

# MARITIME SAAREMAA







Kristina Mägi



Saaremaa



Priit Noogen



Margit Kõrvits

## IMPORTANT INFORMATION: SAARE COUNTY

Rescue and maritime distress services 112  
Saaremaa Volunteer Marine Rescue Society +372 511 9922  
Kuressaare Hospital, Emergency Department +372 452 0040

Surface area: 2,922km<sup>2</sup> (6.5% of the surface area of Estonia),  
and a total of 710 islands  
Largest islands: Saaremaa, Muhu, Ruhnu, Abruksa, & Vilsandi  
Total length of the coastline: 1,414km  
Population: approx. 34,000, or 13.1 people per km<sup>2</sup>  
Administrative division:  
Three parishes - SAAREMAA, MUHU, RUHNU  
One city - KURESSAARE, population approx. 13,000



Kuressaare Tourist Information Centre  
Tallinna 2, Kuressaare, Eesti,  
+372 453 3120,  
info@visitsaaremaa.ee  
www.visitsaaremaa.ee



## HOW DO YOU GET TO THE ISLAND?

The long and calm coastline of Saaremaa is lined with friendly ports which welcome sailing boats. A few pages on, you will find the details of our guest harbours. Ahoy!  
In winter or in summer, it is always easy to get here thanks to our new ferries. If you would like to arrive on the island without delay or at a certain time, you can buy your ticket in advance at: [www.praamid.ee](http://www.praamid.ee).

The view of our island from high above is simply wonderful: the islands of **Saaremaa** and **Muhu**, **Vilsandi** and **Abruksa**, and perhaps even a slice of **Ruhnu**. Make sure you wave to our good neighbours in **Hiiu**. This luxury can be enjoyed when arriving on Saaremaa by plane. The flight from Tallinn to Kuressaare takes only about thirty or forty minutes. Read more here: [www.saartelennuliinid.ee](http://www.saartelennuliinid.ee).

Not all winters are cold and icy for coastal people. Should one arrive though, an ice road can be used to drive over the sea to reach the islands. This unique opportunity must be taken advantage of! Driving is only permitted along the official, open ice roads, so make sure you follow the signs and markings and also the rules. See more here: [www.mnt.ee/et/tee/jaateed](http://www.mnt.ee/et/tee/jaateed).  
Our summers are sunny and gorgeous, so there is no chance of trying out the ice road after Midsummer's Day!

MARITIME SAAREMAA





Jarmo Vehkakoski



Priit Noogen



Priit Noogen



Karl Jakob Toplaan

## SAAREMAA – part of the global UNESCO network

Estonia's western islands have been included in the worldwide UNESCO Men and Biosphere network for a total of 28 years. The living environment here which has been preserved for centuries, its peculiar traditions, and the hard-working local people with their good sense of humour have gained special acknowledgment for being able to live in harmony with nature.

The islanders live their daily lives like seafarers on a long journey. They must always keep an eye on the weather and the wind, and think about whether they have enough food and water. There must be supplies in one's boat for getting the occupants out of any sorts of trouble. Nothing is ever simply thrown away if it can be reused. The life on a boat is sustainable and well-considered; every item in a boat must have its own place and meaning. When living on an island, one must be resourceful and be able to make use of what one has. One must also know the sea and respect it rather than being afraid of it. The islanders know when to go into the forest and when to head out to sea. Nothing happens here without a reason; everything is thought through and is based on experience of life today in a manner which ensures that there will still be enough resources left for tomorrow.

Today, the UNESCO Men and Biosphere programme is focused on guiding more and more people towards choosing sustainable lifestyles. In other words, towards choosing a way of life which would resemble being on a longer sea journey. It is up to every single one of us to ensure that we will be able to leave for future generations the same environment that we are enjoying today.

The UNESCO biosphere areas are unique areas around the world in which one can see pure nature, taste local, natural food, and enjoy art which is inspired by nature.

Lia Rosenberg  
Biosphere area specialist



Ühinenud Rahvaste  
Hariduse, Teaduse ja  
Kultuuri Organisatsioon



Lääne-Eesti saarte biosfääri  
programmiala aastast 1990  
• Programm "Inimene ja biosfäär"

**Saared ja meri · hoitud elukeskkond**  
The islands and the sea · safeguarded environment

MARITIME SAAREMAA





## THE GUEST HARBOURS

**1 Lõunaranna Port**  
58°32,5'N  
23°19,1'E  
16,0 m  
2,2 m  
15  
+372 503 6640  
www.lounaranna.ee

**2 Kuivastu Port**  
58°34'N  
23°23'E  
30,0 m  
3,5 m  
55  
+372 5400 4131  
www.saarteliinid.ee

**3 Koguva Port**  
58°35'46"N  
23°04'26"E  
14 m  
1,8 m  
20  
+372 513 3446  
www.koguva.ee

**4 Orissaare Port**  
58°33'44,6299"N  
23°05'37,3299"E  
20,0 m  
2,3 m  
15  
+372 529 6639

**5 Triigi Port**  
58°35,5' N  
22°43,2' E  
20,0 m  
3,1 m  
15  
+372 504 6819  
www.saarteliinid.ee

**6 Soela Port**  
58°37'04"N  
22°35'37"E  
12,0 m  
1,3 m  
42  
+372 57 222 222  
www.soelasadam.ee

**7 Saaremaa Port**  
58°32,4'N  
22°14,4'E  
200 m  
10 m  
30  
+372 631 8555  
www.ts.ee

**8 Veere Port**  
58°27,7'N  
22°03,03'E  
80 m  
3,5 m  
6  
+372 527 6699

**9 Lõmala Port**  
58°10'22,87"N  
22°07'7,84"E  
15 m  
1,7 m  
27  
+372 5647 2104  
www.lomalasadam.ee

**10 Mõntu Port**  
57°56,94'N  
22°07,63'E  
100 m  
4,5 m  
10  
+372 514 5578  
www.montusadam.ee

**11 Kuressaare Port**  
58°14,70'N  
22°28,30'E  
30 m  
2,5 m  
132  
+372 503 1953  
www.kuressaare.ee/sadam

**14 Kungla Port**  
58°21'46,07"N  
22°57'16,82"E  
15 m  
1,3 m  
23  
+372 53411457  
www.kunglasadam.ee

**12 Roomassaare Port**  
58°12,85'N  
22°30,44'E  
30 m  
2,7 m  
30  
+372 52 44942  
www.saarteliinid.ee

**15 Ringsu Port**  
57°46,8'N  
23°16,3'E  
30 m  
3 m  
35  
+372 524 4942  
www.saarteliinid.ee

**13 Abruka Port**  
58°09,77'N  
22°31,65'E  
40 m  
2,5 m  
15  
+372 524 4942  
www.saarteliinid.ee

Maximum length  
Maximum draft  
Quay spots





Seventh century.

A unique boat originating from the first half of the seventh century and probably buried at the end of the thirteenth century has been found in the small town of Salme. This is the oldest sailed vessel to be found in the Baltic Sea region. During the course of the excavation work, the remains of another, longer boat of 175 metres in length were also found with the bones and weapons of 36 warriors who are believed to have originated from Scandinavia. The site is marked by a monument.

Sixteenth century.

The wreck of Maasilinna. In the course of an expedition by the Estonian Maritime Museum in 1985, the wreck of a medieval schute-type ship was found in the sea floor sediment. The almost-sixteen-metre-long and 5.5 metre-wide vessel was a commonly-used type of vessel in Estonian coastal waters in its time, and was able to carry almost fifty tons. Powered by one square sail, such ships could also be used to sail from Saaremaa to Riga and Pärnu. The serpent ships which were used in the Muhu straits later on were quite similar to the wreck of the Maasilinna in terms of their dimensions and method of construction. The ancient ship was found at Maasi Village. A restored serpent ship can be seen at the Port of Kuivastu.

Sixteenth century.

The cargo ships from Kuressaare were the largest in the Baltic States during the Swedish era. The merchants of Kuressaare may already have owned long range cargo sailing vessels at the end of the sixteenth century, which were sailing through the Danish straits to western Europe. It is known from the available written sources that in the period between 1665 to 1674 three ships from Kuressaare – ‘Count Magnus Gabriel de la Gardie’, ‘Margareta’, and ‘Kohl’ – sailed all the way to Spain in western Europe with a cargo of grain. The first two were the largest in the Baltic States at the time.

1820.

Explorers from western Saaremaa. Pilguse Manor on Saaremaa was the location from which the famous seafarer and the man who discovered Antarctica, Admiral Fabian Gottlieb von Bellinghausen (1776–1852) originated, as well as being the home of the navy’s Lieutenant Karl Pontus Nolcken (1800–1846), who sailed around the world twice.

1891.

The first years of maritime education. As shipbuilding gathered pace and the coastal villages grew, the peasants became increasingly interested in the profession of a sailor. Manor owners and merchants had already been interested in founding a maritime school nearby in the 1860s, but the first maritime classes in Kuressaare were only launched in the autumn of 1891 and even then the exams had to be passed at Riga’s maritime school. The Kuressaare Maritime School operated in Saaremaa until 1945, when it was relocated to Tallinn. Today the small craft building programmes taught in Kuressaare Regional Training Centre and TallinnTech Centre for the Blue Economy are unique in Estonia.

1891.

The beginning of sailing as a sport. The numerous merchants and manufacturers of German origin who were residing in the city initiated the founding of the Arensburg Yacht Club in 1891. In the year after this, the first larger sailing competitions for yachts and sailing vessels were held, with some Estonian boat owners participating as well. Before World War I, the club included fifteen yachts and they had even begun to build long-range yachts. Another yacht club was founded at the end of 1926 – the Saaremaa Maritime Sports Society for Estonian hobbyists, which has now raised generation after generation of sailors.

## A JOURNEY THROUGH TIME ON SAAREMAA

1857.

The beginning of regular passenger transport services. The ships sailing the route between Riga and St Petersburg began calling in at Kuressaare from the spring of 1857. The increasing numbers of mud bath visitors and commuting workers gave rise to the establishment of local passenger transport links and, in 1875, a new cargo and passenger vessel, ‘Konstantin’, was ordered from Germany. After Estonia became independent, Kuressaare had maritime links with Tallinn, Pärnu, Riga, and Stockholm. In 1903, the connection of Saaremaa with the mainland transferred from sailing vessels to steamboats. The year-round carrying of cars and passengers by icebreaker-type ferries began in 1956.

1892.

Roomassaare Port. The town’s old port which was located in Tori cove was naturally shallow and got in the way of marine traffic as the dimensions of the drafts of the vessels grew. The new port was built between 1892–1894, four kilometres outside the town, on the cape of Roomasaare.

1917.

The most extensive sea landing. In the autumn of 1917, before the end of World War I, the German general staff decided to capture Saaremaa in order to defend its northern front in Latvia. For this purpose, a large-scale operation codenamed ‘Albion’ was prepared at the Port of Liepaja, with marine forces being dispatched to Tagalahe on Saaremaa which housed a large number of Russian troops, artillery batteries, and warships. On 12 October, 181 ships of various types, 127 motorboats, 24,600 soldiers and officers, 5,000 horses, 1,400 carriages, 150 machine guns, 54 artillery pieces, 100 airplanes, and supplies for thirty days were transferred to Tagalahe. The main force consisted of ten modern ‘König’ and ‘Kaiser’ battleships and eight battle cruisers. The history of marine battles had not previously seen such a large-scale accumulation of firepower being aimed at the same target. Saaremaa was taken in five days.

Author: Bruno Pao





Karl Jakob Toplaan

## TEN PLACES TO VISIT:

- **Kuressaare Episcopal Castle**  
The best preserved medieval castle in the Baltic States
- **Vilsandi National Park**  
The most maritime-themed of the national parks
- **Kaali meteorite crater**  
The most striking crater lake in Eurasia
- **Panga cliff**  
The most gorgeous sunsets
- **Angla Windmill Park**  
The highest number of windmills together in one place
- **Mihkli Farm Museum**  
The most comprehensive and authentic farm museum
- **Sõrve peninsula cape and the lighthouse**  
The south-westernmost point of Estonia and the only light house on Saaremaa that is open for visitors
- **Koguva Village on Muhu Island**  
The most remarkable example of farm architecture
- **Churches of Saaremaa**  
The holiest places on Saaremaa
- **Spas on Saaremaa**  
The most relaxing holiday

All about Saaremaa [www.visitsaaremaa.ee](http://www.visitsaaremaa.ee)



Bug overflow, Karl Jakob Toplaan, toplanfoto.com

MARITIME SAAREMAA

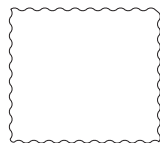


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MARITIME SAAREMAA



Sõrve Cape, Priit Noogen [www.noogen.ee](http://www.noogen.ee)



MARITIME SAAREMAA

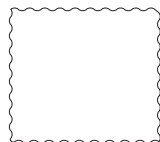


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Ehtne.ee

## PURE PRODUCTS OF SAAREMAA

Welcome to Saaremaa - the land of good things!

You have doubtless already heard that everything is nice on Saaremaa. Nice ideas, nice places, nice food, and nice people.

The people here believe that our home is unique. The nature here is pure and, in terms of food production, the environment and traditions are held in high regard.

The 'Saaremaa Ehtne toode' trademark (which in English means 'Authentic product of Saaremaa') makes it easy for you to find in the shops food products and handmade products that have been produced on the island. The cafe and restaurant menus which value local flavours and raw materials are also marked with the same label.

Find the Sign!



### PIKE PATTIES

Work some clean pike fillet through a grinder, with salted lard at a ratio of 1:4, one onion of a nice size, and three to four loaves of white bread. Add salt and pepper, two eggs, and a bit of cream. Mix well and shape into patties, and then bread with breadcrumbs. Bake as you like and serve with boiled potatoes and tartare sauce.

MARITIME SAAREMAA

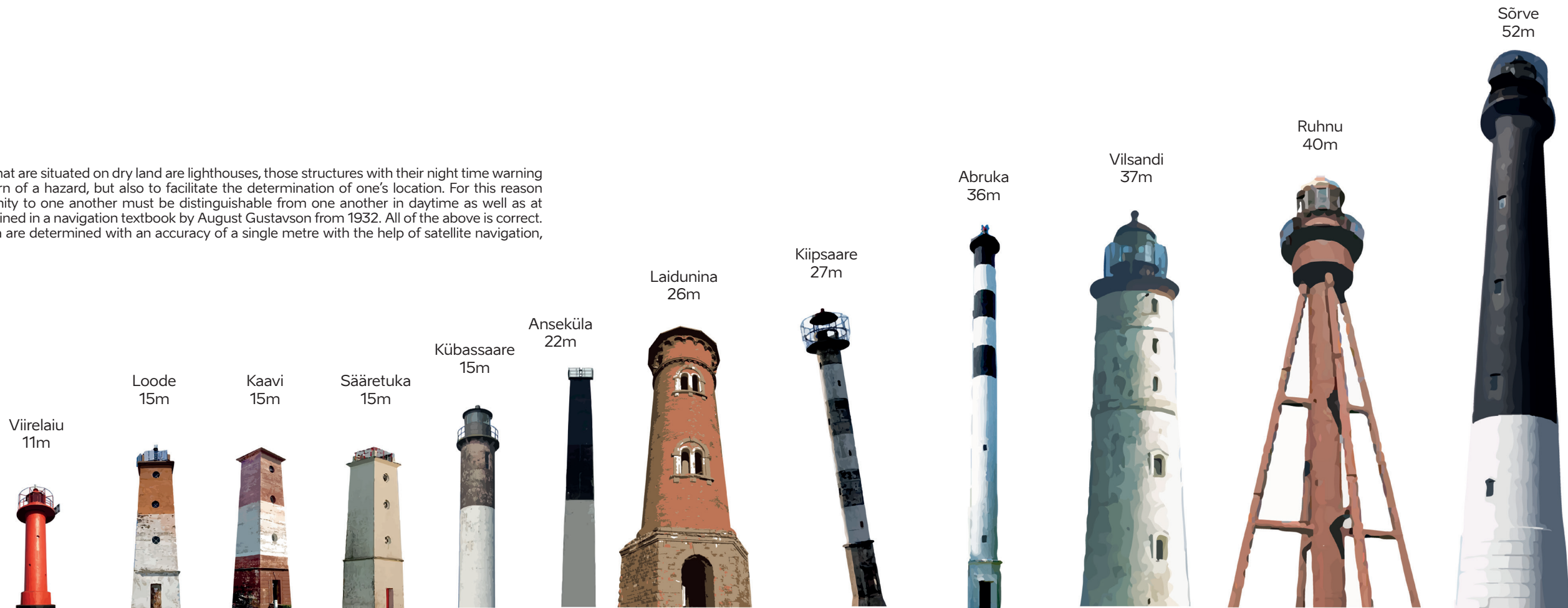


# THE LIGHTHOUSES

'...The most important sources of maritime warning that are situated on dry land are lighthouses, those structures with their night time warning light. The purpose of a lighthouse is not only to warn of a hazard, but also to facilitate the determination of one's location. For this reason alone, lighthouses which are located in close proximity to one another must be distinguishable from one another in daytime as well as at night.' That's how the duties of a lighthouse are explained in a navigation textbook by August Gustavson from 1932. All of the above is correct. Today, however, when the locations of vessels at sea are determined with an accuracy of a single metre with the help of satellite navigation, lighthouses have forfeited their initial meaning.

Having the lighthouses of Irben and Sõrve within my sight every day as a practicing seaman, I have often found myself wondering whether this development is something about which I should be happy or sad. To be honest, in my opinion, there is more reason to be happy - if for no other reason than because lighthouses are part of our seafaring history and, if you wish, romance. What could be more beautiful when arriving back from a months-long journey than spotting the blinking light of the first lighthouse of your home port and knowing that you are expected there?

Lembit Uustulnd / Captain



MARITIME SAAREMAA





Karl Jakob Toplaan



Kristina Mägi



Priit Noogen



Kristina Mägi



Priit Noogen



Priit Noogen

## THE FOUR SEASONS IN SAAREMAA

**Visit us in spring!** Large junks of hummock ice can be spotted here after the first warm days of spring. The birds are singing, the first flowers are in bloom, and suddenly it's as if you are at the North Pole, surrounded by icebergs. Would you like to become a birdwatcher or perhaps you already are one? There is a great bird migration route that runs along the coastline. The orchids which bloom on their slate bases are a gorgeous sight to behold. When the coastal people around the harbours get especially active, however, it is probably the roach-catching season. Read more about the fishing regulations here: [www.kalateave.ee](http://www.kalateave.ee)

**Visit us in summer!** Saaremaa is a well-known holiday paradise with just the right beach for anyone. On the stony beaches of the northern shore there is a good chance of finding yourself completely alone with no other soul in sight. The sandy beaches of the southern shore are full of life - including swimmers, surfers, and beach parties. Discover the beaches of Saaremaa, go diving or sailing or spend a lovely day kayaking. By the way, Saaremaa is one of the sunniest regions of Estonia. Don't forget to visit the capital, Kuressaare, as there is always something going on here. Really, there is! The summer draws to a conclusion with visitors and locals alike enjoying ancient lights by the sea, reminding Saaremaa's inhabitants that they are a people of the sea and that the sea is part of their lives. See more here: [www.muinastuled.ee](http://www.muinastuled.ee)

**In autumn,** roam along the cliff tops of the northern coasts of Muhu Island and Saaremaa, by the Silurian Clint. Roughly 443 million years ago, there was a warm sea full of life around these rocks. Since then, our coral island has sailed away from the equator and only fossils remain as reminders of the warm era ages ago. Enjoy the cameos of autumn, but don't forget that it is a miracle to find yourself here!

Perhaps you would like to do something seriously unusual and arrive in **winter**? You might even find the ice road open. Dress warmly and hike to the end of the world, to the tilted lighthouse of Kiipsaare, without coming in contact with a single soul. If swimming in icy water is not quite the thing for you, enjoy the heat of the saunas and spas of Kuressaare after your wintry journey.

MARITIME SAAREMAA





## MUHU UISK

**Muhu uisk** • A thousand years of history  
Sea trips on board the Moonland historical sailboat

Centuries ago, the people of Muhu island developed a traditional Viking war boat (a serpent ship, or 'uisk' in Estonian) into a large-scale sailing vessel, which was used to transport passengers over the sea up to the beginning of the twentieth century. Today, the historical sailing vessel, Moonland, is again welcoming passengers on the route between Virstu and Kuivastu so that they can enjoy the gorgeous cliff-filled coastline. Picnics on the deck and longer sea trips are also available. The boat runs between May to September.

Väinamere Uisk NGO  
Kuivastu small craft harbour, Muhu Parish  
[www.uisk.ee](http://www.uisk.ee) 58°34' N, 23°24' E



Väinamere serpent ship,  
Mihkel Jürisson

## BUILDING A VIKING BOAT IN SALME

The sea, a sailor's life, fishing, and ports have always held an important place in the lives of the people of Saaremaa. The locals have always been great shipbuilders and there are numerous signs all over the island pointing to places in which ships are built. One of these is located next to Lõmala Harbour, near Salme Village, and this one is the last place known in which an historical wooden ship is actually being built. The master craftsmen of this trade are building a real wooden Viking ship there. The vessel is fourteen metres long, making it the largest Viking ship in Estonia.

The building of a Viking ship is not merely a project, it's a great dream and even a mission for one man, something that has now gradually become reality. The ship is a tribute to all of the brave seafarers who used to consider this piece of land their own, once upon a time.

If you would like to take a look at the process of building Saaremaa's very own Viking ship, please pre-book by calling +372 502 1572

Arne Stern



## BLUE ECONOMY

International research confirms that people living near the coast are happier and healthier than those living inland. People living in coastal areas are also resourceful and entrepreneurial.

The blue economy is a system which involves entrepreneurship, tourism, shipbuilding and repairs, as well as other branches of maritime and coastal economy. Saaremaa economy is a blue economy.

MARITIME SAAREMAA





## SMALL CRAFT BUILDING

‘Their strength is in their ships.’  
(Livonian Rhymed Chronicle, 1161-1290)

On the eve of the Northern Crusades, it was written that the people of Saaremaa were surrounded by the sea and unafraid of strong warriors, as the might of the people of Saaremaa lay in their ships. Even today, Estonian small craft building is focused on Saaremaa, which is the centre of the Estonian small craft building cluster. The small craft builders of Saaremaa earn 70-80% of the annual sales revenue for the sector.

There are twelve shipbuilding companies on Saaremaa. They produce workboats as well as recreational vessels, from composite materials as well as from aluminium. The shipbuilding industry supports a network of rapidly developing subcontractors. Various Estonian marine industry products have gained international recognition.

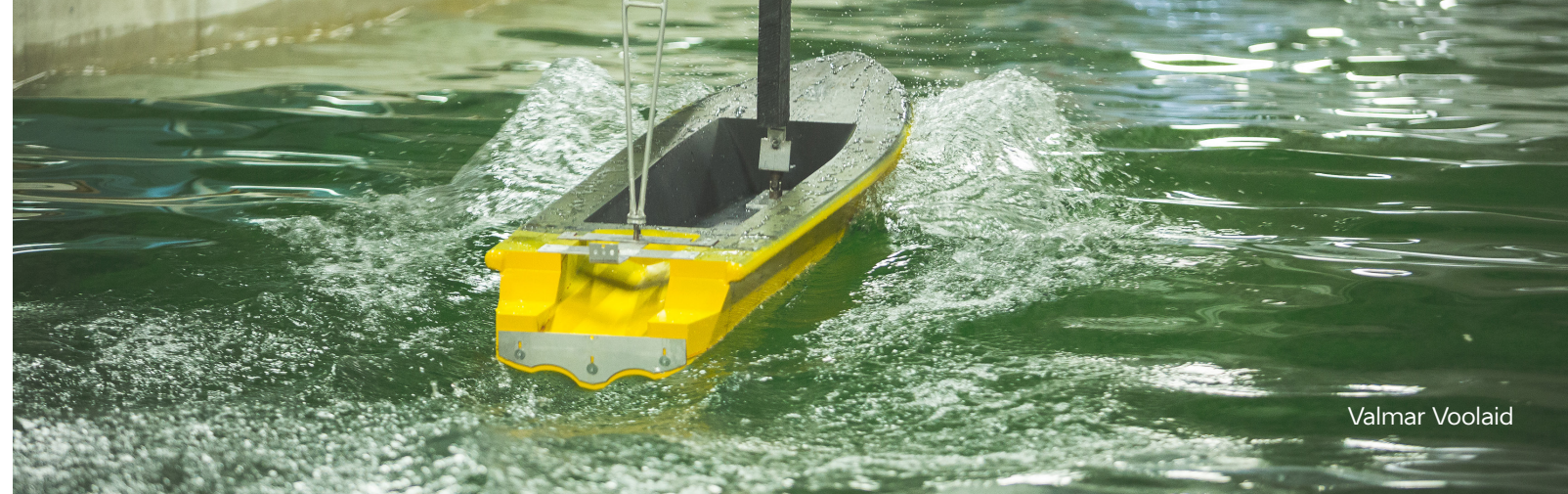
For example, the historic fishing village of Nasva is home to the makers of the best-known Estonian yacht brand, Saare Yachts, and to the largest workboat builder in the Baltic Sea region, Baltic Workboats. Workboats by Alunaut are known around Europe and beyond; the boats of Kasse have been held in high regard by amateur fishermen for years; Eysysla Yard is a successful newcomer and Vätta Puit is involved in restoring historical vessels and building iceboats.

The Estonian shipbuilding industry has found its niche in small crafts and in complex, one-off vessels which demand a good deal of resourcefulness from the builder.

The Association of Estonian Marine Industries: [www.marineindustry.ee](http://www.marineindustry.ee)



ASSOCIATION OF ESTONIAN  
MARINE INDUSTRIES



Valmar Voolaid

## RESEARCH AND DEVELOPMENT

Small Craft Competence Centre, or SCC, Tallinn University of Technology R&D unit on Saaremaa, was launched in 2011. The SCC building — and the only towing tank in the Baltics — located in the heart of Kuressaare, opened in 2014.

SCC's main research area is sustainable marine engineering with a focus on vessel hydrodynamics: hull resistance, seakeeping, loads and vessel manoeuvrability. SCC is home to TallinnTech Naval Architecture and Hydrodynamics Research Group.

SCC specializes in small craft design, model testing and materials laboratory services. Since becoming fully operational in 2015, SCC has rendered its services to over 100 clients in shipbuilding and other industries. The biggest workboat producer in the Baltic Sea Region, Baltic Workboats AS, is a frequent towing tank client. As a part of TallinnTech's Centre for the Blue Economy, SCC contributes towards engineering education in Estonia. TallinnTech Centre for the Blue Economy is the only provider of higher education on Saaremaa. The small craft building programmes taught in Kuressaare Regional Training Centre and TallinnTech Centre for the Blue Economy are unique in Estonia.

Association of Estonian Marine Industries: [www.marineindustry.ee](http://www.marineindustry.ee)  
Tallinn University of Technology Small Craft Competence Centre: [www.scc.ee](http://www.scc.ee)

MARITIME SAAREMAA



Front cover: the 'Tantsutaja' anima film, Mihkel Jürisson  
Photos: Priit Noogen [www.noogen.ee](http://www.noogen.ee)  
Karl Jakob Toplaan [www.toplaanfoto.com](http://www.toplaanfoto.com)  
Jarmo Vehkakoski, Kristina Mägi,  
Mihkel Jürisson, Margit Kõrvits  
Valmar Voolaid



Kiipsaare lighthouse, Priit Noogen



[visitsaaremaa.ee](http://visitsaaremaa.ee)



EESTI MERETÖÖSTUSE LIIT

MARITIME SAAREMAA