



Saariselkä - A Window to the Northern Lights at Christmas



HOLIDAY TYPE: Small Group
VISITING: Finland

BROCHURE CODE: 20018
DURATION: 4 nights

In Brief

Spending Christmas in Lapland is always special but spending it hunting for the Northern Lights and sleeping in a glass-roofed cabin really makes for a memorable trip. This four-night break to the Northern Lights Village combines unique accommodation, dedicated Aurora hunts and amazing winter activities.

Our Opinion

“ *The Aurora Cabins are a fabulous base for a Christmas escape and provide your own home from home for your holiday. The activities encapsulate the best of Lapland and offer some festivities without the feeling of being in a ‘Santa-centric destination’. The Aurora viewing potential here is amazing and the guides really put in the effort to help you achieve your goal. Their photography tuition is also a real bonus for anyone who wants to capture the lights on camera.* ”

Ali Mclean



What's included?

ALL OF THE ACTIVITIES AND SERVICES LISTED BELOW ARE INCLUDED IN THE HOLIDAY PRICE

- **Flights:** indirect return flights from London Heathrow to Ivalo (via Helsinki). Regional and non-UK departures available on request (flight routes subject to change)
- **Transfers:** return airport transfers
- **Accommodation:** 4 nights in an Aurora Cabin
- **Meals:** 4 breakfasts, 3 lunches and 4 dinners
- **Activities:** snowmobile and ice fishing tour, Aurora workshop, reindeer experience, Aurora camp, 10 km husky safari and Northern Lights snowshoeing (**order subject to change**)
- Cold weather clothing for the duration of your stay
- Aurora alert service which you can set to alert you throughout the night or end at a specific time
- Services of our expert local guides and Aurora Zone representative

Trip Overview

Tucked behind a small forest, on the outskirts of the ski town of Saariselkä is the Northern Lights Village. Set deep in the heart of the Aurora Zone in North Eastern Finland, this is a prime location for both viewing the Northern Lights and trying unforgettable activities. A Christmas escape here provides you with a unique and memorable holiday packed with winter experiences.

The delightful Aurora Cabins provide your accommodation and with the partially glassed roof sitting above your bed, you'll have great views of the sky all night long.

Of course, the best way to see the Northern Lights is from outside and so we have included two dedicated evenings of hunting to offer you the best chance to witness the Aurora Borealis.

We tend to start with an informative workshop on how to photograph the Northern Lights, as we know that most people are desperate to capture the Aurora on camera and so the guides here will impart their expertise in this department. Please note that you will need to bring your own equipment (camera, ideally SLR, and a tripod).

One evening, you will visit one of the famed Aurora Camps. These camps are dotted around the region and are all situated in excellent viewpoints. A Northern Lights snowshoe hike then caps off your Aurora hunting.

During the day the wonderful blue light of deep winter offers around four hours of dusky light either side of noon. Whilst the sun never rises, the light is very special and creates an atmosphere only experienced at this time of year (please note that some activities may start/finish in the dark).

We've included all the key experiences in this short break and so you will enjoy a snowmobile and ice fishing trip, encounters with reindeer and an unforgettable dog sled safari. There is also some free time for you explore Saariselka, add in [additional activities](#) or try some downhill skiing.

With Christmas festivities on both the 24th and 25th December, this really will be a festive holiday to remember.

Please note that over the Christmas period, there are likely to be children under the age of 15 on the activities and staying at the village. Whilst this should not detract from your experience, should you like details of one of our adult-only options then please ask one of our Travel Experts.

Photography by Eerikki Rundgren, Markku Inkila, Matt Robinson, Robert Smith and Visit Finland

Agenda

Please note the order of activities is subject to change

DAY
1

ARRIVAL

Upon arrival at Ivalo Airport, a driver will meet you and transfer you to the Northern Lights Village. You can then check-in and relax ahead of your active days. Dinner will be served in the restaurant.

Please note: the agenda shown is simply an example order for the activities and your final agenda will be provided on arrival in Saariselkä.

Included Meals: Dinner

DAY
2

SNOWMOBILE AND ICE FISHING TOUR, CHRISTMAS EVE AND AURORA WORKSHOP

Today's activity combines two of the most popular pastimes in Lapland; snowmobiling and ice fishing.

Your snowmobile experience begins with a full safety briefing and instructions on how to handle the machines before you set off, two people per snowmobile, with your guide leading the way.

Your destination is a frozen lake nearby and it is here that your guide will assist you in drilling a hole through the thick ice. You then drop your baited line into the chilly depths below and begin the patient business of ice fishing. Whilst you maintain focus on catching a fish, your guide will prepare lunch around a campfire (weather permitting). With luck, you may have a perch or a local Inari whitefish to add to the menu.

After your meal, you will head back on your snowmobiles and return to the village. You will be out for around four hours in total. Please note that you must be over 18 and hold a full driving licence to drive a snowmobile.

Later this afternoon, you will take part in an Aurora workshop, lasting around 1 hour. The expert guides here are all so passionate about the Aurora and so they share their knowledge about how to capture the lights on camera. You will need to bring your own equipment (camera, ideally SLR, and a tripod).

Christmas is celebrated on Christmas Eve in Finland and so tonight the festivities begin with a special meal in the hotel restaurant showcasing some typical Finnish Christmas fayre.

Included Meals: Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner

DAY
3

REINDEER EXPERIENCE AND AURORA CAMP

You really can't visit Lapland around Christmas and not meet some reindeer. The reindeer paddock is within the village and so you do not have far to go for this experience today.

Your expert guide will introduce you to the animals before you get the chance to feed them. A one-hour reindeer-sleigh ride will follow, and lunch will be served in a kota (traditional teepee) at the village. Including your meal, the activity lasts around three hours in total.

You will have the afternoon free to relax, or perhaps you may like to include additional activities which can be found in the '[Personalise](#)' section of the holiday page.

Later this evening, after your dinner, it's time for an evening of Aurora hunting to top off the day nicely. You will begin with a bus journey north towards Lake Inari. In the area, there are numerous Aurora Camps which have been erected in prime viewpoints. These are ideal places to wait for a potential show and your guides will choose the best spot based on the evening's forecast. A fire will be lit, warm drinks and snacks will be served, and you can settle in to watch the skies. You will be out for around three hours in total.

Included Meals: Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner

DAY
4

HUSKY SAFARI AND NORTHERN LIGHTS SNOWSHOEING

Dog sledding is one of the most unforgettable winter activities and today is your chance to try it for yourself. Travelling in twos, each pair will be given their own team of eager dogs for the safari with

one person sitting in the sled and the other taking the controls.

When you meet the excitable huskies, you will hear them bark and howl in anticipation of the trail and they'll be hugely pleased to see you. They love to pull the sleds and they know what your arrival means!

After a full instruction and safety briefing, you will take to the trails, the dogs will fall silent and the fun will really begin. There are few better ways to travel in the Arctic.

This activity lasts for around two hours in total and includes around one to one and a half hours of dog sledding depending on the conditions. You shall cover around 10km during the safari. You can, however, upgrade to a longer experience should you wish to do so and the details of the options available can be found in the '[Personalise](#)' section of the holiday page.

Lunch will be served at the Northern Lights Village and the afternoon is free for you to explore Saariselkä or perhaps enjoy additional activities such as those listed in the '[Personalise](#)' section. Ski hire is available in the town for those who fancy some downhill skiing.

Your last night of Northern Lights hunting will see you strapping on your snowshoes. You will venture out into the wilderness to a great Northern Lights vantage point. Whilst you enjoy a hot drink the Northern Lights will, hopefully, make an appearance. The activity will last for around two hours.

Included Meals: Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner

DAY
5

DEPARTURE

Today, it will be time to leave the Northern Lights Village behind. If you are departing on an early flight, a packed breakfast will be provided for you to take with you on your transfer.

Included Meals: Breakfast

Personalise this tour

Our pick



Snowmobile safari - 2 hours

We know that for some people the thought of snowmobiling may be a little daunting so this short 2 hour (approximate) safari provides the ideal introduction.

Full instruction will be provided along with a safety briefing from your expert guide and then you'll set off in convoy, following the well-marked trails and travelling two people per machine.

Snowmobiles offer the chance to explore further afield and offer the passenger (you can swap drivers) the

chance to fully enjoy the sights of Lapland.

There will be a break for you to enjoy warm drinks and snacks along the way.

Please note: Snowmobile drivers must be 18 years old and hold a valid driving licence.

Group size: 1-24 (approximately)

Available: Monday - Sunday at 10 am & 1 pm from December until mid-April. Please note that the times may vary throughout the season.

Duration: 2 hours (approximately)

Other options

ACTIVITIES



Snowshoe hike in the fells

The beauty of snowshoeing is that it provides the chance for wildlife encounters, as the local flora and fauna will not be scared off by the noise of engines or the sound of sleds. So, for nature lovers, this is an ideal choice as your local guide will provide information on the wildlife and its natural environment. You may have the chance to witness Siberian Jay, willow grouse or a herd of roaming reindeer.

Group size: 1-16 (approximately)

Available: Monday - Sunday at 10 am, 1 pm & 3 pm from December until mid-April. Please note that the times may vary throughout the season.

Duration: 2 hours (approximately); a warm drink is included

Photography by Markku Inkila

LITTLE EXTRAS



Husky safari upgrade options

A husky safari is one of those experiences you are likely to remember for the rest of your life. Once the dogs are running and the sled enters the wilderness surrounding Saariselkä, all else is forgotten.

Whilst we do include a safari in the holiday, we know that many people like to extend this activity and so the option is listed below for you. It is based on two people per sled but if you would like your own team then this can be arranged on request for a supplement.

Upgrade to a 20 km trip

This safari will see you cover around 20km during around 2-2.5 hours of driving.

In total, you will be away from the village for around four hours (including briefing). Lunch is included.

Driving time: 2 – 2.5 hrs (depending on weather and track)

Image credits: Lapland Safaris

Included Accommodation

Saariselkä Northern Lights Village (Nights: 1-4)



Located in North East Finland, the Northern Lights Village sits on the outskirts of the ski resort of Saariselkä. Tucked away from the town and separated from it by dense forest, the location is ideal for viewing the Northern Lights but is still within walking distance (around 1000m) of the town's amenities. The ski slopes can be accessed via a shuttle (small charge applies) or a pleasant walk of

around 40-50 minutes.

The Northern Lights Village offers accommodation in Aurora Cabins which are half-roofed with glass. The twin or double beds are situated beneath the panoramic roof and provide the chance to view the Northern Lights from your bed! It's not often that folk prefer a sleepless night but here it's not considered to be a huge inconvenience as it provides the chance to potentially witness Mother Nature's greatest light show!

There are 80 cabins in total, all of which are within a 5-10 minutes' walk of the Village's central facilities which include the restaurant where you'll enjoy breakfast and dinner.

Facilities

- The village restaurant is an atmospheric place, inspired by traditional wooden kotas (Finnish teepees). Breakfast is a buffet of continental options and some hot dishes. Evening meals are a buffet with starters of soups and salad, a choice of local meat or fish will follow (the reindeer and white fish in this region are delicious!). Typically a cake will be served for pudding, keeping you well-fuelled for your nocturnal Aurora hunting adventures. Dietary requirements are all well-catered for as long as we are informed at the time of booking. There's also a large lobby near reception for you to relax in after your meal.
- The Northern Lights Village has an onsite reindeer paddock and all activities start in the village so there is no need for time-wasting transfers. Basically, because we want to make your holiday as uncomplicated as possible, life is made very easy here.
- Saariselkä is around a 20-25 minute walk from the Northern Lights Village (40-50 minutes to the ski slopes) which means that all of the amenities, shops, cafés and local restaurants are within easy reach.
- For all Northern Lights activities, an expert guide will provide you with photographic tuition. The guides sometimes take pictures throughout the activities which can be purchased on your return to the village, if they take any.
- For all of your provided winter clothing, simply go to the onsite Safari House where overalls, gloves, boots, skis and snowshoes are stored for easy access.
- Guests can pay extra to use the hot tub, sauna and ice pool. This can be used during public time or booked for private use.

Aurora Cabins

The Aurora Cabins have a half-glass roof and all face north. The design is based on the traditional wooden kotas (teepees) of Finland.

Each cabin has twin beds (which can be made into a double) and a sofa bed, suitable for an additional adult. There is a shower room (with underfloor heating) and a toilet, as well as a luggage storage area (please note that hot water is limited). Tea and coffee making facilities, a hairdryer and a minibar are also included.

Importantly for duvet-based Aurora hunting, a timer switch can be used to heat the glass roof should your view be obscured by snowfall. It takes approximately 5-10 minutes to heat and melt the snow so there's no need to go and sweep the roof in your pyjamas!

Cabins are not cleaned between arrival and departure unless requested from reception. Additionally, towels can be exchanged at reception if required.

Free Wi-Fi.

Image credits: Markku Inkila

The Specifics

Holiday group size (approximate)

This holiday requires a minimum of 2 people to run, however, on some dates we require a minimum of 8 people for our flight allocation. Maximum 30 people (approximately). Please speak to our Travel Experts for further information.

Group Size

We always try to provide an approximation of the group size you can expect to be with for the duration of each of our holidays. It may be that you are joined by others for parts of your holiday (such as transfers and particular activities) but the above number reflects those you can normally expect to be with from beginning to end. If group size is something which is particularly important to you, please speak to our Travel Experts and they can suggest the best holidays for you.

Tailor-made holiday group sizes will vary for all activities as will the group size for any additional activities you book.

Minimum numbers required for a holiday to operate

Some of our holidays require a minimum number of participants to operate (as listed in the 'Group Size' section). If your holiday departure has not yet reached the minimum number, you will be told at the time of booking. In the unlikely event that your chosen date is not guaranteed by nine weeks before your scheduled departure date, we will contact you to discuss the available options as per our [booking conditions](#).

Minimum and maximum age

If a specific minimum age applies to this holiday, it can be found in the Key Facts box on the holiday Overview page.

Unless otherwise stated in the Key Facts box on the holiday Overview page, the minimum age for participation in an Aurora Zone holiday is typically 12 years old (there may be younger children in some destinations who have booked with other companies). If an adult-only environment is important

to you, then please contact our Travel Experts and they will advise on the best dates and destinations for you. If you are looking for a holiday designed specifically for families then please see our sister company www.activitiesabroad.com.

Itinerary amendments

The order of activities listed in this agenda is provided for guidance only, your final and detailed itinerary will be provided either with your final travel documents (which are uploaded into your online account around a week prior to departure) or upon arrival.

Terms and Conditions

Our full booking terms and conditions can be found on our website: <https://www.theaurorazone.com/booking-conditions>