



Saariselkä - A Window to the Northern Lights



HOLIDAY TYPE: Small Group
VISITING: Finland

BROCHURE CODE: 20016
DURATION: 4 nights

In Brief

Situated in Saariselkä, Finland, the Northern Lights Village puts you in prime Aurora viewing territory. This makes your 4-night stay in a glass-roofed Aurora Cabin even more exciting. What's more, you'll go on dedicated Northern Lights hunts and enjoy unforgettable daytime experiences such as dog-sledding.

Our Opinion

“ Staying in an Aurora Cabin was beyond my expectations and something I will never forget. I arrived just as the sun was setting and the sky was a magnificent combination of pink and orange, yet it was still only the afternoon. I hadn't really expected anything from that first evening, but not long after settling into the cosy bed, I noticed flickers of green through the glass roof of the cabin. I immediately went outside and was treated to a fabulous display of ethereal colour. An experience which will stay with me for a long time! ”

Katharina Rogalski



What's included?

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

- **Flights:** return from London to Ivalo (via Helsinki). Flight routes are subject to change.
- **Transfers:** return airport transfers
- **Accommodation:** 4 nights in an Aurora Cabin
- **Meals:** 4 breakfasts, 3 lunches and 4 dinners
- **Activities:** Reindeer day, Aurora workshop, snowmobile and ice fishing tour, Aurora camp by the lake, 10km 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
- 24/7 assistance from our UK based operations team and in destination support from our local partners

Trip Overview

Saariselkä is ideally located at the edge of a winter wilderness in the far north of Finland. It is approximately 250km above the Arctic Circle which means that it is a prime location for Aurora hunters. Although the fresh Arctic air can be quite tiring, you will find yourself fighting to stay awake, attempting to seek out flickers of green in the sky above your bed. Don't worry if you fall asleep though, as you can make use of the Aurora alert system in your cabin which will sound if the Northern Lights are showing!

Perhaps one of the most sought-after souvenirs from any Aurora holiday is a photograph of the lights. An initial Aurora workshop will reveal the secrets necessary for capturing the lights, introducing the settings required for producing the best pictures. You'll then set out to hunt the lights on two nights, enjoying time at an Aurora Camp and then going on a snowshoe hike.

In addition to hunting the Northern Lights, this holiday includes some of our favourite winter activities. A session combining snowmobiling and ice fishing ensures that you are able to enjoy a popular Finnish pastime whilst also experiencing the thrill of snowmobiling. You will also enjoy a 10 km husky

safari. When not planning on how to sneak a husky home, you shall take to the trails for an unforgettable adventure with the dogs.

Living this far north of the Arctic Circle is extremely challenging given the harsh winters, but the indigenous Sámi people have thrived here for generations, many as reindeer herders. This holiday provides an insight into their culture, including a visit to the reindeer paddock for a sleigh-ride.

This four-night itinerary is designed to maximise your chances of seeing the Northern Lights, whilst also introducing you to the fascinating culture north of the Arctic Circle.

Credit: Inari-Saariselka Tourism Ltd, Markku Inkila, Ben Murgatroyd & Ivo Hafner

Agenda

Please note the order of activities is subject to change

DAY
1

ARRIVAL AND WELCOME

Following your arrival at Ivalo Airport, you will make the short transfer to the Northern Lights Village and your Aurora accommodation.

You will have a meal this evening and we would suggest casting your eyes up to the night sky and who knows, the Northern Lights might welcome you to Lapland in spectacular fashion.

Included Meals: Dinner

DAY
2

REINDEER DAY AND AURORA WORKSHOP

After breakfast, you will meet a local reindeer herder before enjoying a tour which will explore this age-old way of life. Reindeer are synonymous with the Arctic and it is fascinating to learn how they manage to survive in these harsh winter conditions. In addition, you will gain insight into Sámi culture which has thrived north of the Arctic Circle for generations. Reindeer have played a key role in the Sámi's ability to adapt and asking a Sámi how many reindeer he has, is like asking how much money somebody earns.

You will explore the paddock at the Northern Lights Village before meeting the reindeer and having the opportunity to feed them. Your guide will introduce you to the various aspects of reindeer herding. Following this, you will enjoy a one-hour (approximately) ride on a reindeer-pulled sleigh. This was once a traditional method of transport, before the introduction of snowmobiles, and it can feel quite 'Narnia-esque' as you venture into the snow-covered forest. Lunch will be served in a teepee and the activity will last for around three hours in total.

Viewing the Northern Lights is a spectacular experience, but capturing them on camera is no easy task. This evening's Aurora photography workshop will help prepare you as you join a local guide who has many years of knowledge and experience. The workshop will reveal all the secrets necessary to capture the Aurora through a lens. Should the lights appear in the coming days, you can then proudly show off your photos. Please note that you will need to bring your own equipment (camera, ideally SLR, and a tripod).

Included Meals: Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner

DAY
3

SNOWMOBILE AND ICE FISHING AND AURORA CAMP BY THE LAKE

Following breakfast, you will join your local guide and enjoy a combination of two popular winter activities. The four-hour tour will begin with a snowmobile safari as you enter the forest and breeze past breathtaking scenery towards a nearby frozen lake. Once at the lake, your guide will assist as you drill a hole into the ice, bait the hook and attempt to catch perch or whitefish. Ice fishing is very popular with the locals and, whilst it may seem a sedate activity, that all changes if you land a catch! Your guide will build a fire and you will enjoy lunch, which hopefully will include some fresh fish. Full driving instructions will be provided and you will travel two people per snowmobile (you must have a full driving licence and be over the age of 18 to drive the snowmobile).

During the evening, you will enjoy dinner in the restaurant before venturing out for a dedicated Aurora hunt. This three-hour tour will take place in the comfort of a bus and includes a visit to Lake Inari. The Aurora Camp is located on the lakeshore and has a stunning outlook across the frozen ice. You will enjoy drinks and snacks around a cosy campfire and should the lights appear, you can grab a reindeer hide, lie down in the snow and enjoy a captivating display.

Included Meals: Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner

DAY
4

HUSKY SAFARI AND NORTHERN LIGHTS SNOWSHOEING

Perhaps the most eagerly anticipated daytime activity will be your husky safari. Obviously, the dogs themselves are a major attraction and you will immediately notice their excitement. They simply love pulling the sled and once attached they will no doubt be jumping up and down in anticipation. The moment the safari begins, however, they become focused and the only sound is that of pattering paws on the snow.

You will meet the dogs and explore the wilderness during this 10 km safari (approximately one hour). The terrain is diverse and you will navigate the rugged fells and through the forest. Full tuition on how to handle the sleigh will be given by your expert guide beforehand and you will travel two people per sled. The activity lasts for approximately two hours in total including briefing. If you would like to upgrade to a longer safari then this can be arranged, please see the '[Personalise](#)' section of the holiday page for details.

Following the tour, you can enjoy lunch in the restaurant before having the remainder of the afternoon at your leisure.

Tonight it is time for your final activity. You will strap on your snowshoes and 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

Following breakfast, it will be time to leave the Northern Lights Village behind. If you are departing on an early flight then a boxed breakfast will be provided for you to take with you. You will be transferred back to Ivalo Airport for your return flights home.

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 9am & 1pm from December until March. 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. You will stop for a hot drink along the way.

Group size: 1-16 (approximately)

Available: Monday - Sunday at 10 am, 1 pm & 3 pm from December until March. 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 hours of driving.

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

Driving time: approximately 2 hours (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.

Covid-19 Safety and Hygiene 16-step Protocol

The Northern Lights Village is committed to delivering a clean and safe environment for its guests through strict hygiene and safety protocols, in order to bring confidence to all visitors. As part of this commitment, they have introduced a 16-step protocol which includes, amongst other measures, a reduction in group sizes during activities, meal times arranged in advance to avoid overcrowding and enhanced surface and gear disinfection.

Image credits: Markku Inkila

The Specifics

Holiday group size (approximate)

This holiday requires a minimum of 1 person 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>