



Saariselkä - Glass Igloo Escape in Autumn



HOLIDAY TYPE: Flexible Dates

VISITING: Finland

BROCHURE CODE: 20036

DURATION: 4 nights

In Brief

With its wilderness surroundings and excellent Northern Lights track record, visiting Saariselkä in autumn allows you to experience all the wonders of the Arctic in much milder temperatures. Spend four nights searching the skies from your glass-roofed Aurora Cabin as well as on two dedicated Northern Lights activities. During the day, explore the colourful landscape by hiking and dog sledding (on wheels), and visiting Sámi Siida Museum.

Our Opinion

“ Though the dedicated Northern Lights activities are a must-do, I found it completely satisfying knowing that even when the activities end, the search for the green dancing lights could continue from the comfort of my Aurora Cabin! ”

Jono Archer



What's included?

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

- **Transfers:** return group airport transfers
- **Accommodation:** 4 nights in an Aurora Cabin
- **Meals:** 4 breakfast, 1 lunch and 4 dinners
- **Activities:** Guided hike in the National Park, Aurora photography workshop, Husky safari, Aurora Camp by the lake, visit to Sámi Siida Museum, Aurora Camp at Paatsjoki River Bridge or Aurora search on Fatbikes (**order subject to change**)
- 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

Situated high above the Arctic Circle, amongst the forest and fells of Finnish Lapland sits Saariselkä, a location renowned for its Aurora activity. It's no surprise then, that the masterminds behind the Northern Lights Village decided to make the most of this wonderful gift from nature. This special village provides you with the brilliant opportunity to search the skies from the comfort of your bed in your Aurora Cabin.

Here at The Aurora Zone, we want to give you the best possible chance of seeing a display. So though your Northern Lights hunt can continue long into the night from your cabin, we have also included two dedicated Aurora activities to increase your chances. During both of these guided excursions, you will travel further into the wilderness and to darker skies, to search for the green ribbons of light dancing above. We have also included an Aurora photography workshop so that you can have your camera at the ready for that perfect photo, should they appear. What's more, autumn has been scientifically proven to offer dazzling displays and allows you to tick this off your bucket list and experience the Arctic in much milder temperatures!

This time of year also opens up a breathtaking landscape during the daylight hours. Autumn bathes the

surrounding wilderness in colourful shades of orange, red and brown and for those travelling nearer November, you may experience the first snow of the season.

Your itinerary includes a range of activities to make the most of the beautiful landscape. There is a guided hike into the Urho Kekkonen National Park with pine forests and flowing rivers where you will look for any wildlife in the area. You'll also journey through the stunning wilderness as you try dog sledding with an autumnal difference. As the deep snow is yet to arrive, you will travel on a wheeled sled, driven by your guide, with your loyal pack of dogs out in front guiding the way.

To experience the fascinating culture, we have included a day trip to Inari, the heart of the Sámi people. Here you will visit the Sámi Siida Museum which provides a brilliant insight into the indigenous Sámi people and is also a great place to pick up some souvenirs.

This holiday gives you the opportunity to experience the wonders of the Arctic during its fabulous autumnal season. With a brilliant Northern Lights track record and plenty of opportunities to explore the wilderness all before retiring to your Aurora Cabin, this trip gives you a fantastic insight into life in Lapland.

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European Regional Development Fund



EUROPEAN UNION

Image Credit: Makku Inkila, Inari Saariselkä Tourism Limited, Northern Lights Village Saariselkä, Adriana Estallo Giral

Agenda

Please note the order of activities is subject to change

DAY
1

ARRIVAL AND WELCOME

On arrival at Ivalo Airport, you will be transferred to the Northern Lights Village where you will check into your Aurora Cabin. Get settled into your new surroundings in Finnish Lapland ahead of dinner in the restaurant tonight.

Included Meals: Dinner

DAY
2

GUIDED HIKE THROUGH THE NATIONAL PARK AND AURORA PHOTOGRAPHY WORKSHOP

Today, following breakfast, you will see the wonderful natural surroundings in all their autumnal glory during a guided hike into the Urho Kekkonen National Park.

The landscape at this time of year is simply stunning and hiking through the park is one of the best ways to see the vibrant colours. The trails will take you through the wilderness, passing by crystal-clear rivers and through forests bathed in the shades of the season.

You will spend approximately two hours hiking and the tracks are suitable for all levels.

Back at the village, it's time to learn everything you need to know about the Northern Lights and how you can capture the elusive display on camera. During this one hour photography workshop with a local Aurora expert, you will learn all the tips and tricks of searching for the Northern Lights as well as the optimal camera settings so that you're ready to take that perfect picture, should the lights appear.

Tonight, enjoy dinner in the restaurant and keep your Aurora alert close. Hopefully, you will get to put your new camera skills to good use.

Included Meals: Breakfast, Dinner

DAY
3

HUSKY SAFARI AND AURORA CAMP BY THE LAKE

After breakfast, you will get to meet some much-loved animals of Lapland – the huskies.

Then it's time to gain a real insight into mushing during a 20-30-minute husky-pulled sleigh ride on a wheeled sled, which will be driven by your guide. A full safety briefing will be provided along with instructions before you set off, with up to 4 people in a sled, on this wonderful adventure. *

Back at the Northern Lights Village, you will have some time to relax ahead of dinner this evening. Then, as the dark skies set in, it's time to hunt for the Aurora Borealis.

You will join a local expert guide who will transfer you via minibus to the stunning wilderness region of Lake Rahajärvi. Here, your guide will build a fire - keep warm while you enjoy hot drinks and snacks, all the while searching the sky for a potential display.

* Please note that the wheeled sled ride is subject to weather conditions. If the temperature exceeds 7 degrees, it will be too warm for the huskies to run, and you will visit a husky farm instead.

Included Meals: Breakfast, Dinner

DAY
4

TRIP TO THE SÁMI SIIDA MUSEUM AND AURORA CAMP AT PAATSJOKI RIVER BRIDGE

Following breakfast, you will transfer to the Sámi heartland of Inari. The Sámi are Europe's only indigenous people and there is no better place to learn about their fascinating culture and tales of survival in the Arctic than at the Sámi Siida Museum. Here, you will have time to admire the impressive exhibitions and explore more of the village. After lunch, you will go for a short walk to see the Juutuanjoki River.

You will return to the Northern Lights Village and have dinner ahead of your Aurora hunt this evening.

You will meet with your local guide who will transfer you via bus to Paatsjoki Bridge, approximately an hour away. This wilderness area is renowned for its Northern Lights potential and offers very minimal light pollution.

Upon arrival, you will sit around an open fire enjoying hot drinks and snacks with your local guide who will tell you all about the Aurora Borealis as you wait in hopes of a sighting. You will be out for approximately four hours tonight.

Alternatively, you could choose to hunt for the Aurora via an electric fatbike. The wide tyres on these bikes make them perfect for travelling on the trails and can easily tackle any early signs of winter on the ground.

Meeting with your local guide, you will cycle away from the lights of the village and into darker skies to try and spot the Northern Lights. Along the way, you will stop for warm drinks before taking to the enchanting trails again which lead you through dark forests and if conditions are favourable, under the Auroras. You will be out for approximately 2 hours and the speed and complexity of the trail will be determined based on the group's ability. You don't need to have prior mountain biking experience, but average physical condition is needed.

Please let your Travel Expert know at the time of booking.

Included Meals: Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner

DAY
5

DEPARTURE

Today, unfortunately, marks the end of your time in Saariselkä. Following breakfast, we will transfer you to the airport for your flight home. If you have an early flight time. We will box up breakfast for you to take with you.

Included Meals: Breakfast

Personalise this tour

Our pick



Aurora Hunt by the Lake

Join an expert local guide on a hunt for the Aurora Borealis during the mild autumn months. If conditions are favourable then this trip offers a stunning opportunity to gaze as the Northern Lights dance overhead.

You will travel via minibus into the surrounding wilderness close to Lake Rahajärvi. Your local guide will build a fire, where you can enjoy some hot drinks and snacks. The sense of peace and tranquillity when sitting below the starry night sky is an experience in itself, but the feeling of anticipation that the Aurora may appear at any

moment adds an extra element of excitement to the camp.

Duration: approximately 3 hours

Minimum 2 people

Other options

ACTIVITIES



Aurora Camp at Paatsjoki Bridge

Paatsjoki Bridge is a prime location for Aurora hunting. The surrounding wilderness ensures that there is minimal light pollution and the flowing waters of the river can create captivating reflections if the Aurora appears in the dark sky. It is a stunning scene, providing ample photo opportunities.

You will travel to Paatsjoki Bridge via bus with an experienced, local Aurora guide. The bridge is located approximately an hour from the village. After arriving you will sit around an open fire with your guide, waiting in

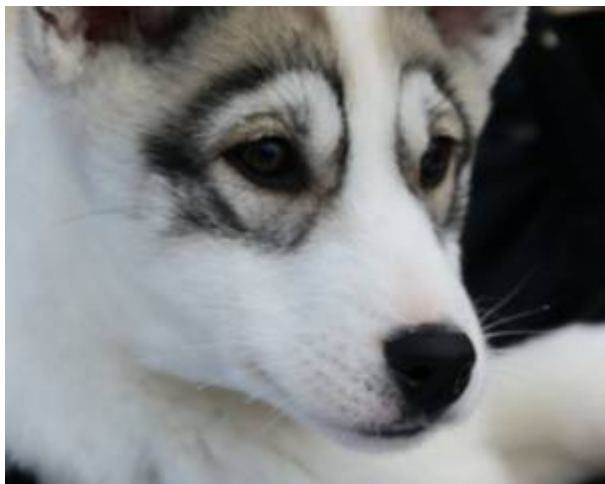
anticipation for a potential sighting.

Hot drinks and snacks will be provided.

Duration: approximately 4 hours

Minimum 2 people

Image credit: Markku Inkila



Wheeled Sleigh Ride

Huskies are synonymous with the Arctic and this activity is particularly popular here at the Aurora Zone. Very rarely will you witness such excitement amongst dogs as when you first enter the vicinity to prepare for a sleigh ride. Their eagerness is infectious and displayed with some pretty happy (and loud) howls and barks.

You will experience a taste of the musher's lifestyle with a 20 to 30-minute husky pulled sleigh ride on a wheeled sled (driven by your guide). A full safety briefing will be provided along with instructions before you set off with

up to 4 people per sled on this thrilling trip.

Please note that the sled ride is dependent upon the weather. On warmer days (generally above 7C), the huskies are unable to run and a sleigh ride is not possible. Instead, you will visit the husky farm and learning about the life of a dog musher.

Duration: approximately 1 hour

Minimum 2 people

Credit: Malcolm Turner



Gold Panning at Tankavaara

Find your fortune with a trip to Tankavaara, which is said to have the only international museum in the world displaying the past and present of gold panning and prospecting.

You will be provided with the relevant equipment and given an introduction to gold panning by an experienced guide. You will then be taken to a nearby site in order to try your hand at this unusual activity. If you are lucky enough to find any gold, you can keep it and take it home with you. Either way, you will return from this

activity richer, in both knowledge and experience. Lunch is included.

Duration: approximately 4 hours

Minimum 2 people

Image Credit: Visit Finland and Juho Kuva



Day trip to Nellim

The small village of Nellim, is at the heart of Sámi land and has three distinctive cultures, Inari Sámi, Skolt Sámi and Finn. This tour will give you an insight into these cultures, particularly that of the Skolt Sámi, which is showcased at the impressive log-built church of Nellim.

You will also explore the stunning Paatsjoki River. The river is flanked by pine trees which are dotted with shades of autumn making for an impressive and picturesque setting, particularly as they reflect off the water's edge.

Lunch at either the Nellim Wilderness Hotel or by an outdoor campfire is included.

Duration: approximately 6 hours

Minimum 2 people

Image credit: Markku Inkila



Hiking trek to Urho Kekkonen National Park

Urho Kekkonen National Park showcases the autumn terrain in its entirety. There are open wilderness areas bathed in vibrant colours, crystal clear rivers, and forests littered with autumn shades. The trails are excellent for both experienced hikers and beginners and a hike is a fantastic way in which to explore and immerse yourself in the natural surroundings.

During the hike, you will stop for some snacks and drinks. Approximately 2 hours will be spent walking and the tracks are suitable for hikers of all levels.

Duration: approximately 3 hours in total

Minimum 2 people

Credit Visit Finland and Aleksi Koskinen

Included Accommodation

Saariselkä Northern Lights Village (autumn) (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 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
- 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. If you do not have an SLR camera and tripod then they can both be rented locally. Your guide will also take pictures throughout the activities which can be purchased on your return to the village

Aurora Cabins

The Aurora Cabins have a half-glass roof and all face north. The design is based around the traditional wooden kotas (teepees) of Finland and has been specifically created for the village.

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. 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 the first snowfall of the oncoming winter.

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

Wi-Fi is only available at the onsite restaurant.

Image credits: Markku Inkila

The Specifics

Holiday group size (approximate)

Minimum 2 and maximum 24 people (approximately)

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>