

# Lapland Explorer

## 6 Days | Starts/Ends: Kittila



*SEMI-INDEPENDENT TOUR: Spend 6 days in Finland's most popular ski resort – Levi in Lapland. Cross the Arctic Circle and meet Santa Claus and his elves plus opt to go husky or reindeer sledding, snowmobiling and cross country skiing.*

### HIGHLIGHTS AND INCLUSIONS

#### Trip Highlights

- Levi – Explore this beautiful Lapland resort, a picture-perfect winter wonderland that the entire family is sure to enjoy
- Santa Claus Village – Cross the Arctic Circle and meet Santa Claus in his Finnish home
- Husky farm – Opt to visit a husky farm, where you can embark on a memorable husky sleigh ride
- Northern Lights – Search for the Northern Lights by snowmobile on an optional nighttime safari with included BBQ Finnish sausage dinner

#### What's Included

- 5 nights 4 star hotel in Levi
- 5 breakfasts
- Return private airport transfers on day 1 and day 6

- Unlimited spa access for Levi Hotel Spa guests
- Excursion and entrance into Santa Claus village in Rovaniemi

#### What's Not Included

- Items of a personal nature and additional meals
- International flights to/from our tour start/end points and visas

### DETAILED ITINERARY

#### Day 1 : Welcome to Lapland



Upon arrival at Kittila airport in Finnish Lapland you will be met and transferred to your hotel in Levi. Why not take advantage of the onsite sauna at the hotel, a classic Finnish experience.

#### Overnight – Levi

#### Day 2 : Meet Santa Claus



This morning (10am) we head over to the capital of Finnish Lapland, Rovaniemi, which happens to be the official home of Santa Claus. Our two hour transfer takes us to the Santa Claus Village and across the Arctic Circle.

Santa Claus spends most of his time here and legend has it that his real home at Ear Mountain (Korvatunturi) was revealed about a century ago. However, in order to maintain his privacy, the local elf folk got together and built him a place where he could meet people from around the world in Rovaniemi.

When at the Santa Claus village you'll be able to visit the Mail Elf and send a "real" letter from Santa for next Christmas for any friends, children or relatives. Rudolf's gift factory shop is without doubt one of the best places

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to pick up any gifts for Christmas, regardless of the time of year. Getting back to Levi in the early evening, the remainder of the day is at leisure.

**Overnight - Levi (B)**

## Day 3 : Optional snow activities



This morning after breakfast there is the option to take an hour and a half mountain or cross-country skiing lesson.

This afternoon (2pm) why not head out on a 2-hour snowmobile safari. This wonderful winter adventure explores the beautiful northern Finnish countryside. The nearby frozen river acts as a snowmobile route made by Mother Nature herself. There are loads of opportunities for picture stops and once we reach the silent forest a welcoming hot drink is served.

Returning to the resort the remainder of the day is at leisure. **Overnight - Levi (B)**

## Day 4 : Optional Husky Farm Visit



This morning is at leisure. This afternoon (2pm) you will have the chance to take an excursion to a husky farm. At the husky farm, professional dog breeders will take you through the daily routine of the huskies on the farm. You'll have

to take a brief but fun course of 'the young dog breeder' before setting off on a 3km safari with the dogs. After lots of photography opportunities and a short rest you'll return to the farm for delicious hot berry juice and cookies.

**Overnight - Levi (B)**

## Day 5 : Optional Reindeer farm visit



This morning is at leisure and later (2pm) you can take an optional visit to a reindeer farm. When you arrive at the farm you will be introduced to the daily life of the reindeer. You will then be able to sit an exam on reindeer handling where you can obtain a special driving licence for driving reindeer. Later on, jump aboard your sleighs and head out into the Lappish wilderness. If you're getting cold there is a toasty bonfire and hot juice available for you to enjoy.

**Overnight - Levi (B)**

## Day 6 : Goodbye Lapland



Today your Lapland adventure comes to an end after hotel check out and included transfer to the airport. If you would like to spend an extra night here in Levi please contact us for more details.(B)

Highlighted below are some of the accommodation/ hotels which we frequently use on this tour. We reserve the right to substitute these stays to ones of a similar standard.

**Please refer to your Tour Voucher for your confirmed arrival hotel or start point and further arrival information.**

### Levi Hotel Spa

Levi's flagship hotel is ideally located just a short stroll from the ski slopes and the centre of Finland's most popular ski resort. Guest rooms are modern, spacious and well equipped, with free WiFi. The outstanding feature of this hotel is the amazing Spa Water World, which guests have free access to. With no less than 17 indoor and outdoor swimming pools, some with water slides, in addition to a wide variety of saunas, steam rooms and hot tubs, there's plenty to keep you entertained without leaving the hotel! For families there's also a children's play area complete with bouncy castle and for adults there's a gym and day spa. When it comes to meal times there's no shortage of choice, from fine dining to fast food, this hotel has it covered and for evening entertainment just head to the karaoke and live music bar.



### BEFORE YOU GO

#### Please note

This tour is run in conjunction with Easy Travel Finland.

This itinerary should be used as a guide only and may vary from day to day depending on road & weather conditions

### ACCOMMODATION

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## Optional Activities and Weather

Please note that all snow-based optional activities and add-ons are weather dependent and may be cancelled if weather conditions aren't ideal.

## Visas

Please be advised that visa requirements are subject to change and that visa procurement is the responsibility of the traveller and not On The Go Tours, therefore it is essential that you check current visa requirements with the embassy before travel. Please also ensure that your passport is valid for at least 3 months from your planned date of departure from Finland, has at least two blank pages and has been issued within the last 10 years.

UK, Australia, New Zealand, Canada and USA passport holders do not require a visa for a stay of less than 90 days.

Finland is part of the borderless region known as the Schengen Area and South African residents require a Schengen visa in order to enter Finland. This schengen visa must be submitted at least 15 days before their intended departure for the Schengen member states. Visa forms can be down loaded at <http://formin.finland.fi/Public/default.aspx?>

## Currency

The official currency of Finland is the Euro. However please note the 1 and 2 cent coins are not used in Finland and everything will be rounded up to the nearest 5 cents. All major credit and debit cards are accepted in Finland. ATMs are found in every city, major town or resort and even some small villages.

## Time & Voltage

Finland works on GMT + 2 hours. It observes daylight saving with clocks going forward at the end of March and back again at the end of October.

Standard voltage is 230 volts, 50 Hz. Primary sockets generally require Continental or European plugs, of the two round pin variety. We recommend that you pack a universal travel adaptor. You will need a voltage converter, and plug adaptor in order to use U.S. appliances.

## Health Requirements

You should seek medical advice before travelling to Finland from your local health practitioner and ensure that you receive all of the appropriate vaccinations. As a guide Tetanus is recommended. The medical facilities in Finland are good and available for free to European Union citizens with a valid EHIC form or its replacement ID card.

The water quality in Finland is excellent and tap water is always drinkable

## Food & Drink

Unsurprising for a nation surrounded by water, fish plays a very prevalent role in Finnish cuisine with salmon and herring often playing a starring role. Meat is also widely eaten with delicacies including reindeer, elk and bear. More commonly found is the HK Sininen Lenkki sausage. Many main meals are served with potatoes, berry sauce and gherkins/pickles and rye bread is often the bread of choice.

Alcohol is fairly expensive in Finland (compared to continental Europe) however it is very easy to find. Local beers like Lapin Kulta, Karjala and Olvi are easily found in local supermarket – they are branded by their alcohol content though. I is the weakest and cheapest whereas IV is the strongest and no doubt the most expensive. Anything harder than beer needs to be bought at Alko – a government run chain of supermarkets. They hold the monopoly on where you can buy anything pretty much over 4.7% in Finland.

## Daylight in Finland

Due to its location in northern Europe with the Arctic Circle crossing the north of the country, parts of Finland experience both extremes when it comes to daylight. The northern part of the country (Lapland) that sits above the Arctic Circle has at least one day a year when the sun never sets (usually mid to the end of June) and one day when the sun doesn't even appear (usually mid to the end of December).

Helsinki in the south has the least extreme of the daylight hours but still sees a lot more than most European capitals in the summer and a lot less in the winter. The earliest you are likely to see the sun rise in Helsinki is about 4am in the middle of June, on top of this you can enjoy up to 19 hours of daylight with the sun not setting until just before 11pm. The winter is obviously a very different story with the latest the sun rises being about 9:30am in late December, early January. The sun generally sticks around for just shy of 6 hours before setting around 3:15pm. After January the daylight increases slowly until June and then begins to decrease again until it's December again.

In Rovaniemi (the capital of Lapland) the story is a bit more intense. In June and most of July you'll be unlikely to see much darkness. From mid July the sun rises at about 2am and doesn't set until about 00:45am. Towards the end of December the sun doesn't tend to rise until 11:45am and barely sticks around for an hour, setting at 12:32 in the afternoon. As with Helsinki the daylight increases moderately from January to June and then decreases again in the second half of the year.

## What to Pack

For an extensive list on what to bring when travelling to Finland during winter see our Lapland Packing List on our Travel Guide on our website.

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- Walking boots or snow boots (avoid wellies/gum boots), woollen socks (Merino if possible - avoid cotton)
- Long johns (wool or polyester - avoid cotton), jogging/sweat pants and ski trousers or waterproof trousers.
- Base layer (wool or polyester - avoid cotton), fleece shirts, woollen jumper.
- A down parka is ideal but pricey, otherwise a down shell jacket or a similar insulated jacket.
- Hat, gloves and mittens, scarf and balaclava (optional)
- Padded bag for camera
- Spare batteries and SD cards
- Swimming costume/trunks/swimming shorts if you plan to visit a sauna when you are in Finland

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