

Lapland & the Arctic Circle

5 Days | Starts/Ends: Rovaniemi



SEMI-INDEPENDENT TOUR: Head to Finnish Lapland for 5 days with a difference. Cross the Arctic Circle, meet Santa Claus in Rovaniemi and become a reindeer driver all in five magical days.

HIGHLIGHTS AND INCLUSIONS

Trip Highlights

- Rovaniemi - See the sights of Rovaniemi on a city tour and visit the famous Arktikum Museum
- Santa Claus Village - Cross the Arctic Circle and meet Santa Claus in his home in Rovaniemi
- Reindeer farm - Opt to visit a reindeer farm and enjoy a sleigh ride, stopping for a warming bonfire enroute
- Husky sleigh ride - Choose to embark on a husky sleigh ride through the Lappish countryside

What's Included

- 4 nights 4 star hotel
- 4 breakfasts
- Return airport/railway transfers on days 1 and 5
- City tour of Rovaniemi
- Excursion to Santa Claus Village

- Entrance into Arktikum Science Museum 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 : Rovaniemi



Welcome to Lapland! Upon arrival at Rovaniemi airport you will be met and transferred to your hotel. The remainder of the day is at leisure. **Overnight - Rovaniemi**

Day 2 : Santa Claus & Rovaniemi city tour



This morning after breakfast we depart for a visit to see the Rovaniemi's most famous resident - Santa Claus. Crossing the Arctic Circle we'll arrive at the village to meet the man himself. Spending most of his time here, Santa Claus has made his mission in life to enhance the well-being of children and the kindness of grown-ups as well as spreading the message of love and goodwill.

This afternoon we continue back to Rovaniemi for a city tour and included visit to the Arktikum museum. Arktikum provides information on Arctic issues and tells stories about Lapland. An Arktikum exhibition is an enormous information package of what's going on today in the evolving Arctic region. It will also educate you about Lappish history, culture and nature from Rovaniemi to the further reaches of Upper Lapland. Arktikum is

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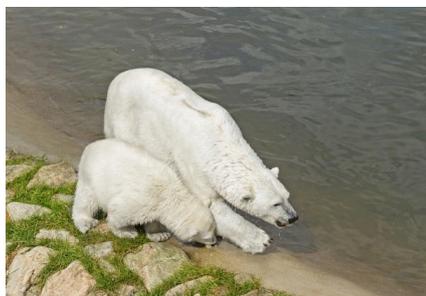
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your source of knowledge when travelling to the North. **Overnight - Rovaniemi (B)**

Day 3 : Optional Reindeer Farm Visit



Today there is the option to visit a Reindeer Farm. You'll learn all about the daily life of the reindeer before taking your reindeer driving licence and heading out on the sleighs, stopping en route by a toasty bonfire near a hut for a cup of hot juice. At this traditional Lappish hut you will be baptised according to the traditional rules of the north.

In the afternoon you have the option to embark on a snowmobile safari around Rovaniemi where you can drive along the forest trails surrounding Santa Claus village soaking in the Lappish nature and stunning scenery around you.

Overnight - Rovaniemi (B)

Day 4 : Optional Husky Farm visit



This morning there is the option to visit a husky farm to learn about the daily life and hard work of these magnificent animals. After meeting the dog-breeders and becoming acquainted with the dogs, you'll get the chance to take a "dog -breeder" course before embarking on a safari on dog sledge around the grounds stopping for a rest and hot berry juice along the way.

Tonight you have the option to go searching for the Northern Lights in a snowmobile safari. Leave the city lights behind and find the perfect spot to set up a camp fire grill some traditional makkara sausages and wait for the lights to appear.

Overnight - Rovaniemi (B)

Day 5 : Goodbye Lapland



Tuesday. Today marks the end of your Lapland adventure with included transfer to the airport or railway station for your onward journey. (B)

HOTELS

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

Please refer to your Tour Voucher for your confirmed arrival hotel and further arrival information.

Santa's Hotel Santa Claus

Set in the heart of Rovaniemi - the official hometown of Santa Claus, this 4 star hotel is conveniently located for Arctic adventures, entertainment and visits to Santa Claus Village, which is just a 10 minute drive away. Guest rooms are spacious and equipped with modern amenities to ensure a comfortable stay. All rooms offer en suite bathrooms, air-conditioning, TV, a minibar, ironing facilities, a kettle and hair dryer. Most rooms are equipped with a twin beds and a sofa which can be made into an extra bed. Guests can enjoy tasty Finnish cuisine and Lapland specialities at Restaurant Gaissa and Bar & Grill ZoomUp, while light snacks and drinks are available at Café & Bar Zoomit which is open until late. The hotel also has a

small casino and a sauna to relax in after an exciting day of winter pursuits.



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

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.

KNOW BEFORE YOU GO

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?>

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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.

- 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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