Inside the Arctic Circle - Skiing the Kings Trail

Trip Code: SKS

Version:

WINTER	GUIDED GROUP	CHALLENGING 7



HIGHLIGHTS

- Go in search of the spectacular Northern Lights in Abisko
- Cross Tjaktja Pass (1140m), the highest point of the entire King's Trail
- Fully guided with snowmobile support and all meals and transfers included

- Finish beneath Kebnekaise, Sweden's highest peak, at its mountain station
- Sleep in cosy mountain huts and relax in traditional wood-fired saunas along the way

AT A GLANCE

- 7 days ski touring
- Max altitude - 1140m
- Join at Kiruna

ACCOMMODATIONS & MEALS

VIEW DATES, PRICES & BOOK YOUR HOLIDAY HERE

Introduction

This Arctic winter wonderland adventure ski holiday will see you ski touring Nordic style along the famous King's Trail/Kungsleden of Sweden. With the winter sun resting on the horizon, the Arctic landscapes of northern Sweden, featuring majestic peaks and frozen waterfalls, are bathed in an ethereal light. Our fabulous ski touring holiday through this winter wonderland begins with 2 nights in Abisko - perhaps the best place in the world to experience the stunning Northern Lights. Then, after a day to hone your Nordic Skiing technique, we ski off into the wilderness, skiing across dramatic valleys and glorious viewpoint passes, as we follow the route of the King's Trail/Kungsleden. Snowmobiles will carry the group's equipment, so you'll only need to ski with a light back pack each day. We overnight in remote mountain huts, some of which have washrooms and wood fired saunas; the perfect place to relax after a full day cross country skiing in the cold, crisp air. Finally, from the Kebnekaise Mountain Station, beneath the highest peak in Sweden, we use snowmobiles to return to the roadhead. A memorable end to a fantastic ski touring holiday. Skiing the Kungsleden Trail demands a good level of fitness and, though cross-country ski experience is not essential, you need to have mastered the basics of down hill skiing.

Is this holiday for you?

During the course of this ski touring holiday, you will cover more than 90km on your skis, averaging 15km per day. The terrain is undulating rather than mountainous and the maximum amount of ascent on any of the days is 400m. Since we have snowmobile support to carry our small bags of spare clothing, we can limit the amount that we carry in our day packs to the daily essentials plus a certain amount of group safety gear. It should be possible to keep our packs down to no more than 7 - 9kg. Regular cross-country skiers will find this tour to be reasonably straightforward, those with little cross-country skiing experience will find it more challenging. Coming to terms with the techniques and rhythm of moving on skis on level ground can be demanding and it will be a couple of days before you will start to see an improvement in your technique. Though we have included a familiarisation day at the beginning to give those with less experiences the chance to practise their ski touring techniques, we would only recommend this holiday to those who have previous cross country skiing experience or who are competent downhill skiiers looking for a new challenge.

Because of the shortness of the day and cold temperatures during February, it is essential that all group members on early departures are competent cross-country skiers. We would recommend that those with less experience travel on later departures where days are longer and conditions warmer.

Note that you will be expected to take part in 'hut chores' including cooking, cleaning and fetching water; for many this is one of the best parts of experience!

Itinerary

Version:

Holiday Information

What's Included

- A professional and qualified tour leader
- All land transport involved in the itinerary
- Accommodation as described
- All meals as described in the Meal Plan
- Single timed group Kiruna Airport transfers

What's not Included

- Travel insurance
- Tips for local staff
- Ski equipment and boots and/or associated hire costs
- Miscellaneous expenses souvenirs etc.

Joining Arrangements & Transfers

The group will meet at the Abisko Mountain Station. On Day 1 of the itinerary there will be a single timed transfer from Kiruna airport to Abisko Mountain Station. This transfer will be timed to meet the SAS flight from Stockholm arriving in the early afternoon. The journey takes 1.5 hours.

On the last day of the Land Only itinerary there will be another single timed transfer from Nikkaluokta to Kiruna Airport timed to meet the check in of the SAS flight to Stockholm departing in the late morning.

Anyone may join the group transfers by prior arrangement. Travelling as a group or on public transport saves energy. If your flight schedule does not allow you to take advantage of the arrival transfer you should make your own way to the Abisko Mountain Station.

Accommodation contact details and an emergency number will be provided with your booking confirmation.

Meal Plan

All meals are included in the holiday price.

Special Diets

Whilst we can cater for vegetarians, albeit sometimes with a more limited choice, we cannot always provide for special diets. Due to the nature of some of the trips that we operate and the countries in which we operate them, it can be very hard (and sometimes impossible) to cater for a wide range of dietary choices and you may have to supplement your meals with food/snacks from home. If you have specific dietary requirements please do speak to our sales team and they will be able to advise you whether or not we will be able to offer your specific choice. Please note that we are unable to provide separate menus and cannot accept liability for any problems arising from special dietary requirements or intolerances.

Food & Water

Whilst staying at the Mountain Stations at Abisko and Kebnekaise, all meals will be taken in the restaurants. Meals whilst on tour will be prepared via communal cooking, to be co-ordinated by the Guide. Everyone will be expected to assist with preparing meals. Breakfast will consist of bread, porridge or muesli with dehydrated milk, coffee, tea, hot chocolate and some jam. Lunch will be bread, sandwiches and soup, made up from hot water from a thermos. Dinner will be co-ordinated by the guide and will consist of food brought in from Abisko, vacume packed and frozen.

Tap water is drinkable in Abisko. Whilst staying in the huts, crystal clear water will be collect from the lakes/wells to provide plentiful drinking water.

Accommodation

We will spend 3 nights in "Mountain Stations", at Kebnekaise and Abisko, which are more like lodges and have great facilities. Here the group will sleep in 6 berth rooms, with shared toilet and shower facilities and communal seating areas. All bedding is provided. Each station has a separate male and female saunas, a good restaurant and a bar.

During our time on the trail we will stay each night in a different hut. These are maintained by the Swedish Tourist Association (STF) and each has its own host in residence. The huts offer simple but comfortable accommodation and each has its own unique personality! There will be no electricity, running water or mobile phone coverage, this is all part of the special and unique experience of staying in the remote Swedish wilderness. For many staying in these cosy mountain huts is one of the highlights of the tour.

The biggest hut has spaces for around 90 people, split over several smaller individual cabins, others are much smaller. Our group will usually have exclusive use of one of the lodges, though at busy time we may be required to share. Inside each of the huts you will find a combined kitchen and cosy day room, bedroom and drying room.

At the huts we will sleep in mixed dorms of 4 -10 people. Pillows and blankets are provided and all rooms have a wood-burning stove or gas heater. You will need to bring your own pillow case and a sleeping bag liner.

Each hut has a shared outside toilet block. These are well maintained and have plenty of toilet paper and antibacterial hand wash available.

Most of the mountain huts also have their own wood-fired sauna. The saunas will have split session times in the evening: female only, male only and mixed. Towels are not provided at the huts so we recommend taking a travel towel that is large enough to wrap around you. Each of the saunas will have and a small basic wash room attached to it, where bowls and hot water (from the sauna) are provided for you to wash. It is possible to wash your hair here if there is enough water.

One of the most fun aspects of this ski tour is getting involved in the hut chores. Chores include fetching water from the wells (which are normally on the edges of frozen lakes), being responsible for the fires, cooking dinner, preparing breakfast and packed lunch items and clearing up. This will be coordinated by the guide and teams will rotate chores throughout the week. It is expected that you leave the hut in the condition you found it with fresh water and wood for the next travellers.

After an exciting day skiing, recuperating in the sauna and dinner, there will generally be time for relaxing where you can read your book by candlelight, chat to your fellow travellers or play card games. You will also of course be on the lookout for the Northern Lights, which can regularly be seen when the sky is clear.

Single rooms are not available.

Group Leader & Support Staff

The group will be led by a professional and qualified tour leader.

Altitude

This holiday does not involve any significant ascent to altitude and we would not expect any altitude issues with this trip.

Spending Money

We recommend allowing approximately £150 (or equivalent in US dollars, Euros, etc.) for miscellaneous expenses, drinks (please note that alcoholic drinks in Sweden are expensive), and souvenir purchases. This amount will also enable you to give reasonable tips to local staff. Please note that when you collect your main travel baggage, which will have been transported separately to meet you in Nikkaluokta, you will be asked to pay a small storage fee of approximately £4 (40 SEK) per bag.

We recommend paying for local items by credit or debit card wherever possible. Sweden is a largely cashless society, and debit cards are widely accepted – even in the small shops within the huts along the trail. If you do choose to bring cash, carry it in the form of Swedish Krona (SEK), as there are no opportunities to exchange currency once you leave Stockholm. There is no ATM at Kiruna Airport, but you can withdraw cash at ATMs at Stockholm Arlanda Airport when changing flights. For this reason, you may prefer to obtain Swedish Krona before you travel.

Guidance on Tipping

Tipping is the accepted way of saying 'thank you' to your leader and local team. Tipping is entirely voluntary and should be dependent on good service. We recommend that you decide levels of tipping and give any tips as a group rather than from individual group members.

Baggage Allowance

For this holiday you will require three different bags: your main luggage, a small additional bag and a rucksack of around 40 - 60 litres.

Bag 1. Main Luggage
This is the bag in which you will transport all of your luggage to Abisko. A soft duffle bag or a wheeledsuitcase is suitable. Please check your baggage allowance with your international airline. On the evening on Day 2 you will be asked to pack all the items you require on tour into your rucksack and your smaller bag ready for the following morning. On the morning of Day 3, when we set off on tour, the group's main luggage, including all items not required on tour, will be transported directly to Nikkaluokta where it will be stored for the coming days. You will be reunited with your main luggage on arrival in Nikkaluokta.

Bag 2. Small Bag
A 20L dry bag or small lightweight rucksack is suitable. In this bag you will pack a few personal items / clothes that you require for the evenings in the huts. This might include your pyjamas, hut slippers, t-shirts, toothbrush and book. There is a strict weight limit of 7kg for this bag, as it travels on the snowmobiles each day.

Bag 3. 40 - 60 litre rucksack, with hip belt
This is the bag you will carry with you each day during the ski tour. In this bag you will carry your sleeping bag, thermos flask, roll mat, med kit, warm clothing, lunch, water and a share of the group's saftety equipment. The packed weight of the bag will be around 7-9kg. We recommend a rucksack of around 40- 60 litres, though a 60l rucksack will be easier to pack and will allow you to store all of your equipment inside the bag on cold days.

We also recommend a rucksack, with an outer attachment for storing your roll mat, and a hip belt.

NOTE If you are planning to travel with your own skis, please be aware that different airlines have differing policies with regard to baggage allowances and transporting ski equipment. The baggage section on your chosen airline's website will usually contain this information.

Group Size & Holiday Status

For each holiday there is a minimum number of participants required to enable it to go ahead. Once the minimum number is reached, the trip status will change from 'Available' to 'Guaranteed to run'. You can check the trip status for each departure in the 'Dates and Prices' table. Other than in exceptional circumstances, we will not cancel a trip once it has achieved this guaranteed to run status so you are free to proceed with your international flight booking and other travel arrangements.

General Information

Passport & Visas

Europe

Your passport must meet 2 requirements. It must be:

- less than 10 years old on the day you enter (check the 'date of issue')
- valid for at least 3 months after the day you plan to leave (check the 'expiry date')

For the latest details on visiting countries within the EU or the European Economic Area (EEA), please check the UK Government website

The information that we provide is for UK passport holders.

A passport with 6 months remaining validity at the end of your stay is generally required**,** and you should have at least 2 blank pages for each country that you visit.

For other nationalities, please refer to your own Government website for the latest information.

It is your responsibility to ensure that you have the correct travel documents including vaccinations and health certificates *(see Health & Vaccinations below),* **and visas for your holiday.** Please ensure that you check the FCDO for the latest advice for **each country visited** before travel.

Health & Vaccinations

Vaccinations:

You should be up to date with the routine vaccinations recommended in the UK for overseas travel.

You must also contact your doctor or travel clinic to check if there are specific vaccinations or other preventive measures that you need for the area you are visiting, in good time before you are due to depart.

Please ensure you are looking at the recommendations for all countries visited on your holiday plus recommendations for any borders you cross.

On holidays to more remote areas you should also have a dental check-up.

It is your responsibility to ensure that you have the correct travel documents including vaccinations and health certificates.

Please check the FCDO and Travel Health Pro. For all of your intended destinations for up-to-date advice.

Severe Allergies:

If you have a severe allergy please inform the KE office before you travel. We will do all we can to help, but we cannot guarantee an allergy free environment on KE trips.

Currency

The unit of currency in Sweden is the Swedish Krona.

Preparing for your Holiday

Getting some additional exercise before coming on an active holiday makes a lot of sense. The fitter you are, after all, the more enjoyable you will find the experience.

You should be aerobically fit and comfortable with walking for 6 hours for consecutive days. Hill walking, with a good amount of ascent and descent, is the best training. Running, cycling and swimming are also good for developing cardiovascular fitness and stamina.

Climate

The ski-touring season in northern Sweden extends from February to May. By the beginning of March there is lots of daylight (sun rises at 0700 and sets at 1700 approx.) and the temperatures start to rise. The ambient daytime temperatures are still low - several degrees below freezing - though, because the air is so dry here, it does not seem so cold. Night time temperatures in February and early March can be as low as -30°C though -10 to -15 °C is the norm from mid March through April. Thanks to the influence of the Gulf Stream it is actually warmer here than its Arctic Circle location would suggest. During the day the sun warms the snow, causing a little softening and then at night it re-freezes to form a crust which is perfect for skiing. Long, sunny days are quite usual at this season, although it is also possible that we might encounter short-lived snow storms.

Travel Aware

As a reputable tour operator, KE supports the British Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office's **'Travel Aware'** campaign to enable British citizens to prepare for their journeys overseas. The 'Travel Aware' website provides a single, authoritative source of advice for all kinds of travellers and we recommend that before travel, all KE clients visit the official UK Government website at travelaware.campaign.gov.uk and read the FCDO Travel Advice for their chosen destination. All other nationalities should check their government websites for relevant information.

KE treat the safety and security of all clients as the most important aspect of any trip we organise. We would not run any trip that we did not consider reasonably safe. Should the FCDO advise against travel for any reason, we will contact everyone booked to travel to discuss the situation. We receive regular updates directly from the FCDO and are in constant touch with our contacts on the ground. If you have any questions about government travel advice, please call our office.

Single Use Plastic

KE do not encourage the use of single use plastic items. We are ensuring that our agents all over the world are working together to reduce the problem and educate those around them. We are leading by example in our KE office by reducing our plastic use.

Books

- The Rough Guide to Sweden. Proctor and Roland.
- Sweden - Lonely Planet Guide. Bain and Cornwallis.

Maps

Tourist & Hiking Map. 1:100 000. Sheet BD6 (Abisko - Kebnekaise) Piblisher: Lantmateriverket.

A detailed topographic map in colour, at a smaller scale than most UK hikers' maps but with a useful 25m. contour interval. The map is in Swedish with an English legend.

Private Groups Information

Make this KE Adventure holiday your own!

- Do our normal group departure dates not fit?
- Would you prefer to travel with just friends and/or family?
- Are you looking to organise a trip for your local walking, biking or mountaineering club?

It's really easy to make a trip your own. Simply select from our full range of adventure holidays and choose the dates that work for you and your group.

We are experts in creating holidays for groups of friends, families, charities and clubs. Our personal service means you'll be fully involved as we make the arrangements for your perfect adventure holiday.

Independence with Security

Travelling as a KE Private Group allows you more flexibility and choice, but still with the peace of mind that everything is pre-planned and arranged for your group by a reputable adventure travel company.

To take your first step to an amazing adventure with your friends and family complete the private group enquiry form, or call our **Sales Experts on: 017687 73966**

Travel Insurance

It is an essential condition of joining a holiday with KE Adventure Travel that you have a valid travel insurance policy to cover the cost of medical treatment and to protect the value of your holiday in the event of cancellation. When taking out insurance please ensure the policy you choose covers you for the activities and altitude included in your itinerary.

For appropriate insurance cover we recommend Campbell Irvine Direct. Please go to our Travel Insurance page for further information and to get a quote.

Equipment Information

Equipment List

Please try to keep the weight of your baggage to a minimum. See the 'baggage allowance' section for further details.

You SHOULD bring the following items:

- Ski touring boots - see Ski Equipment for more information
- Lightweight shoes or hard soled slippers (for use whilst staying in the huts/ideal for evening visits to the outdoor facilities! Crocs are ideal for this purpose)
- Woollen liner socks (2 pairs) - these great for preventing blisters.
- Woollen Knee length ski socks (2 pairs)
- Socks and underwear (wool recommended)
- Travel clothes (for use before and after tour)
- Winter mountaineering trousers or salopettes (for use in evenings or for skiing in on cold days)
- Fleece lined thermal leggings (In good weather conditions you will ski-tour in these each day underneath your overtrousers. Running, cycling, or cross-country ski leggings are ideal)
- Waterproof/windproof overtrousers
- Thermal baselayer shirts (2 short sleeve, 2 long sleeve)
- T-shirt or casual shirt
- Fleece jacket
- Down jacket (essential for putting over your ski clothes during breaks)
- Waterproof/windproof jacket with hood or ski jacket
- Warm hat
- Lightweight balaclava or facemask
- Ski goggles

- Sunglasses (Category 4)
- Lightweight thermal gloves
- Warm and waterproof ski gloves and mittens
- Spare pair of warm gloves or mittens
- Backpack (40 - 60 litres) with hip belt and outside attachment for roll mat (see notes)
- A large travel bag and a separate small bag (see baggage allowance for more information)
- Full-Length foam roll mat (for sitting on at lunch stops/emergency use - see notes)
- 1 litre Thermos flask (with insulating carrier if possible)
- Camping mug
- Spoon

Water bottle 1 Litre (plastic not metal) (we encourage re-filling water bottles rather than single use plastic)

Sleeping bag (comfort rated to 0°C) for emergency use (see notes)

- Headtorch and spare batteries
- Basic First Aid Kit including: antiseptic cream, throat lozenges, diarrhoea treatment (Imodium), painkillers, plasters and blister treatment, and re-hydration salts (Dioralite)
- Sun protection (including total bloc for lips, nose etc.)
- Buff x 2
- Emergency whistle
- Sleeping bag liner or sheet sleeping bag (for whilst in the huts) (mandatory)

- Pillow case (mandatory)
- Washbag and toiletries (it is possible to wash hair at huts where there are saunas)
- Small Towel (big enough to wrap around you in the sauna)
- Antibacterial hand wash
- Small lunch box

Ski Equipment

- Ski-touring skis* - see below
- Ski-touring boots *
- Ski poles*
- Gaiters
- Skins*
- Windshelter (provided) One for every 2 persons
- Snow shovel (provided) One for every 2 persons

The following items are optional:

- Binoculars
- Camera
- Ear plugs (especially if you are not the one snoring!)
- Pen-knife (remember to put all sharp objects in hold baggage)

- Book / playing cards / headphones and music (for evening entertainment)

- Reusable cloth bag for shopping (to avoid plastic bags)

Ski Equipment:

The ideal skis to use for this trip are 'no-wax' cross-country skis with scales, together with appropriate ski boots. Skis should have steel edges. If we encounter icy snow, crust or deep powder - the scales will not always provide sufficient traction and skins will be required. For inexperienced cross-country skiers, skins can also be used on long descents, slowing the rate of descent and providing a degree of control.

* **Ski Hire Available:** Ski Touring Equipment, which includes skis (Make: Asnes Amundsen BC - Norwegian), boots (Crispi - Italian - leather, all sizes available), poles and climbing skins can be hired through KE, at a cost of approx. GBP 295 (2024 price). Please note that equipment should be reserved and paid for through the KE office with at least 5-weeks advance notice, along with your boot size (please specify European size) and your height and weight.

Notes:

- For safety reasons, It is mandatory that all participants on the Kungsleden must carry a sleeping bag. We recommend taking a warm, lightweight, small bag, which will sit easily inside your rucksack.

- We also ask you to bring a foam mat rather than a self-inflating thermarest because thermarests are not so easy to handle in very cold weather.

- At Abisko the group will be paired up and each couple will be asked to carry a snow shovel and emergency wind shelter, which will be provided.

Land Only Information

Please refer to the 'Joining Arrangements & Transfers' within Holiday Information for further details.

Flights and other transport to your destination should not be booked until you have received your booking confirmation and the departure is showing 'Guaranteed to Run' or 'Limited'.

Land Only Information

The LAND ONLY dates and prices are for joining at the Abisko Turiststation and ending in Kiruna. Single timed transfers are included from/to Kiruna Airport are provided.

Flight Inclusive Information

Limited seats are available at the advertised flight price, please book as early as you can. If we are unable to secure seats at the price shown, or you have requested regional departures and/or upgrades, we will provide you with an alternative quote. It is likely that flight payment will be in advance of your final holiday balance. Booking a flight inclusive package means you will benefit from full financial protection, eases your holiday planning, and leaves us to deal with airlines and schedule changes. If you book flights through KE Adventure Travel we will offset the carbon of your flight.

Regional departures and/or alternative carriers are available on request.

Flight Inclusive Information

The FLIGHT INCLUSIVE dates and prices are based on UK flights from London to Kiruna with SAS via Stockholm. Outbound flights will depart the UK in the morning arriving later the same day. Return flights will depart Kiruna airport in the early afternnon of the last day of the itinerary, arriving in the UK later the same evening.

Why Choose KE

Why KE

This classic ski tour offers great value for money; with all meals, timed airport transfers, and snowmobile support all included in the price of the holiday.

Please Note This document was downloaded on 11/11/2026 and the trip is subject to change