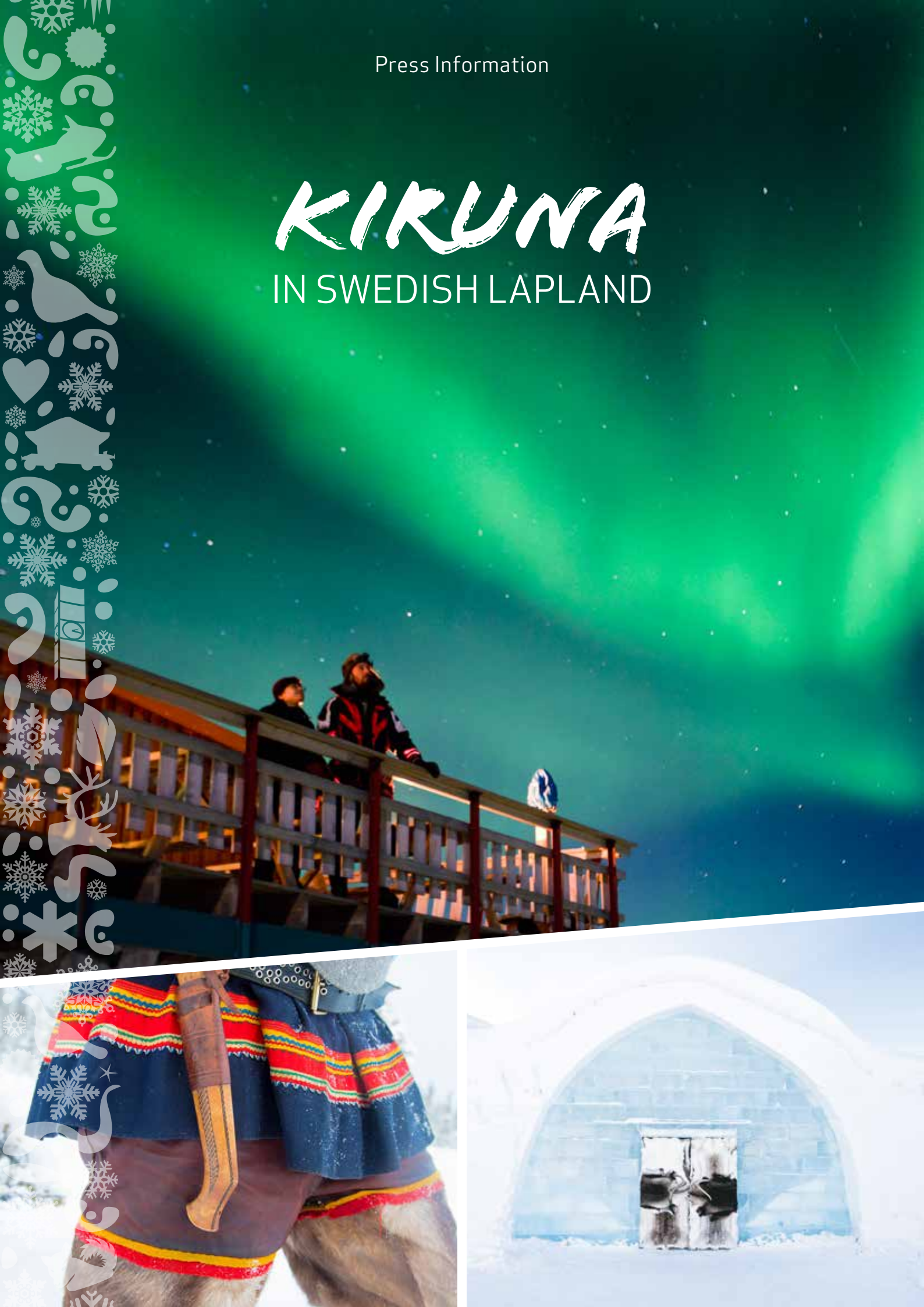


Press Information

KIRUNA

IN SWEDISH LAPLAND



Kiruna in SWEDISH LAPLAND

KIRUNA IS A special place in many ways. Sweden's northernmost town is home to Icehotel in Jukkasjärvi, to Sweden's highest mountain, Kebnekaise, and to the world's largest underground iron ore mine – a mine that is now forcing the town to move.

Situated 145 kilometres north of the Arctic Circle, Kiruna enjoys around two months of midnight sun in summer and ideal conditions for viewing the magical northern lights from September through March. Aurora Sky Station in Abisko in Kiruna municipality has been named by Lonely Planet as the best place in the world to experience light phenomena.

While Kiruna is a relatively small town with a population of around 23,000, the municipality encompasses an area of 19,447 square kilometres, which makes it the second largest municipality in the world. Kiruna's border to the west is Sweden's national border with Norway, and its eastern border is the country's national border with Finland. In the north, all three countries meet at Terikrsörset – the Three-Country Cairn, which is the world's northernmost tripoint and a landmark on the

international Nordkalottleden Trail.

KIRUNA OFFERS EASY access to vast areas of great natural beauty that invite to outdoor activities during both summer and winter. The snow-capped Scandinavian Mountains, the Scandes, are visible from the town centre and surrounding Kiruna you find boreal and birch forests, alpine tundra, wetlands, 7 unregulated rivers and more than 6,000 lakes. Abisko National Park and Vadvetjåkka National Park are both situated in Kiruna, as is the famous u-shaped valley near Abisko known as Lappporten – the Lapponian Gate. For hikers who pursue the entire 400 km long King's Trail, Kiruna is either the start or end of the journey.

When you visit Kiruna, you also visit Sápmi – the land of the indigenous Sámi people. Kiruna shares a long history with the indigenous Sámi people and Sámi culture and language is highly visible in our society. Together with Swedish and Tornedalian culture, Sámi culture contributes to making Kiruna a unique and interesting destination in the Arctic.

Internationally, the name Lapland is often used to describe all of northern Scandinavia, but it is also the official name of Sweden's northernmost province, where Kiruna is situated. The organisation Kiruna Lapland Economic Association was created to promote the destination Kiruna in Swedish Lapland around the world and develop Kiruna's tourism industry. The association has about 110 members and runs the authorised Tourist Centre in Kiruna.

KIRUNA IN SWEDISH LAPLAND is a large destination with many big attractions. At the same time, it is a destination that offers genuine, authentic and small-scale tourism with focus on people and encounters. We invite guests from all over the world to share our Arctic way of life – close to nature and far from the ordinary.



Facts about Kiruna:

- 145 km north of the Arctic Circle.
- The world's second largest municipality.
- Home to the highest mountain in Sweden.
- A population of around 23,000.
- Home of the indigenous Sámi people.
- Sweden's northernmost skiing destination.
- The start or end of the King's Trail.
- Northern lights from September to March.
- Midnight Sun from end of May to mid-July.
- Has the world's largest underground mine for iron ore.
- Home to Icehotel and Aurora Sky Station.





KIRUNA

— A part of the Arctic

THE WORD ARCTIC comes from the Greek word for bear, and the name is said to mean 'the land that lies under the constellation of the Great Bear (part of which is the Big Dipper)'. A common misconception is that the Arctic is a continent, just like the other pole, Antarctica. This is not the case.

THE ARCTIC HAS no natural border towards the south and many definitions of the Arctic have been used in the past. Some have used the Arctic Circle as a dividing line, others use the tree line limit. During the last 20-30 years the meaning of the Arctic has been amplified and given a certain political connotation as well.

Nowadays, the Arctic is normally defined as the northern parts of

Canada, Norway, Sweden, Finland and Russia, together with Iceland, Greenland and Alaska. The Arctic Ocean, partly covered in pack ice and drift ice, is also part of the Arctic. Around 4–5 million people live in the Arctic area, and around ten per cent belong to one of the indigenous peoples of the Arctic, for example the Inuit, Nenets and Sámi – cultures that are thousands years old, but still alive and evolving.

WHEN YOU TRAVEL to Kiruna in Swedish Lapland, you are effectively travelling to a part of the Arctic and are able to participate in our Arctic lifestyle. The vast distances and harsh climate have created a very special way of life, centred around nature and the seasons.

Kiruna is also

A PART OF SÁPMI

SÁPMI IS THE Sámi name for the region where the Sámi people have their land. Sápmi spans across four countries – Norway, Sweden, Finland and the Kola Peninsula in Russia. In Sweden, Sápmi covers the northern half of the country. It is a nation without national borders, but within the area there is a common language, history and culture. The reindeer is intertwined with people and nature, and the roots of Sámi culture go back very far in time. The word Sápmi is taken from the Sámi language, with the same origin as the word Sámi itself.

IT'S ALMOST IMPOSSIBLE to answer the question 'What is Sápmi?' in just a few sentences; Sápmi is the land and the people, the nature and the reindeer, the animals and the light. The midnight sun and the

northern lights. The heat from the fire on a sparkling winter's day and the coolness of a mountain stream after a long day's hike. Sápmi is the food and the produce. But also human rights and Sámi names. Duodji handicrafts, fishing and Sámi tourism. The flag and the Sámi colours. The wanderlust and the respect for everything we see around us. Young and old. And everything in between.

IF YOU WOULD like to learn more about Sápmi we recommend that you visit some of the many Sámi entrepreneurs in Kiruna. Storytelling is an important part of traditional Sámi culture and members of the Sámi community are often keen to share their knowledge about the land and about a truly unique cultural region.



AURORA BOREALIS

— The Northern Lights

IN 2015, the year proclaimed as the International Year of Light by the United Nations, Lonely Planet listed the top ten places in the world for experiencing natural light phenomena. Aurora Sky Station in Abisko in Kiruna grabbed the top spot – thanks to the area's often clear weather and dark winter skies, which together make the Aurora Sky Station in Abisko the best place in the world to experience the northern lights.

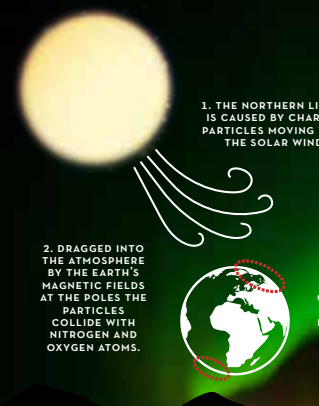
When the Italian astronomer, Galileo Galilei, gave the northern lights their Latin name, Aurora Borealis, he was inspired by the Roman goddess of dawn, Aurora, and the Greek god Boreas, god of the unruly northern wind. It is a suitable name for a light phenomenon that can move as fast as the wind and display colours as intense and vibrant as the colours of dawn.

The northern lights, or rather: the polar lights, is a phenomenon experienced near the poles of the Earth. They occur when particles, most often electrons, accelerate inside the Earth's magnetosphere and crash into its atmosphere. Different colours signify particles colliding with particular components of the atmosphere at different distances from the Earth's surface.

Kiruna is home to the headquarters of the Swedish Institute of Space Physics, IRF, and thanks to our location, at the centre of the auroral oval, the northern lights have been studied here since the 1950s.

The Northern Lights

SCIENTIFIC NAME: AURORA BOREALIS



1. THE NORTHERN LIGHTS IS CAUSED BY CHARGED PARTICLES MOVING WITH THE SOLAR WIND.


2. DRAGGED INTO THE ATMOSPHERE BY THE EARTH'S MAGNETIC FIELDS AT THE POLES THE PARTICLES COLLIDE WITH NITROGEN AND OXYGEN ATOMS.

3. THE COLLISIONS RELEASE FLASHES OF COLORED LIGHT.

The color
DEPENDS ON THE HEIGHT IN THE ATMOSPHERE WHERE THE PARTICLES COLLIDE SINCE THE COMPOSITION OF ATOMS VARIES.


RED	ABOVE 150 MILES
GREEN	UP TO 100 MILES
PURPLE	ABOVE 40 MILES
BLUE	UP TO 60 MILES

What to bring
THE WAITING MAY BE LONG, PREPARE YOURSELF FOR A MORE PLEASANT EVENING OUT IN THE DARK.




Where to see the northern lights
NORTHERN LIGHTS MOST TYPICALLY OCCUR IN THE AURORA ZONE BETWEEN 65° AND 72° NORTH BUT CAN BE SEEN OVER A WIDER AREA. THIS MAKES THE WHOLE OF SWEDISH LAPLAND AN EXCELLENT DESTINATION FOR SEEING THE NORTHERN LIGHTS.
ABISKO NATIONAL PARK LIES IN THE MIDDLE OF THE AURORA ZONE, HAS AN EXTREMELY HIGH PERCENTAGE OF CLOUD-FREE SKIES AND VERY LITTLE ARTIFICIAL LIGHT POLLUTION. THESE THREE KEY FACTORS EXPLAIN WHY THE NORTHERN LIGHTS ARE SEEN SO RELIABLY OVER ABISKO.

Ideal conditions




FOR THE BEST OPPORTUNITY ALSO CHECK OUT:
WWW.AURORA-SERVICE.EU/AURORA-FORECAST

Ideal time
FOR OBSERVING THE NORTHERN LIGHTS:



www.swedishlapland.com



Swedish Lapland*

68° ABISKO
66° ARCTIC CIRCLE
SWEDISH LAPLAND

EUROPEAN UNION
European Regional Development Fund



THE MIDNIGHT SUN



IN SUMMER, you can experience the midnight sun in all parts of Kiruna. It arrives to Treriksroset, the Three-Country Cairn, in the northernmost part of Kiruna municipality around May 20th, and to Kiruna about a week later. In Kiruna, the midnight sun lasts until mid-July.

Technically, midnight sun means that the centre of the sun is visible during local midnight. In other words, during a large part of summer, Kiruna has full daylight during the middle of the night.

In Kiruna, also the rest of the summer is characterised by an abundance of light. We call it *100 days of midnight light* and make the most of this beautiful time of the year, by spending lots of time in the great outdoors.

Popular activities under the midnight sun include skiing and heli-skiing at Björkliden and Riksgränsen in May, hiking along the King's Trail, usually starting from when the snow melts in June, white water river rafting on the magnificent Torne River that runs through Kiruna municipality, and night fishing in one of Kiruna's many pristine rivers and lakes.

Now, you can also experience staying in an Art Suite made from ice and snow at the year-round attraction ICEHOTEL 365, during the season of the midnight sun.



OUR EIGHT SEASONS

DIVIDING THE YEAR into eight seasons is a Sámi custom. The indigenous Sámi followed the changing seasons when they moved their reindeer between winter and summer pastures. These days most Sámi are more or less settled, but for those who are involved in reindeer herding the working activities are still planned around the seasons and the climate. The Sámi's traditional knowledge about the elements of nature is important in a region where there are stark contrasts between summer and winter. Some years the temperature difference can amount to as much as 70 degrees C.

Giddadálvi — Spring Winter

The spring-winter, giddadálvi in Sámi, falls in March/April and brings light and warmth after months of winter. This is the peak season for snowmobiling, dog sledding and ice fishing. And for skiing both downhill and cross country. Or if you prefer a more relaxing day, you can carve yourself a snow sofa, roll out your reindeer skin, light a fire and enjoy a coffee in the brilliant sunshine. The spring-winter spells busy times for reindeer-herding Sámi. This is when the reindeer are moved from their winter pasture in the forest land up to the mountains. It's easier to watch over the herd in the mountains, and pregnant cows get the peace and quiet they need before giving birth.

Gidđa — Spring

After spring-winter comes spring and in Kiruna this usually occurs in May. Up in the mountains the nights are still cold and the conditions for snowmobiling, ice fishing, dog sledding and skiing can still be excellent. At the end of May, the sun stops going down and the period of midnight sun begins. The reindeer calves are born and take their first stumbling steps, watched over by their mothers.

Giddageassi — Spring Summer

In June, the magical light of the midnight sun can be seen in all parts of Kiruna. The spring becomes pre-summer, or spring-summer, and nature turns green almost overnight. This time of year marks the beginning of the hiking and biking season, although snow can last throughout June in the mountains, and we switch the ice-fishing rod for a spinning rod, or fly-fishing rod. For the reindeer, June is the start of a much longed-for, tranquil time.

Geassi — Summer

In June/July the eagerly awaited warmth arrives and it's finally summer in Kiruna. This is a time to enjoy a dip in a mirrored lake or cool your tired feet in a merry mountain stream. For the Sámi communities, summer is a hectic time of year. The reindeer have continued up onto the high mountains to escape insects and heat and the calves are rounded up for branding. This is an important event of the Sámi year, which involves both hard work and the opportunity to socialise with members of the Sámi community.

Čakčageassi — Autumn Summer

In August comes autumn-summer. Berries and mushrooms ripen and we fill our larders and freezers with all the goodness of nature to keep us through the long winter. The evenings and nights begin to darken, insects disappear and nature changes colour in the mountains. If you're hiking, you're rewarded with beautiful scenery all around. The autumn-summer is an important time for the reindeer to eat everything that nature offers and build up their fat reserve and muscle mass in preparation for the approaching winter.



Čakča – Autumn

And then autumn arrives, in September-October. The sun is high and it can be nice and warm during the day, even if the clear air tells us it's autumn. The northern lights return to Kiruna in September, dancing in the sky during clear nights. Despite the frosty nights there are still mushrooms and berries available, at least in the beginning of September. Autumn is also hunting time, with the traditional elk hunt taking place in Kiruna. Autumn is another hectic time for Sámi reindeer herders. The reindeer mostly graze in the low mountains and towards the middle of September, just before they rut, it's time to slaughter the steers, and any calves missed during summer are branded.

Čakčadálvi – pre-winter, or autumn winter

Pre-winter makes its entrance in November-December. Days get shorter and nature changes colour to white as the snow comes to stay. The ski enthusiasts eagerly wait for trails and slopes to open and sometimes this happens already in November. During this time of the year, the reindeer hurry to graze any grass or sedges remaining in the forest or on marshland, where they can reach it even if there's a snow cover of 10-20 cm. In November/December reindeer herds are divided into winter groups and moved to the winter grazing lands in the forest. It is also a time for slaughter; mostly calves are slaughtered during the early winter. In Kiruna, the polar night begins in the second half of December. During a period of three weeks, the sun does not rise above the horizon.

Dálvi – Winter

Dálvi, winter, is the longest of our eight seasons and lasts from December to March. The cold grabs hold of the landscape, freezing it into the most exquisite formations. Howling blizzards haunt the mountain regions. You have to dress with care if you're spending time outdoors. Layers on top of layers, with wool closest to your body and a thick down jacket to keep the heat in. In Kiruna and Swedish Lapland we love the outdoor activities winter brings: snowshoe walking, snowmobile driving,

dog sledding, skiing and ice-fishing. On clear nights, the northern lights can often be seen dancing across the sky. During winter the reindeer are looked after daily, but also during this season they graze freely, mostly on lichen that are found under the snow. The reindeer is adapted to the harsh Arctic climate and can store both water and energy when the temperature drops.

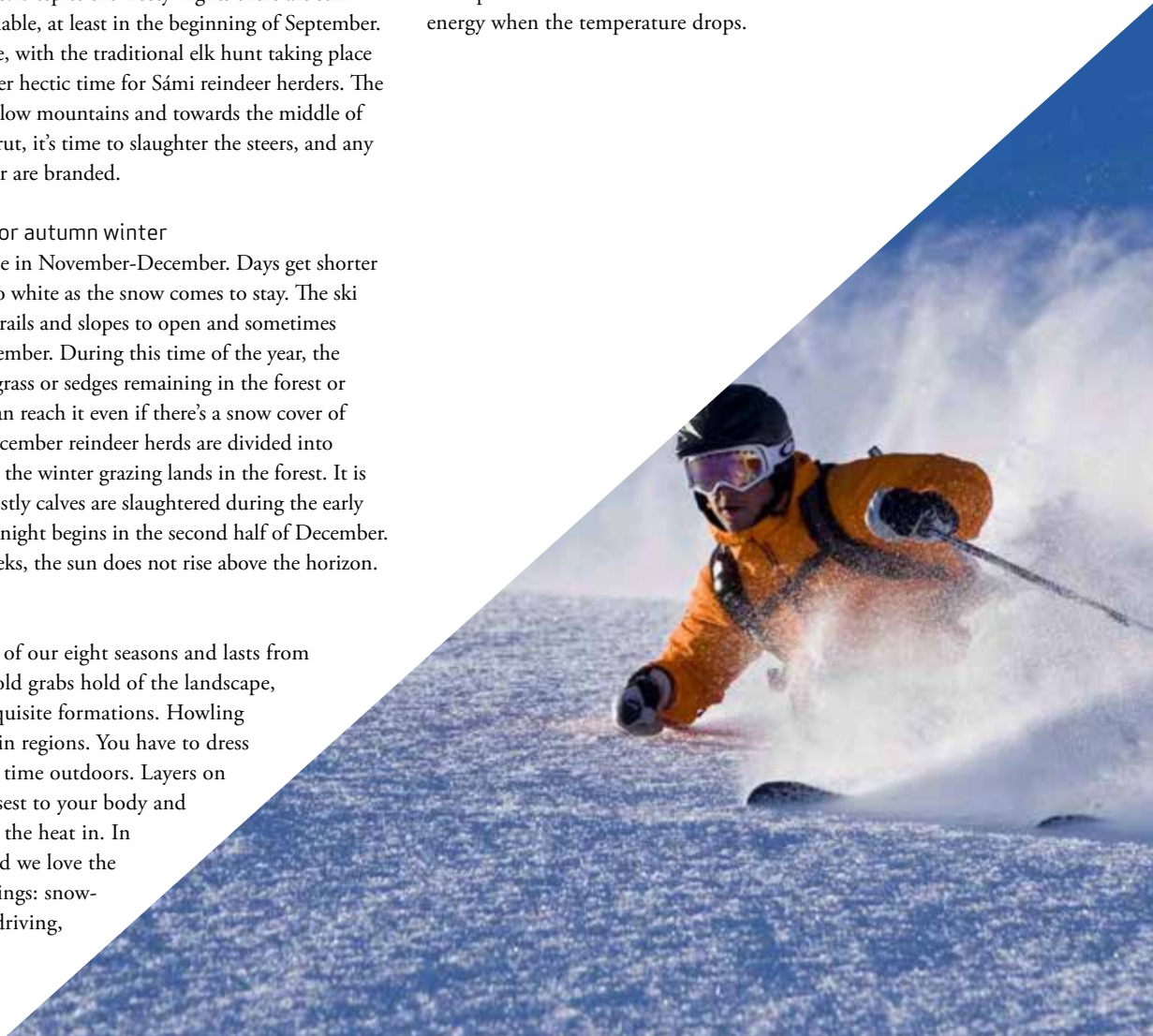


Photo: Icehotel, Asaf Kliger



Photo: Icehotel, Asaf Kliger



ICE ALL YEAR ROUND AT ICEHOTEL 365



ICEHOTEL IN JUKKASJÄRVI in Kiruna municipality has been an iconic place to visit for travellers around the world for more than 25 years. But until recently, this attraction has only been available during the local winter season. In December 2016, Icehotel inaugurated the new concept ICEHOTEL 365, which provides guests with an experience of winter and ice during 365 days of the year.

ICEHOTEL 365 is a specially designed 2,100 square metre ice art hall, which houses 21 suites, including 9 luxury suites, an ice bar, an ice sculpture gallery and an event hall that runs on solar power from the midnight sun.

The midnight sun plays a big part in ICEHOTEL 365, not just as an attraction, but more as a necessity to make the facility available year round in a sustainable way. Solar panels provide ICEHOTEL 365 with enough energy to keep the rooms frozen even during the height of summer.

Icehotel continues to be a world attraction during winter, under the dancing northern lights. Every year, the seasonal edition of the hotel, with additional 37 rooms, will be constructed – offering stunning ephemeral art and design during the winter season.

For more information, visit www.icehotel.com

Northern lights experience AT AURORA SKY STATION



THE EXPERIENCE AT Aurora Sky Station starts with a beautiful chair-lift ride from Abisko to the top of Mount Nuolja, 900 metres above sea level. On Nuolja, in Abisko National Park, it is marvellously quiet and no artificial lights will interrupt your unique experience of the northern lights. At Aurora Sky Station, you can enjoy an exclusive and romantic four-course dinner that takes you on a culinary journey through the flavours of Lapland's cuisine. All this, while waiting for the gods, Aurora and Boreas, to start the show.

For more information, visit www.auroraskystation.se



Gateway to UNSPOILT NATURE AND WILDLIFE



THE TOWN OF KIRUNA sits amidst an area of great natural beauty. We prefer not to call it “wilderness”, because it has been the workplace and home of the indigenous Sámi people for thousands of years. Rather, it is a vast area of unspoilt nature, where Sámi reindeer husbandry and recreational activities exist side by side.

Kiruna municipality has ten nature reserves and two national parks; Abisko National Park and Vadvetjåkka National Park. Vadvetjåkka National Park is situated in roadless land by Sweden’s border with Norway. It is a remote area of fells, mountain birch forests, bogs and delta land. You find deep limestone caves here and Sweden’s most northernmost glacier. Because access to Vadvetjåkka is difficult, the park has relatively few visitors. It is a place where you can experience solitude and silence, and have a chance to study wildlife; the park is known for its elks and birdlife and is an important summer forage area for the Talma Sámi reindeer herding community.

ABISKO NATIONAL PARK

In contrast, Kiruna’s most well-known national park, Abisko National Park, is easily accessed by train, bus or car from Kiruna or Narvik. In summer, you can step off the train and straight into a flowering mountain world. Abisko’s Mount Nuolja is known for its spectacular views of Lake Torneträsk and the u-shaped Lapponian Gate. This is one of the sunniest places in Sweden and the clear skies and absence of light pollution makes Abisko one of the best places in the world to experience the northern lights in autumn and winter.

KING’S TRAIL

Sweden’s most famous hiking trail, the 400-km-long King’s Trail, starts or ends in Abisko. The area has a rich birdlife and in winter elk (*Alces alces*) come to feed here. Reindeer are found in the Abisko National Park during most of the year, and sometimes also predators such as bears, wolverines and lynx are present. They are difficult to spot, however. Most often we only know about their presence through their tracks.

Nature is everywhere in Kiruna; we have walking and biking trails, cross-country skiing tracks, ski slopes and snowmobile trails starting directly from town. Spending time in nature is an important part of our Arctic lifestyle.



Illustration: Henning Larsen Architects A/S

KIRUNA

— A town on the move

HOW DO YOU go about moving a town? The question was first raised in Kiruna in 2004, when the state-owned mining company LKAB announced that its mining activities were causing ground subsidence that threatened the safety of the town. For LKAB to be able to continue mining iron ore, up until 2035, the town must be moved to safety, and be rebuilt elsewhere, on new ground.

Not surprisingly, the news provoked both anxiety and anticipation among Kiruna's residents. Who would finance the move? Would it be possible to move Kiruna to a new location whilst preserving its unique identity? What opportunities might arise from the situation? Where would the new town be built and what would it look like?

For a town that has been a mining town since its foundation in 1900, closing the mine was never an option. Instead, Kiruna had to come up with a sustainable urban transformation plan, which included moving large parts of the town to a new location, where a new urban area would be established.

Two major architectural competitions were launched: one for the new town centre and one for a new city hall, and in close consultation with the entire community a plan for a new and better Kiruna was drawn up.

Today, the transformation of Kiruna is in full swing. Roads and rail roads have already been rerouted. Buildings have been demolished and others are being constructed in the new town centre that is located three kilometres east of the "old Kiruna". The first building to be completed is the new city hall, Kristallen, around which the new town will be developed. New Kiruna will be characterised by a vibrant and safe urban environment. This includes good lighting and a denser city centre, which has been a main request from Kiruna's inhabitants.

Some of Kiruna's most well-known and beloved buildings, including Kiruna Church and the clock tower of the current City Hall, will be deconstructed piece by piece and moved to the new centre to form a part of the new Kiruna.

It is the most radical urban relocation project ever undertaken, never before has such a large community been transformed. Swedish architecture firm White's winning proposal in the competition for the design of the new town centre, Kiruna 4-ever, describes a process that goes on until the year 2100. Whether Kiruna will be finished by then is impossible to say at this time.

QUIRKY FACTS from Kiruna

#1 In Kiruna there are 1,500 km signposted snowmobile trails and 8,000 snowmobiles. There are also 3,425 dogs and 2,464 dog owners among the 23,000 inhabitants in the municipality.

#2 The son of Kiruna, the NHL pro Börje Salming, has more than 600 scars on his body. He had more than 300 stitches in his face at one occasion. That's the price you pay to get elected to the 'Team of the Century' together with Tretjak, Fetisov, Makarov, Charlamov and Gretsky. On the other hand, Börje Salming has no problems with his knees.

#3 The construction of ICEHOTEL requires approximately 30,000 cubic metres of 'snice' and 1,000 tonnes of ice. The amount of snow needed to build the rooms would be enough to make 700 million snowballs. The ICEHOTEL chandeliers alone require 1,000 handmade crystals.

#4 There are more than 300 words in Sámi dialects to describe different types of snow.

#5 Lake Rissajaure (Troll Lake) in the Kärkevagge valley between Björkliden and Riksgränsen has the greatest water transparency measured in any Swedish lake: 34 metres. That's the depth of the lake; if it were deeper perhaps it would be even more.

#6 Global heating. Kebnekaise/Giebmegáisi is Sweden's highest peak. The massif consists of two peaks; north and south. All these years the south peak has been the higher one. There's a glacier on top of it. The last 20 years the glacier on the south peak has been melting and the difference between the north and south peaks is less than a few metres. It looks like it will only take a few years or so before the north peak at 2,097 metres above sea level becomes the highest peak in Sweden.

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