



KALEVALA SKI TOUR

Travel information

SOME BASIC FACTS ABOUT THE TOUR

- Daily skiing distances are 37 – 50 km. Approx. skiing time is 6 – 7 hours daily including breaks.
- Good physical condition and **previous experience on cross-country skiing are absolutely needed to participate this tour.**
- The track is made by snowmobile.
- Only classical technique can be used on this tour.
- “Normal” cross-country skis (width approx. 44 mm) are the best choice for this tour. Skis can be waxable or non-waxable.
- On guaranteed departures groups are international. Maximum group size is 12 persons.

FLIGHTS / AIRPORT TRANSFERS, TRAINS

The tour starts from Kuusamo airport and ends at Kajaani airport.

Domestic flights from / to Helsinki are operated by Finnair (www.finnair.com). The flight times from / to Helsinki are approx. 1 hour.

Note! We organize only one airport transfer for each group by arrival and departure so before booking the flight, please check which is the flight the airport transfer is organized from / to!

Trains: From Kajaani it is also possible to take a train to Helsinki. The fastest travel times are about 6 hours. For schedules etc. you can see www.vr.fi

If someone arrives at / leaves from the railway station he / she must use the same transfer as those arriving at / leaving from the airport. So before booking any tickets please check the transfer schedules!

ACCOMMODATION

All the accommodations are warm, have enough space and electricity. Sauna is available every night.

If the group is small participants can have twin or single rooms. If the group size is near the maximum of 12 everybody can't have twin / single rooms, instead some triple and quadruple rooms will be used too.

1st night at Hotel Hossan Lomakeskus (Hossa Holiday Centre)

Accommodation in hotel standard twin/double rooms, with private facilities.

www.hossanlomakeskus.com/english.htm or http://www.wildtaiga.fi/index9.php?id=5_83_84

2nd night at Arola

The farm has a log house used as a guest dining room and 6 bedrooms taking up to 14 persons. Sauna will be heated. Arola is well known of its delicious food, mostly made out of local ingredients.

www.arolantila.suomussalmi.net

3rd night at Martinselkonen Wilderness Centre

This guesthouse is established in former frontier guard station. It has beds for over 20 people from single to quadruple rooms. Sauna will be heated. Shower and toilets are within the room in 9 rooms and in 3 rooms they are on corridor.

www.martinselkonen.fi

4th night at Haapa-Aho

A former farm house. Accommodation in four 2-4 persons rooms. Shower and sauna are available. Just one toilet. <http://koti.kainuu.com/terhoh/Haapa-ahon%20sivut.htm> (in Finnish only)

5th night at Kuivajärvi

A beautiful Karelian style log house where accommodation is in 2-4 person rooms with shared facilities. It's possible to visit an orthodox chapel near by.

<http://www.suomussalmi.fi/Resource.phx/sivut/sivut-suomussalmi/matkailu/english/accommodations/otheraccommodations/majatalodomnanpirtti.htx>

6th night at Korkana

A husky farm established in old frontier guard house. Accommodation in 2-4 persons rooms, shower and toilets in corridor.

www.korkana.de (in Finnish and German)

7th night at Kivi-Kiekki

Once more husky farm and a former frontier guard station in the middle of the taiga forest – nearest neighbour is 13 km away. Beds for 14 persons in 2-4 person rooms, shower and toilets in corridor. www.ultimataiga.fi

LEVEL OF DIFFICULTY AND SKIING

On this tour the daily distances are 37 – 50 km and the total distance approx. 250 km. **To participate this tour a good physical condition and previous experience on cross-country skiing are needed.**

The terrain is fairly easy and there are not big hills on route which goes in forests, crosses lakes and swamps and follows most of the time the border of Finland and Russia. There are not many other skiers, just some frontier guards. A lot of animals' tracks such as hare's, fox's, elk's and wolverine's tracks can be seen on route.

We try to organize so that everyone can ski the daily stages at his/her own speed, however to cover the daily distances a participant should be able to ski an average of 8-10 km per hour. The fastest skiers can follow the track and our guide comes with the slower ones. If someone gets bad blisters, gets too tired or can not ski for some other reason there is a seat on the service-snowmobile. This snowmobile will be far ahead from the skiers making the track and transporting the luggage. The driver also prepares the lunches on route.

Lunches are organized indoors on days 3 and 6 so that skiers can have the lunch when they reach the place and carry on when they have finished. It is not necessary to wait everyone to eat at the same time. On days 2 and 5 the lunch is indoors too but those days it is necessary to wait that everyone has finished the lunch before the skiing goes on again. On days 4 and 7 the lunch is enjoyed outside by the fire. To avoid waiting outside faster skiers can start later on those days so that the group will be together at the lunch. If needed, it is possible to prepare some sandwiches in the morning.

WEATHER AND TEMPERATURES

These skiing tours take place in February and March when there is more daylight as earlier in the winter. In the beginning of February there are about 9 hours of daylight (from 8 am to 5 pm) and in the beginning of March about 12 hours (from 6.30 am until 6.30 pm). And in April already about 15 – 16 hours.

The day temperature vary normally between – 5 and -20°C. However it is also possible that the temperature rises until some plus degrees or falls until -30°C. If the night is very cold, the temperature normally rises quite rapidly as the sun rises up especially in March/April.

The weather in these months can be cloudy or sunny (sunshine is more probable in March than in February) and there can be wind though the most of the route is quite sheltered from the wind. Some snowfalls can also appear. Ten day weather forecast can be seen: <http://www.foreca.com/Finland/Suomussalmi?tenday>

FOOD

We pay a lot of attention to provide good food for the participants. The tour includes breakfast, lunch and dinner every day. Breakfast is served at the accommodation place (bread, cheese, ham, porridge, muesli, yoghurt, coffee, tea). Lunch is prepared and served by the snowmobile guide on a fireplace on the route and it consists

of warm soup, bread, ham, cheese, sausages, coffee, tea and chocolate biscuits. Dinner is the main meal of the day. There are usually meat or fish, vegetables, fresh salad, bread and dessert.

Breakfast is usually around 8 am, lunch at 11 am – 1 pm and dinner at 7- 8 pm. Clients can also have some sandwiches when arriving at the accommodation place, usually around 4 pm.

During the skiing there is no other food served except the lunch so you can bring your own chocolate, muesli bars etc. if needed.

In case any special meals (vegetarian, gluten-free etc.) **are required please inform us in advance** because the meals are pre-ordered!

EQUIPMENT

Clothing is a personal choice but must include windproof and cold weather clothing. During the skiing the body activity will generate enough heat to keep you warm but during the breaks you get cold very easily after sweat in skiing. Therefore it's very important to have a warm jacket to wear during the stops. The snowmobile and the luggage will be available during the lunch. If you do not need anything to carry in the rucksack during the skiing you can ski without it. However it is good to have something to drink for example in a drink belt.

Here are some suggestions what you could pack for this tour:

Clothing

- warm jacket for breaks
- trousers and jacket for skiing
- thermal longjohn and top
- mittens or gloves and pair of big mittens to put over the others
- warm socks
- woolly hat, ear muffs can be useful as well
- spare warm clothes for cold weather and to wear in the evening
- pair of light shoes or thick woollen socks to wear in the evening

Other personal items

- ski glasses or goggles to protect your eyes against the sun
- sunscreen and lip salve
- rucksack or drink belt
- thermos flask
- torch
- camera
- toiletries
- personal medical supplies, plasters, double-skin (e.g. Compeed)...
- pair of normal cross-country skis
- pair of ski shoes, also pair of warm covers for the shoes are useful
- pair of ski poles, preferably with large ring as the snow can be a bit soft at some stages

Material offered by the organizers

- towels
- bed linen
- sleeping bags and sheets
- ski waxes and other material needed for ski waxing

Note: Quite often, unfortunately, the luggage doesn't arrive as the passengers arrive. Regularly there are cases that the luggage has stayed in Helsinki or at the departure airport and it comes eg. a day later.

That is why we recommend you to bring in your hand luggage, if possible, such clothes and shoes that you can participate the first activity day without problems even if your luggage doesn't arrive with you.

SKIING EQUIPMENT

On this tour it's possible to use only classical technique, see the track in the picture below. The track is made by a snowmobile. The skis we use are "normal" cross-country skis for classical style and the width is usually 44 mm. Skis can be waxable or non-waxable. To wax the skis your guide has glide and grip waxes, wax removal liquid, iron for applying glide wax and for wax removing a heat gun. A waxing bench will be available too. Please note that it is not allowed to take wax removal liquid in the airplane!

NOTE! We have ski equipment for rent. If you want to rent the equipment please contact us as soon as possible and inform your height, weight and shoe size so we can have the equipment ready for you by arrival. The skis we have for rent are with Salomon SNS bindings, see the picture below.



TRAVEL INSURANCE

Clients must take care of the travel insurance by themselves. We recommend to apply for the European Health Insurance Card which is available free of charge for the citizens of EU/EEA and of Switzerland. The holders of the card are entitled to medical care while staying temporarily in an other EU/EEA country or in Switzerland (with same regulations and co-payments like the residents of the country). More information about the card is available in internet http://ec.europa.eu/employment_social/healthcard/index_en.htm Having this card helps a lot in the case of accident because without the card a client has to pay all the costs on spot and they can be due to long distances from several hundred euros up to one thousand euros.

TIME ZONE

Time in Finland is 2 hours ahead of Greenwich Mean Time (GMT).

ELECTRICITY

The electric current in Finland is 220 V (230 V), 50 Hz. A two-pin plug system, familiar throughout Europe, is used. Adapters are available in airport shops.

LENGTHEN YOUR STAY

Extra nights in Helsinki: If you wish to stay eg. in Helsinki before or after your ski tour we are glad to help you to find the accommodation if needed.

Border to Border skiing event: Year 2010 guaranteed Kalevala ski tour departures can easily be combined with another long distance skiing event Border to Border. You can ski first Kalevala ski tour and then Border to Border or vice versa. The dates of the Border to Border are 11. – 17.3., 12. – 18.3., 13. – 19.3 and 14. – 20.3.2010. The route goes from Russian border to Swedish border, totally approx. 440 km.

For more information on the event please see: <http://rajaltarajallehihto.ranua.fi/?depid=6739>

Vuokatti ski marathon: The 9th Vuokatti Hiihto will be skied March 20th in Vuokatti. (40 km from Kajaani).

For more information on the event please see:

http://www.kainuunliikunta.fi/tapahtumat/vuokatti_hiihto/vuokatti_hiihto_in_english/