



# Father Christmas And Arctic Animal Encounters



**HOLIDAY TYPE:** Small Group  
**VISITING:** Finland

**BROCHURE CODE:** 1801  
**DURATION:** 4 nights

## In Brief

Share a magical Lapland Christmas at Ranua with the whole family! You will search for and decorate a Christmas tree, enjoy fun and games in the snow, and meet polar bears and other Arctic animals at the Wildlife Park. Most importantly, you will have a private family meeting with Father Christmas, creating memories to last a lifetime. You'll also have free time to fill with your own choice of activities from our fantastic selection!

## Our Opinion

*“ Christmas is, of course, a magical time of year for children (and adults!) alike. This adventure in Ranua makes it all the more special and memorable. With its winter-wonderland setting and carefully designed Father Christmas experience, this trip has the perfect festive feel. Added to that is the chance to choose your own winter activities, giving this holiday a truly personal touch. And how could I forget to mention Ranua Wildlife Park, where you can see a wide range of Arctic creatures up close? This is an unforgettable Christmas holiday! ”*

Ali Mclean



## What's included?

- **Transfers:** return airport transfers
- **Accommodation:** 4 nights' villa accommodation.
- **Meals:** 4 breakfasts\*
- **The following activities are included in your stay:** meeting with Father Christmas, guided tour of the Wildlife Park with animal feeding. If you are travelling on our 22nd December 2024 departure date then you will also have included: snowmobile search for Christmas tree (the order of activities is subject to change)
- Access to Ranua Wildlife Park throughout your stay
- Cold weather clothing for the duration of your stay
- Fully qualified wilderness guides and instructors for any activities
- **A note on flights:** whilst flights are not included in the holiday price, our team will happily provide a quote and arrange them for you. Simply ask one of our Travel Experts for details of the available options for you

\*If you are travelling on 15<sup>th</sup> or 22<sup>nd</sup> December, you will also have 4 dinners included in the price of your holiday

## Trip Overview

Celebrating Christmas in Lapland is always an enchanting experience. The picture-postcard landscapes and unique blue light create a very special backdrop for unforgettable family memories.

This four-night Father Christmas holiday features both set activities and the opportunity to choose your own. A highlight is a special private meeting with Father Christmas, which is a magical moment for families. Other festivities include a gala dinner and for guests on 23rd December departure a woodland search by snowmobile for a Christmas tree to decorate and of course, plenty of fun in the snow.

You will also have the chance to get up close to Arctic animals at the Ranua Wildlife Park, which is home to the likes of polar bears, moose, golden eagles, Arctic foxes, otters, lynx, elk and deer. Together, you can learn about the fascinating lives of these creatures and

help feed them too!

During your free time you get to choose from our very own assortment of winter activities- see the '[Personalise](#)' section for more details. Enjoy your very own reindeer sleigh ride, explore the wilderness by snowmobile or during a husky safari, and search for the Northern Lights on snowshoes – just a few of the many wonderful activities you can add to your holiday!

Ranua is one of our favourite family locations as it combines comfy, modern family villas with welcoming hospitality and knowledgeable guides. Your villa comes equipped with a kitchenette which makes it a perfect place to cook lunch and dinner or if you'd prefer, you can purchase it locally in the restaurant. In our experience, the restaurant can become busy during the festive lunchtimes, with outside visitors to the park, and we have found that most families prefer to make their own lunch arrangements in their wonderfully equipped villa kitchens.

This is a delightful holiday packed full of experiences for children and adults alike. This holiday offers a real celebration of the Christmas spirit, with plenty of other highlights along the way.

©Hotel Gulo Gulo

## Agenda

Please note the order of activities is subject to change

DAY  
1

ARRIVAL IN LAPLAND

Today you will journey to Lapland ready to begin your wonderful Christmas adventure!

Upon arrival in Rovaniemi, you will be transferred through the snow-covered landscape to your accommodation at Ranua, approximately an hour away.

After checking in to your cosy villa, the evening is free for you to settle in

**Included Meals:** None

DAY  
2

MEETING FATHER CHRISTMAS

Today the magic starts after breakfast when you prepare for your very important meeting with Father Christmas\*. Your guide will lead each family along a forest trail by snowmobile-pulled sleigh and you will soon see the glimmer of lights from a cosy cabin ahead.

The door will be answered by the man in red! He will spend time talking with the children,

telling stories and listening to their Christmas wishes. The children can ask any questions they have about his life and work in Lapland. Each family will spend around twenty minutes in his company before returning to Ranua for dinner in the restaurant. In total, the activity lasts around 45 minutes.

\*Please note that some families will have their private meeting with Father Christmas in the next few days depending on your family's individual schedule.

**Included Meals:** Breakfast

DAY  
3

### GUIDED TOUR OF RANUA WILDLIFE PARK

Today you will visit the Wildlife Park and meet with over 50 different types of animals! Whilst you may have popped into the park before now, today you will be given an in-depth tour and you can ask your guide questions about your favourite animals.

On top of its famous polar bears, the park is home to a wide range of species, including otters, Arctic foxes, wild boars, and wolves. Special enclosures have been designed and constructed to reflect the natural environment of the animals. You will be shown around the park and have the chance to help the guides serve the animals their dinner!

After time at the park, you can return to the villas to spend some time as a family.

Dinner will be served at the restaurant this evening.

If you are travelling on our 22nd December departure date you will also take part in a wonderful search for the perfect Christmas tree to take to the hotel. You head out into the surrounding forested wilderness in search of the perfect Christmas tree. Adults will be given full instruction on how to drive a snowmobile and will travel in pairs, while children will sit in a sled pulled by the guide's snowmobile. This is a great way to move through the winter scenery and allows you to see more of the stunning landscape.

Once the important decision has been made and the tree selected, you will enjoy warm drinks and cookies around a campfire before taking your tree back to Ranua to decorate.

Please note that in order to drive a snowmobile you must be over 18 and hold a full driving licence.

For guests on 22nd December, you will also enjoy a Festive Gala dinner this evening and you never know, a very special guest may also make an appearance!

**Included Meals:** Breakfast

DAY  
4

### FREE TIME TO TAILOR YOUR STAY

Today is totally free for you and your family to plan your own time. We offer a fabulous

range of optional activities at Ranua and you can pick and choose those that most suit your family. Full details of all of the options can be found in the 'Personalise' section of this holiday page. Options include snowmobile safaris, reindeer experiences, snowshoe excursions, and much more!

Access to the Wildlife Park at Ranua is included throughout your stay and so you may like to start exploring and meeting some of the incredible animals who live just across the street from you here!

One thing we also find is that sometimes children simply just love playing out in the snow and making snowmen outside the villas. It's a fabulous way to spend time together as a family.

Breakfast will be served as usual each day in the main restaurant building at the park. If you have been making lunch and dinner in your villa, you could choose to try one of the restaurants today.

**Included Meals:** Breakfast

DAY 5	DEPARTURE
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Today, your festive stay draws to a close. After breakfast, you will be transferred to the airport for your flights home.

**Included Meals:** Breakfast

## Personalise this tour

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## Our pick





## Husky Safaris

This is a truly wonderful way to journey across the snow-laden landscape of Lapland!

You will travel in a sled pulled by your own eager team of huskies (up to two adults and one child per sled) with the chance for the adults to take it in turns to drive depending on which length of safari you book (3km - 45km available). After your adventure, there will usually be a chance to pet the dogs and take pictures, as well as asking the mushers any questions you may have.

**Please note:** All decisions are made on the day of the safari by the lead guide as to any guest's suitability to drive their own dog sled. As a general rule, those aged 15 and over are normally able to drive their own team of huskies but the guide's decision on the day will be final and in the interest of safety. On certain safaris, children under the age of 15 will either travel in a sledge driven by the guide or an accompanying adult.

**Duration:** approximately 20-30 minutes in total

**Adult price:** from £70

**Child price:** from £45

**Duration:** approximately 60 minutes in total

**Adult price:** from £109

**Child price:** from £60

**Duration:** approximately 2 hours in total

**Adult price:** from £139

**Child price:** from £70

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## Other options

## ACTIVITIES



## Day Trip to Rovaniemi and Santa Claus Village

Following breakfast, your minibus will take you directly to Rovaniemi which is around an hour away. Your first stop will be the Santa Claus Village on the Arctic Circle where you can immerse yourself in the festive cheer!

Here you can meet Father Christmas and enjoy shopping from a wide range of locally crafted souvenirs. After lunch at the Santa Claus Village, you will head towards Arktikum, a wonderful local museum exhibiting the unique culture of the Arctic. Alternatively, you can head to the city centre and explore independently.

**Duration:** approximately 6 hours (transport 2 hours)

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## Snowmobile Safari to the Reindeer Farm

Following driving instructions, you will set out on snowmobile towards Laivala, a small authentic reindeer farm, which is approximately 15km from the Holiday Village Gulo Gulo. Here you will be welcomed by the herder and taken to see his reindeer, before enjoying a short reindeer sled ride (approximately 15 minutes).

Back at the farm you will enjoy a hot snack and learn more about the life of the reindeer herders and their long history in this region. The activity will end with a snowmobile trip back to the hotel.

**Duration:** approximately 3 hours

**Please note:** the driver of a snowmobile must be at least 18 years old and hold a valid driving licence. Children will travel in a sled pulled by the guide's snowmobile on selected safaris where this is offered. Older children may be able to travel as pillion on the snowmobile but this is at the discretion of the guide. Single driver supplement applies.



## Reindeer Sleigh Ride

Enjoy a short journey via reindeer-pulled sled, travelling the way people have done here for centuries! The ride will take you from the hotel out into the surrounding wilderness.

**Duration:** approximately 40 minutes



## Northern Lights Safari via Horse-Drawn Sleigh

Enjoy the opportunity to seek out the Northern Lights as well as enjoying a wonderful horse-drawn sleigh ride (6 to 8 people per sleigh) through the snowy night-time wilderness. Travelling through the neighbouring forest you can enjoy the night sky which will hopefully come alive with the dancing colours of the Aurora Borealis.

**Duration:** approximately 2 hours

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**Image credit: Visit Finland**



## Ice fishing via snowmobile

Your guide will give full instructions before you set off via snowmobile heading towards a nearby frozen lake. Here you will learn more about the long history of ice fishing and try your hand at it too. Warm drinks will be served around the fire and there will be the chance to cook anything that you may catch!

**Duration:** approximately 3 hours

**Please note:** the driver of a snowmobile must be at least 18 years old and hold a valid driving licence. Children will travel in a sled pulled by the guide's snowmobile on selected safaris where this is offered. Older children may be



able to travel as pillion on the snowmobile but this is at the discretion of the guide. Single driver supplement applies.



## Searching for the Aurora Borealis via Snowmobile

Heading out into the darkness via snowmobile is a wonderful way to explore the night-time wilderness and your guide will lead the way along the dark forest trails. There will be breaks to enjoy a hot drink and keep a keen watch on the sky in anticipation of a potential Northern Lights display.

**Duration:** approximately 3 hours

**Please note:** the driver of a snowmobile must be at least 18 years old and hold a valid driving licence. Children will travel in a sled pulled by the guide's snowmobile on selected safaris where this is offered. Older children may be able to travel as pillion on the snowmobile but this is at the discretion of the guide. Single driver supplement applies.

**Image credit:** Antti Pietikainen



## Snowshoeing

One of the best ways to enjoy the wonderful forest neighbouring the wildlife park is to strap on a pair of snowshoes and head into the deep snow to explore. Your guide will offer lots of interesting information on the way on the local flora and fauna.

**Duration:** approximately 2 hours



## Cross-country Skiing

Explore the Arctic the ancient way – on cross-country skis! Your guide will teach you the various techniques of this activity before you head out to put your skills into practice. The ski tracks reside close to the Ranua Wildlife Park and will cover around 3km.

**Duration:** approximately 2 hours



## Lappish Workshop in Ranua: Arts and Crafts With Ms. Paula

Join local handicraft artist Ms. Paula in her workshop, where you'll make a traditional Lappish souvenir to take home with you.

You can choose between different sessions depending on the item you want to make. From genuine reindeer leather shoulder bags and pouches to a unique piece of Lappish jewellery, the choice is yours! Children can also take part by making a red-nosed reindeer using a variety of materials.

The workshop is situated in Ranua's traditional Lappish hut, located next to the information and ticket sales office.

Minimum group size is 4 persons and maximum group size is 36 persons (excluding the round reindeer leather pouch or a small bag workshop where the minimum group size is 8 and the maximum is 38).

**Duration: 1-1.5 hours in total**

**Image credit: Gulo Gulo Holiday Village**



## Finnish Horse Sleigh Ride

Get snug under the sleigh's warm blankets for this winter sleigh ride through the snowy forest. Listen to the sound of sleigh bells tinkling and the patter of hooves as you experience this traditional ride on a Finnhorse-pulled sleigh.

**Duration:** approximately 1 hour

### SPECIAL NIGHTS



## Arctic Fox Igloo

These beautiful glass igloos add a very special accommodation experience to any stay at Ranua. There are 20 igloos in total (10 twin igloos and 10 family/lakeside igloos) which are located around 8km from Ranua Wildlife Park. They are set in an idyllic lakeside location with very little light pollution and uninterrupted views to the North, giving you an excellent chance of watching the Northern Lights from your bed, talk about a holiday memory!

### Twin igloos

The igloos include a twin bed and have a small kitchenette, a bathroom with private sauna (this is Finland after all!) and a limited lake view. Guests will normally be transferred to the igloos ahead of their evening meal at the Igloo Village Restaurant and are then picked up the following morning in time for breakfast back at the main restaurant in Ranua. Whilst there is no reception building at the igloo camp, all guests receive a contact number in case of any questions or issues.

### Family/lakeside igloos

These igloos have the same facilities as the twin igloos but have a double bed and space for two small extra beds for children (4-14 years old) and a lake view. Please note that the maximum occupancy is 2 adults and 2 children (4-14 years old).

Guests will normally be transferred to the igloos ahead of their evening meal at the Igloo Village Restaurant and are then picked up the following morning in time for breakfast back at the main restaurant in Ranua. Whilst there is no reception building at the igloo camp,



all guests receive a contact number in case of any questions or issues.

Please note, that the example price listed is based on guests spending the final night of their holiday in an igloo, and checking out of their apartment accommodation. If guests wish to spend any other night during their stay in a glass igloo, they must retain their apartment accommodation. Our Travel Experts will happily provide you with a quotation.

Image credits: Jari Romppainen & Marko Juntilla

## Included Accommodation

Gulo Gulo Holiday Village (Nights: 1-4)



Located around 4km from the small town of Ranua, the Gulo Gulo Holiday Village takes its name from the Latin word for Wolverine, one of Finland's rare native animals and is an ideal family base. The wildlife theme continues throughout due to the accommodation's proximity to the Ranua Wildlife Park which guests have unlimited access to throughout their stay.

The holiday village offers families modern comfortable apartments which are very well equipped.

### HOTEL FACILITIES

- Ranua Wildlife Park offers a wonderful opportunity to observe the lives of Arctic wild animals in their natural environments. Your ticket entitles you to visit the wildlife park as many times as you wish during your stay, something that our families always love
- The simple but convivial restaurant is situated at the wildlife park itself which is just across the road from your accommodation. Here you will enjoy your breakfast and dinner, offering a selection of traditional Finnish foods and international dishes for all the family to enjoy, including a children's menu. Lunch is also available to guests (payable locally)
- Free Wi-Fi is available throughout the apartments



# Room Types

## VILLA

The villas are beautifully decorated with all modern comforts for families. In total, there are thirty at Gulo Gulo, which are housed within ten semi-detached building backing onto a lovely forest landscape.

The ground floor accommodation comprises of an open-plan living room with flat screen TV, kitchen and dining area. The kitchen is well equipped with stove, microwave, dishwasher, fridge, coffee maker and kettle (you may want to take your own tea and coffee to enjoy in your apartment).

There is one twin bedroom downstairs as well as the bathroom which includes a shower, toilet and drying cabinet for clothes. There is also a private sauna which is a real treat. The accommodation also features a hairdryer and ironing facilities if required.

On the first floor, there is a second twin bedroom as well as an open loft area with two smaller extra beds (suitable for children) as well as a shower and toilet. All linen is of course provided.

These have their own decking area which can come in very handy for viewing the local wildlife or (fingers crossed!) maybe even the Northern Lights.

## The Specifics

### Holiday group size (approximate)

Minimum 8 people and maximum 42 (approximately)

### Group Size

We always try to provide an approximation of the group size you can expect to be with for the duration of each of our holidays. It may be that you are joined by others for parts of your holiday (such as transfers and particular activities) but the above number reflects those you can normally expect to be with from beginning to end. If group size is something which is particularly important to you, please speak to our Travel Experts and they can suggest the best holidays for you.

Tailor-made holiday group sizes will vary for all activities as will the group size for any additional activities you book.

### Minimum numbers required for a holiday to

## operate

Some of our holidays require a minimum number of participants to operate (as listed in the 'Group Size' section). If your holiday departure has not yet reached the minimum number, you will be told at the time of booking. In the unlikely event that your chosen date is not guaranteed by nine weeks before your scheduled departure date, we will contact you to discuss the available options as per our booking conditions.

## Minimum and maximum age

The minimum age for this holiday can be found in the 'Key Facts' section of the holiday overview.

Younger family members may be able to participate but may not be able to take part in all activities. Please contact one of our Travel Experts if you have any questions.

## Itinerary amendments

The order of activities listed in this agenda is provided for guidance only, your final and detailed itinerary will be provided either with your final travel documents (which are uploaded into your online account around a week prior to departure) or upon arrival.

## Terms and Conditions

Our full booking terms and conditions can be found on our website: <https://www.activitiesabroad.com/booking-conditions>

**Please note: our payment and cancellation terms will be unique to each booking - they will be confirmed with you at the time of quotation. The terms listed above are noted as a guide only**