



Menesjärvi Christmas Northern Lights Adventure



HOLIDAY TYPE: Small Group
VISITING: Finland

BROCHURE CODE: 1047
DURATION: 7 nights

In Brief

Spend Christmas in a magically remote Lappish setting, searching for the Northern Lights and enjoying all that this region has to offer. This holiday provides an incredible shared family experience and we include a huge range of activities with everything from husky safaris, snowshoeing, snowmobiling, cross-country skiing and of course some serious Aurora hunting.

Our Opinion

“ To spend Christmas at Menesjärvi is such a treat for any active family who want to search for the Northern Lights. It is a true privilege to stay in such a remote location and, as it is deep within the Aurora Zone, families have a great chance of catching a glimpse of Nature’s greatest light show. This area is also a veritable activity playground and provides families with the chance to experience a range of truly unforgettable experiences. ”

Jono Archer



What's included?

- **Flights:** Return flights from London to Ivalo (via Helsinki). Flight routes are subject to change.
- **Transfers:** return group airport transfers
- **Accommodation:** 7 nights' hotel accommodation
- **Meals:** 7 breakfasts, 6 lunches, 7 dinners
- **The following activities and experiences are included:** Snowshoe hike, kick sleds, cross-country skiing, Aurora workshop and Aurora snowshoe, morning with a reindeer herder, wilderness skills, winter fishing by snowmobile, Aurora kota dinner, husky safari, visit to the Sámi Siida Museum* and Christmas festivities, **(the order of activities is subject to change)**
- Free use of snowshoes, cross-country skis, kick sledges and toboggans throughout your stay
- Cold weather clothing for the duration of your stay
- Fully qualified wilderness guides and instructors
- 24/7 assistance from our UK based operations team and in destination support from our local partners

Trip Overview

For any Aurora hunting family, Menesjärvi's location is absolutely ideal and it is a magical place in which to spend Christmas. You are far from any significant light pollution here and deep within the Aurora Zone. This active holiday includes evening activities that help to maximise your Aurora viewing potential and enjoy an unforgettable festive holiday.

Whilst your nights may be dedicated to trying to spot the Northern Lights, your days contain a wealth of exceptional Lappish experiences for all the family to enjoy. By the end of your stay here, you will have travelled via snowshoes, kick sleds, cross-country skis and snowmobile-pulled sleigh, you will have encountered reindeer in their natural habitat and travelled with a team of huskies – not a bad way to spend Christmas!

The accommodation at Menesjärvi is warm and welcoming, offering simple Finnish décor and hearty food, perfect for the winter climate. Your hosts really do all they can to make sure you have an unforgettable and unique experience.

This festive family holiday is about trying incredible experiences and creating shared family memories

whilst getting to know the real people of Lapland, the culture and the landscape. It's a magical place to spend time together as a family and search out the Aurora Borealis.

**Interreg
Nord**

European Regional Development Fund



EUROPEAN UNION

©Ville Heimonen & Timo Halonen

Agenda

Please note the order of activities is subject to change

DAY
1

ARRIVAL

Having started the day in the hustle and bustle of a busy airport, you will arrive in the wilds of Lapland where the contrast could not be greater!

A warm welcome and dinner await you at the Hotel Korpikartano this evening. Afterwards, you will be provided with your cold weather clothing for the duration of your holiday.

Included Meals: Dinner

DAY
2

SNOWSHOES (BY DAY & NIGHT!), KICK SLEDs, CROSS-COUNTRY SKIING
AND AURORA WORKSHOP

Today you will get your first glimpse of the stunning scenery; the hotel's lakeside location is just wonderful.

We want you to get better acquainted with your new surroundings straight away and so you'll be kitted out with your winter clothing ahead of your inaugural activities.

Snowshoes, kick sledges and cross-country skiing equipment are available for you all to use throughout your stay but first, you will have some instruction on how to use them. You will try out this activity trio with your guides today and get to have some serious fun in the snow with the rest of the group, before a warming lunch.

The afternoon is free for you to explore independently and enjoy the sledges and equipment at your disposal. You can also embrace a great Finnish family tradition and enjoy one of the saunas at the hotel.

After a well-deserved dinner, it is time to get to grips with the Northern Lights and your local guides will give you an overview of some of the science behind them and some hints and tips on how to capture them on film. Your guide will then lead you on a lakeside snowshoe hike in search of a display. You will be out for around two hours this evening.

Included Meals: Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner

DAY
3

INSIGHT INTO A REINDEER HERDER'S DAY

Reindeer are synonymous with Lapland, the indigenous Sámi culture, their traditions and of course Christmas, so a genuine reindeer encounter is a 'must'.

Today you will be transferred to a reindeer farm where you will meet with your Sámi host who will give you an insight into the lives of the herders and their animals. The herder will take you to find the reindeer via snowmobile-pulled sleigh and you will get the chance to feed them some of their favourite snacks and learn about the importance of these animals, both historically and in the present day. Hot drinks will be served around a campfire. The activity will last for around two to two and a half hours.

Back at the hotel you will have free use of the snow fun equipment to make the most of your winter wonderland surroundings, we also recommend booking a slot in the hotel sauna to really unwind before dinner is served in the hotel restaurant.

This evening it is possible to add on an additional Northern Lights hunt by Snowshoe if you would like to head off with your expert local guide in search of an auroral display. Please see the personalise section for more information.

Included Meals: Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner

DAY
4

WILDERNESS SKILLS

Wilderness skills are a vital part of any Lappish upbringing and today you spend the morning with a Finnish version of Ray Mears who will take you into the forest on snowshoes and teach you how to navigate using both GPS and compass.

You'll do some map reading, learn how to identify animals from their footprints, be shown how to light a fire and safely put a wood knife to use (under supervision). Lunch will be enjoyed in a Lappish hut around an open fire: a true wilderness experience.

The remainder of the afternoon will be spent at leisure.

Dinner will be served in the restaurant this evening.

Included Meals: Breakfast, Lunch, DinnerDAY
5

WINTER FISHING BY SNOWMOBILE AND AURORA KOTA DINNER

Following breakfast, you will spend this morning speeding over the fells on a thrilling snowmobile drive, giving you the chance to really explore deeper into the wilds. Your guide will give a full safety briefing and instruction on how to handle the machines before leading you on your safari. You need a full driving licence to drive a snowmobile and should be over 18. Adults will travel two people per sled and children will typically all travel together in a sleigh pulled by the guide's snowmobile.

Your destination is a carefully chosen spot on a frozen lake, the ideal place in which to be shown the art of winter fishing, a tradition that dates back centuries in this region. This is a fascinating experience for all the family and the exhilarating snowmobile safari on either side makes for a fun-filled morning. Please note that while this activity is scheduled for today, the order is always subject to change and confirmed on arrival at Menesjärvi. You will be out for around two hours in total.

Included Meals: Breakfast, Lunch, DinnerDAY
6

HUSKY SAFARI, SÁMI SIIDA MUSEUM AND FESTIVE FUN

You will spend this morning on an unforgettable husky safari. This is a 'must-do' during any winter holiday and today, after full tuition, you will get to take control of a team of dogs and explore the trails with your guide. You will typically travel two people per sled, with the adults in control and the children either riding as passengers or travelling in a larger sled which will be driven by the guide. This activity will last for around two and a half hours in total and is sure to be an unforgettable family experience.

You will then enjoy lunch in Inari Village, before heading to the famous Sámi Siida Museum. This fascinating museum has enough going on to keep even the kids enthused, as you learn about the local wildlife, the Northern Lights and the fascinating Sámi people and their lifestyles.

In Finland, Christmas is celebrated on the 24th of December, so today's fun and games will be memorable. There will be cookies to be baked and a special evening of Christmas celebrations. Finnish and international traditions will be combined to create a great evening for all to enjoy.

Included Meals: Breakfast, Lunch, DinnerDAY
7

FREE DAY

We have left your final day free, so you have the opportunity to plan your own day however you wish. You could kick back and relax in the hotel, explore the local area independently by snowshoes or kick sledges, or if you have some prior experience you could strap on some skis. There may be the chance to enjoy some optional activities which can be paid for and arranged locally.

Included Meals: Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner

DAY
8

DEPARTURE

Today your adventure will draw to a close and you will enjoy a scenic transfer to Ivalo Airport from where you will fly home.

Included Meals: Breakfast

Personalise this tour

Our pick



Aurora Hunt via snowmobile

This thrilling safari will take you out via snowmobile across the vast frozen expanse of Lake Menesjärvi. Your guide will lead the way to the most likely spot to witness the Aurora, far from any light pollution and where you can enjoy unobstructed views of the night sky.

Adults will travel two per snowmobile (drivers must have a full driving licence and be 18 years or over) whilst children will travel in a sled pulled by the guide's snowmobile.

Fingers crossed you are successful in your search and see the Aurora in all its glory!

Duration: approximately 2 hours in total

Other options

ACTIVITIES



Aurora Hunt via snowshoe

On this evening excursion, you will strap on snowshoes and set out into the surrounding frozen wilderness around Menesjärvi in search of the Northern Lights.

Whilst the Northern Lights cannot be guaranteed, your chances are exceptionally high here with Menesjärvi having an excellent track record when it comes to the Aurora so hopefully, your family will enjoy a dazzling display! Whilst you wait patiently, the guide will be on hand to answer any questions you may have about the

Northern Lights and the beautiful surrounding nature here.

Duration: approximately 2 hours in total

Included Accommodation

Hotel Korpikartano (Nights: 1-7)



When it comes to remote locations there are few that compare to Menesjärvi. Pristine and unspoiled, it is the perfect place for an Arctic family adventure in search of the Aurora.

Menesjärvi is a traditional reindeer herding community and what was once the local school is now the Hotel Korpikartano. Locally owned, you are sure of a warm and traditional Finnish welcome and our guests often say that they leave feeling like they are part of the family.

The hotel is split into two buildings with the main building housing the dining room and reception as well as some bedroom. The annexe, which is approximately 50 metres away, houses the majority of the bedrooms.

Hotel facilities

- There are saunas available in both buildings for guests to use free of charge
- Free Wi-Fi is available throughout and there is a PC available
- Most meals will be served in the hotel dining room. The set evening meals are self-service and the food served is simple and hearty home cooking. In our experience, it has always been delicious and ideal sustenance after a day's adventuring
- A selection of games and books is also available but we find that most of our guests spend their time outdoors gazing at the skies or simply enjoying the snow
- Cross-country skis, snowshoes and kick sleds are available to use free of charge
- The hotel's Aurora Lounge offers the perfect place to relax after a day of fun in the snow with tea and coffee available for guests, as well as a small library, TV (with Finnish channels only) and cosy fireplace

Room types

Twin, double and family rooms: The hotel is anything but standardised, with no two rooms being the same shape or size. There are 27 rooms in total, all of which have en-suite shower rooms and hairdryers. There are kettles and cups provided and tea bags and coffee are available in both buildings.

The rooms are comfortable and many are decorated with locally sourced wood and pieces of furniture which have been crafted out of wood from the surrounding forests.

Varying from double and twin rooms to more family-style accommodation (sleeping up to six people) you will be allocated the most suitable room for your party at the time of booking (subject to availability).

Image credits: Timo Halonen

The Specifics

Holiday group size (approximate)

This holiday requires a minimum of 4 people to run, however, we require a minimum of 8 people for our flight allocation. Maximum 20 people (approximately). Please speak to our travel experts for further information.

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.

Menesjarvi - cancellation terms

CANCELLATION TERMS:

Please note that the following cancellation terms supersede those mentioned in section 7 of our general booking terms and conditions.

More than 63 days prior to departure - Loss of deposit (including the full cost of flights or other services where paid at the time of booking)

62 to 46 days prior to arrival – 20%

59 to 45 days prior to departure - 30%

44 to 30 days prior to departure - 50%

29 or less days - 100%

Terms and Conditions

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

Swim stops

There are plenty of opportunities during our cruises for refreshing swim stops in some beautiful spots en route. Please note that this is not a supervised or guided activity and whilst safety equipment is provided on board and staff members will be present, each passenger is responsible for their own safety whilst in the water.