



Lapland

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Why Go?

Lapland casts a powerful spell and irresistibly haunts the imagination and memory. There is something lonely and intangible here that makes it magic.

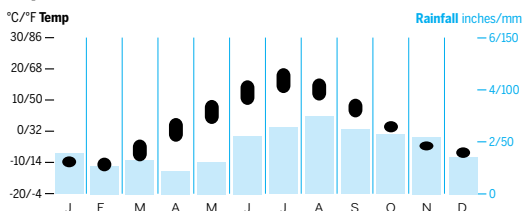
The midnight sun, the Sámi peoples, the aurora borealis (Northern Lights) and wandering reindeer are all components of this, as is good old ho-ho-ho himself, who 'officially' resides here. Another part of the spell is in the awesome latitudes – at Nuorgam, the northernmost point, you have passed Iceland and nearly all of Canada and Alaska.

Lapland, which occupies 30% of Finland's land area but houses just 3% of its population, has vast and awesome wildernesses, ripe for exploring on foot, skis or sledge. The sense of space, pure air and big skies are what is memorable here, more than the towns.

Lapland's far north is known as Sápmi, home of the Sámi people, whose main communities are around Inari, Utsjoki and Hetta. Rovaniemi is the most popular gateway to the north.

When to Go

Lapland



Best Places to Trek

- Urho Kekkonen National Park (p253)
- Kevo Strict Nature Reserve (p260)
- Pallas-Yllästunturi National Park (p243)

Best Places to Stay

- Lumihotelli (p237)
- Porotila Toini Sanila (p262)
- City Hotel (p233)
- Levi Panorama (p241)

Apr The best month for sled treks and skiing, with plenty of light and reasonable temperatures.

Aug Lots of light and sunshine, trails are less crowded, and biting insects fewer.

Dec Reindeer, snow and Santa Claus himself are guaranteed to inject Christmas spirit.

Lapland Highlights

- 1 Trekking the lonely wildernesses around **Saariselkä** (p249) or Finland's highlands at **Kilpisjärvi** (p244)
- 2 Dashing through the snow pulled by a team of **reindeer** (p250) or **huskies** (p242) in Muonio or Saariselkä
- 3 Sailing on an **ice-breaker** (p237) in Kemi, then sleeping in the ethereally beautiful **snow castle** (p237)
- 4 Panning for gold in beautiful **Lemmenjoki** (p258) and walking in the national park
- 5 Learning about northern environments at Rovaniemi's **Arktikum** (p231)
- 6 Taking your first steps at exploring Sámi culture at **Siida** (p255) in Inari
- 7 Skiing at Lapland's best-equipped resort at **Levi** (p240)
- 8 Gazing in awe at the **aurora borealis** (p249)
- 9 Fishing the **Tenojoki** (p261), Lapland's most beautiful stretch of river

