



# Nature Travels

outdoor experiences in Sweden



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## WINTER FAMILY WEEK IN THE MOUNTAINS - 8 DAYS

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# Winter Family Week in the Mountains: 8-day experience

**Experience Code: GS8XW2**

*Experience the winter mountains at their best. At this time of year, there is still plenty of snow on the mountains, inviting you to put on your skis, or climb aboard your sled, and go exploring!*

*The mountain station's guides and leaders for the week will take you out and show you what the winter mountains have to offer. The tours cover a variety of terrain, from open mountain plains to beautiful dense forest both on the Norwegian and Swedish sides of the border. You will have the opportunity for both full day and half day tours.*

*This experience is geared to the needs and interests of families with children – the Swedish mountains are a wonderful winter playground! Children under 6 have free accommodation and food, you can hire a child ski-sled (for young children who cannot ski themselves) free during this week. There are activities such as "ski play" 2 hours/day 5 days a week and evening activities on some evenings and afternoons. Children up to 9 years of age can borrow cross-country ski equipment (skis, poles and boots) for free!*

*You will have the opportunity to go cross-country skiing, tobogganing, build snow castles, look for the tracks of birds and animals, or find a special spot to make a fire and barbecue sausages. The activities and adventures are endless during this family week in the Swedish mountains!*

## **Preliminary itinerary**

### **Saturday 10/2:**

Arrival at the mountain station. Dinner is served between 17:30-19:30.  
19:30 Welcome meeting for information with the local leaders and guides.

### **Monday 11/2 – Friday 16/2:**

Breakfast 07:45-09:30. Information meeting 10:00 every day.  
You will start the week with a short tour in the local area and you will get to know each other and start to get used to the skis and other equipment. You will be taught how to read a map and compass, etc. The activities and adventure possibilities are limitless! The length and the destinations for the tours are naturally adapted depending on weather and wind. Some afternoons/evenings there are activities for the children together with the mountain station's child activity leaders – these may be films, games, craft workshops, etc. There are also lectures, music and quizzes in the evenings.

### **Saturday 17/2:**

07:30-09:30 Breakfast. Departure

## **General information about the mountain station**

### **What can I do myself?**

Suggestions for different tours are available both in written form and from the staff at the mountain station. You can go for ski tours on your own with the help of written guides and well-marked trails in the area.

### **Day excursions:**

There are both full day and half day excursions you can join during your stay. Half day excursions are 5 hours. Full day excursions are 6-7 hours.  
Please ask at the reception on arrival for available excursions during your stay.

**Evening programmes:**

Activities are provided almost every evening of the week, but they can vary throughout the season - most take place at the station but some are in the surrounding area.

Examples: slideshows, quizzes, music entertainment, try yoga, try Qi Gong, etc.

For some of the evening activities there is a small charge.

Please ask at the reception on arrival for evening activities during your stay.

**Rental:**

It is possible to rent equipment at the mountain station - complete outdoor equipment: everything from winter clothes, skis and ice-fishing equipment. Contact us for a list of equipment available and prices.

**Store:**

At the mountain station there is a wide range of outdoor equipment and also food such as bread, canned goods, dried fruit and veg, sausages, meat, fish, milk products and toiletries.

The sports store has a good range of clothes, boots, backpacks, fishing equipment, outdoor kitchens, maps etc.

**Restaurant:** The mountain station has a certified, fully licensed restaurant.

**Other facts:**

Sauna is included for all the mountain station guests. There is also solarium and massage available at the station.

The mountain station has a mini spa, where treatments must be booked 3 weeks in advance. Full list of available treatments and information on how to book will be provided after booking. The mountain station is situated just below the tree line and you can easily reach the mountain plains. Three national parks and large nature reserves offer you fantastic tours in untouched natural surroundings. Here you can still listen to the sound of silence.

**Fixed dates for 2008 winter season:**

9 February–16 February (Sat-Sat):

Start: Saturday 9 February at 17.30 with dinner

End: Saturday 16 February at 10.00 after breakfast

6 April–13 April 2008 (Sun-Sun):

Start: Sunday 6 April at 17.30 with dinner

End: Sunday 13 April at 10.00 after breakfast

**The price:**

Prices below are prices for members of the International Youth Hostel Federation (Hostelling International), YHA or the STF (Swedish Tourist Association).

If you are not already a member, in order to qualify for the prices below you must purchase a membership card for the STF. This costs 430 Skr (approx. £33) for a family. Membership cards will be collected and paid for on arrival at the mountain station in Sweden.

2 adults and 1 or 2 children (under 16) in 4-bed room with sink (shared shower and WC):

Total price: £676/family/7 nights (8 days)

*(Please note that if you are not a member and do not wish to become a member, the non-member price for this experience is: £822/family)*

1 adults and 1 or 2 children (under 16) in 4-bed room with sink (shared shower and WC):

Total price: £487/family/7 nights (8 days)

*(Please note that if you are not a member and do not wish to become a member, the non-member price for this experience is: £541/family)*

It is possible to add an extra mattress on the floor or a cot for a baby at no extra cost for a family with three children (under 16).

Room and board upgrade available, see Optional Extras.

### **What The Price Includes:**

#### ***Accommodation***

7 nights' accommodation in four-person rooms with bunk beds and sink, shared shower and WC (accommodation upgrade available –see Optional Extras).

Bedding, towels are not included - see Optional Extras.  
End of stay cleaning is included.

#### ***Meals***

No food included. Board upgrades available - see Optional Extras.

There are self catering facilities, a store with a wide range of food such as bread, canned goods, dried fruit and veg, sausages, meat, fish, milk products and toiletries. There are also possibilities to buy meals at the fully-licensed restaurant at the mountain station.

#### ***Treatments and activities***

Full day and half day tours with leader.

1 child ski-sled/family (please book in advance)

Children up to 9 years of age can borrow cross-country ski equipment (skis, poles and boots) for free.

#### ***Guides:***

Experienced and knowledgeable local leaders and guides.

### **What The Price Does Not Include:**

Food, drinks, bedding and towels.

### **Optional extras:**

Room upgrades:

4-bed room with WC (shared shower): + £64/family/stay

4-bed room with WC and shower: + £96/family/stay

Board upgrades/week:

*Full board:*

Adult: £198

Child 6-15: £99  
Child 0-5: Free

*Half board:*

Adult: £160  
Child 6-15: £80  
Child 0-5: Free

*Dinner board:*

Adult: £123  
Child 6-15: £62  
Child 0-5: Free

It is possible to pre-book treatments in the mountain station's miniature spa for an additional charge. Information on how to book and treatments available will be provided after booking.

Bedding and towel: £12/set/stay

Ski play activity: £6/child/half day

## **Equipment/clothes needed:**

*NB: We advise you not to buy equipment or clothes for your trip or to incur other non-refundable expenses such as flights until you have received confirmation of your booking from us in writing.*

### ***Packing list (recommended):***

To get most out of your stay, it is important that you go through your equipment and make sure it is OK. Do not make things too complicated just because you are going to the mountains. For day tours from the mountain station you do not need any advanced equipment, but check that everything is in good condition and will last during a week's stay in the mountains.

### **Here are some tips for suitable winter equipment:**

Mountain skis with iron edges. 55-60 cm broad. Length approximately 20-30 cm longer than your own height. Skiing boots which are big enough to fit in thin socks and woollen socks and some insulating air. Poles with wide base for stability in loose snow. Gaiters to prevent snow getting in to your boots. Children from 3-8 years old should have skis that allow them to do a variety of activities. They should be easy to walk, jump and turn with. The skis should not be broader than the heel of the ski boot. The length should be the same as the child's height, but 3-4 year olds need skis a little shorter than their height. When the child gets better the length can be increased. A good rule is "it is better to grow out of a ski than grow into it".

A basic foundation for a good mountain experience is the old layer principle - one inner layer which transports moisture away and lets out heat, one middle layer that keeps you warm but still lets the moisture out and one outer layer that allows the moisture to evaporate and protects against wind and weather. Good basic clothing is a long-sleeved, legged underwear set (inner layer), a sweater, shirt that dries easily (middle layer) and jacket and trousers that breathe and protect against the wind (outer layer).

### **Toiletries:**

Soap, toothpaste, plasters, moisturiser, sun-cream, painkillers, blister tape, mosquito repellent (see the "About Sweden" page on our website for further information about mosquitoes), small first aid kit.

**Clothes:**

Take clothes you are not afraid to damage. Quick-drying materials are best. Bear in mind that jeans and sweatshirts are difficult to dry. Pack windproof jacket and trousers, warm winter jacket or really warm sweater, boots, shoes, two sets of warm socks made of wool, something to cover your head (windproof), two pair of winter gloves, a scarf, a warm sweater, sweatshirt, T-shirt, shirt, trousers, long sleeved, long-legged underwear (2 sets), a pair of shorts, underwear and something to sleep in.

Also bring training clothes and soft clothes for participation in Qi Gong, yoga etc.

**Equipment:**

Bedding and towel (if not chosen from optional extras), backpack for day tours 30-45l with belt, sitting mat, water bottle, thermos with cup.

**Additional:**

Compass and map of the area (map details will be provided after booking – they can also be bought on site), sunglasses, knife, camera, binoculars, plastic box to store your lunch package in.

There is a well-equipped sports store at the station and there are possibilities to rent equipment - you can buy or rent the equipment you need. If it is possible please let them know in advance and check and book so the equipment you need is available. Contact details will be provided after booking.

**Health requirements/experience:**

You should have a good level of fitness and like the outdoors.

**Group size:**

There is no minimum for this experience. There may be travellers from all over the world at the mountain station during your stay, though guests will be primarily from Scandinavia.

**Groups:**

It is possible for groups to book this experience - please contact us to discuss your requirements.

**Information about the area:**

The Grövel Lake and the Grövel Lake Mountains are situated in the northern part of Dalarna. The area is characterized by low mountains and old-growth pine forest and here and there streams and wells break through. Just a couple of kilometres apart lie the sources of the Dalälven and the Klarälven-Götaälv rivers.

The Grövel Lake Mountains are a collective term for the area surrounding the lake which stretches over the border between Sweden and Norway. The highest mountain on the Swedish side is Stovätteshågna at 1,204 m. On the Norwegian side there are a few peaks that reach above 1,200 m. Reachable on a day walk lie Store Svuku and Gröthågna, which are both around 1,400 m. The traces of the Ice Age are tangible and this makes the area geologically interesting.

The mountain flora largely consists of bushy vegetation. In the stream valleys you can find some of the mountains' characteristic plants such as Two-flower Violet and Garden Angelica. Small rodents, hare, foxes and elk are the mammals visitors can count on seeing. Wolverine, lynx and bear have a secure presence in the area. The lynx and bear population has increased and wolves wander through the area. The Ptarmigan, Siberian Jay and the Scandinavian Dipper are characteristic birds of the area. Of the raptors,

Golden Eagle, the Rough-legged Buzzard and the Gyr Falcon breed in the area. The Merlin population has increased during recent years and are now the most common bird of prey in the area.

## **Common Sense and the Right of Public Access**

*Do not disturb, do not destroy – that is the basic principle of Sweden's right of public access. It is not an unrestricted right. Here, you can read about the rules that apply.*

The Swedish right of public access is not a law, nor is it an absolute right. It may rather be regarded as an opportunity, one that makes it possible for everyone to enjoy the countryside. But it is an opportunity that requires responsibility, consideration and good judgement. Rules describing the kinds of consideration that must be shown are incorporated into Sweden's environmental law, and apply to everyone who exercises the right of public access.

### ***Respect others' privacy***

You may travel through the countryside on foot, bicycle, horse or skis, and temporarily remain in one place, as long as there is no risk that your presence or activities will damage crops, tree plantations or other sensitive areas. But you must respect the privacy of others, and you may not cross or intrude upon private property.

### ***Camping***

It is permitted to set up a tent for a day or so on ground that is not used for agriculture and is far from the nearest dwelling. The closer to a residence and the greater the risk of disturbing others, the more important it is to ask the landowner for permission.

### ***Do not litter***

All sorts of littering are forbidden in the countryside. A cigarette butt in a dry summer forest can destroy resources worth millions. Glass, tins and bottle caps harm both humans and wildlife, and plastic bags cause great suffering to animals that ingest them. For this reason, bags full of litter should never be left beside rubbish bin if it happens to be full.

### ***Blossoms and berries***

You may not take such items as twigs, branches or bark from living trees, including birches. Obviously, you may not take entire shrubs or trees, either. But you are allowed to pick wild berries, flowers and mushrooms, as well twigs and branches that have fallen to the ground. Certain flower species are so rare that they risk becoming endangered. These species are protected and may not be picked. Information about them is available from county administrative boards. Orchids are protected throughout Sweden.

### ***Protected natural areas***

Protected natural areas, including nature reserves and national parks, usually have special rules that restrict the right of public access.

More information on the right of public access can be found on our website under About Sweden or on [www.allemansratten.se](http://www.allemansratten.se)

## **Getting there:**

*NB: We advise you not to buy equipment or clothes for your trip or to incur other non-refundable expenses such as flights until you have received confirmation of your booking from us in writing.*

### **By Air:**

The nearest international airport is Stockholm Arlanda. It is also possible to fly into Stockholm Skavsta and Gothenburg. For details of flight connections between the UK and Sweden, see our Travel Add-ons page at:

<http://www.naturetravels.co.uk/category-add-ons.htm>

Without flying

- **London-Stockholm by train via Cologne.** Lunchtime Eurostar to Brussels, train to Cologne, overnight sleeper to Copenhagen and connecting trains to Borlänge.
- **London-Stockholm by train via Hamburg.** Early evening Eurostar to Brussels, overnight sleeper to Hamburg and train on to Borlänge. The fastest option.
- **Harwich-Stockholm by ferry to Denmark then train.** Ferry from Harwich to Denmark, train to Copenhagen and train on to Stockholm. 3-4 departures weekly.

### **Travel within Sweden:**

First travel to Stockholm or Gothenburg as shown above. From Stockholm Skavsta take the connecting airport bus to Stockholm City terminal.

#### **Direct Bus from Gothenburg or Stockholm**

There are direct buses from the bus terminals in Gothenburg and Stockholm direct to Grövelsjön. You can book these buses through Nature Travels. Please contact us for prices.

*From Stockholm:*

09/02/08 - depart Stockholm 10.15 arriving Grövelsjön 19.40

16/02/08 – depart Grövelsjön 08.40 arriving Stockholm 18.20

06/04/08 – depart Stockholm 10.15 arriving Grövelsjön 18.55

13/04/08 – depart Grövelsjön 08.40 arriving Stockholm 18.20

*From Gothenburg:*

09/02/08 - depart Gothenburg 10.15 arriving Grövelsjön 19.50

16/02/08 – depart Grövelsjön 08.40 arriving Gothenburg 18.30

06/04/08 – depart Gothenburg 10.15 arriving Grövelsjön 19.50

13/04/08 – depart Grövelsjön 08.40 arriving Gothenburg 18.30

#### **Other Options**

You can get to this experience by passing Mora. From Gothenburg you can travel with train or bus to Mora via Örebro and Borlänge. From Stockholm Central or Arlanda Central, you can travel by train via Borlänge.

Trains from Stockholm to most cities in Sweden are run by national train operator SJ, see [www.sj.se](http://www.sj.se) for times and fares or call 0046 771 75 75 75. You can travel the whole way with the train and bus journey on one ticket.

After arriving in Mora, you have a direct bus to Grövelsjön. Travel time from Gothenburg approximately 11-12h and from Stockholm City Central or Stockholm Arlanda (the airport) travel time approximately 8-9 hours.

More details and advice on local transport will be provided after booking.

If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact us.

### **What to do next:**

If you are interested in this experience, please make sure that you understand exactly what the experience entails and are confident that you will be able to take part fully in all activities included in the trip. If you have any doubts or questions, please discuss the matter with us and we will be happy to advise. Similarly, if you have any particular health or dietary requirements that we need to be aware of, please mention these at the time of booking. If you feel confident that you will be able to take part, then download and read our TERMS AND CONDITIONS. Then, please contact us to make sure that your chosen dates are available, and feel free to ask us anything else you like: we are keen to ensure that your trip is an enjoyable and memorable experience for you – we love Sweden and we want you to too!

For more information on how to book this trip please visit our website [www.naturetravels.co.uk/booking.htm](http://www.naturetravels.co.uk/booking.htm) or call us on 01929 463774.

### **Additional Notes**

This provider has received a prestigious Swedish Ecotourism award for its commitment to high standards to cultural and environmental sensitivity.