



Nature Travels

outdoor experiences in Sweden



ICE SKATING ON NATURAL ICE - 4 DAYS

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Ice Skating on Natural Ice: 4-day tour

Experience Code: NG4IW1

Ice skating on the clear ice of a frozen lake is a unique way to enjoy the beauty of a Swedish winter. In the wintertime, Sweden's extensive network of lakes make up a labyrinth of ice just waiting to be explored.

Ice Skating on Natural Ice is a 4-day trip-skating adventure under the expert guidance of local skating guides, who know the area intimately and will ensure that you find the locations with the best possible ice conditions for your tour. Ice-skating is an ideal way to experience the majesty and tranquility of the Swedish winter landscape. The sensation of gliding over clear lake ice is as wonderful as it sounds.

Ice conditions change regularly – your guide will know where the ice is best on a particular day. From your base at local hostel or hotel accommodation, depending on your preference, you will head out each day to the most suitable area for your trip skating tour. The speed and distance covered will be adapted to the needs and wishes of the participants – you should find that it is relatively straightforward to cover distances of 25km a day or more, with plenty of chances to take a break and admire the view. At the end of the day, you can soothe tired muscles with a sauna and reflect on your day's skating adventures. There may even be the chance for a moonlight skating tour beneath the stars!

If you have never skated on long-distance skates before, don't worry - you will be surprised how quickly a beginner can learn to trip-skate calmly and safely. Your guide will be skating ahead of you at all times, keeping close watch to ensure the ice conditions are suitable. Skates, shoes, pack and full safety equipment are included as standard.

Trip skating gives you a very special perspective on a Swedish winter – see you soon out on the ice!

Day 1

Your guide will meet you from Stockholm Skavsta (NYO) airport for transfer to the skating area. The exact location for the best ice skating conditions will vary throughout the winter season – your guide knows the area intimately and will ensure that you are skating in a region with the best ice conditions at the time of your visit. You will check in at your accommodation and have a safety and instruction briefing with your guide, when you will also be given your equipment for the tour. If time permits, you may be able to do some skating before relaxing to enjoy your first evening dinner together.

Days 2-3

During breakfast you will prepare lunch packages for your days out on the ice. Based on the latest weather and ice forecast information, you will head out to the best possible skating area for the day. Once at the lake, you will begin by examining the ice before readying your equipment. You will skate in a line, led by your guide, who will be checking the ice and ensure that you avoid any potential weak spots. The speed and distance covered during the day will be tailored to the level of the group and ice conditions.

Skating on natural ice is a unique experience, and you will have regular opportunities to take breaks to admire the beauty of the winter landscape, chat about your technique or just relax and soak up the atmosphere. At the end of your day's skating, you will return to the minibus for transfer back to your accommodation.

A sauna before dinner is a wonderful way to soothe tired muscles and the perfect environment in which to reflect on the day's adventures with your fellow skaters. If

conditions allow, there may even be the chance for a moonlight skating trip later in the evening!

Day 4

After breakfast you will head out for another day on the ice, skating as long as possible depending on scheduled departure times for the participants. On your way back to the airport, you will have time to stop for a shower and change of clothes and perhaps something to eat, before your guide transfers you to the airport for departure.

2010 winter season:

- 14-17 January
- 25-28 February

Start: You will be met by your guide at 12.00 at Stockholm Skavsta airport (NYO) or 12.30 at Nyköping station.

End: Your experience ends at Stockholm Skavsta airport at 18.00 or 17.30 at Nyköping station.

Tours can also be arranged on other dates between just before Christmas and the end of March – please contact us to discuss your requirements.

The price:

Price depends on accommodation option chosen:

- Hostel accommodation including full board (provisions are supplied for self-catering): £540/person
- Hostel accommodation including full board (meals are prepared and served): £632/person
- Hotel accommodation including full board: £697/person

What The Price Includes:

Accommodation

Shared 2-person rooms in local hotel/hostel accommodation depending on option chosen. For hotel and hostel accommodation, bed linen and towels are included. For hostel accommodation, end cleaning is not included.

Meals

All meals from dinner on Day 1 to lunch on Day 4. Please let us know in advance if you have any particular dietary requirements. Meals are self-catering or served depending on option chosen.

Equipment

- Trip skates
- Skating shoes (please advise shoe sizes in advance)
- Rucksack
- All necessary safety equipment

Guides

Experienced and knowledgeable local guide.

Transfers

- Local transfers to/from Stockholm Skavsta airport or Nyköping station and your accommodation.
- Local transfers between accommodation and daily skating areas.

Transfers are by minibus.

What The Price Does Not Include:

- Alcoholic drinks.
- End cleaning of hostel accommodation (if you do not wish to do end cleaning of your room yourself, this can normally be arranged on site, price typically 150-200 SEK, about £13-£18, per room).

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):

Toiletries:

Moisturiser and sun-cream.

Clothes:

Dress for winter activity, as if you were going cross-country skiing. Consider that the clothes need to breathe because you are active. Different layers are always good. Also, bring a complete extra change of clothes and something warm to put on during breaks.

Equipment:

Full equipment is provided. Please see "What the price includes" above.

Additional:

Sunglasses, camera, binoculars.

Health requirements/experience:

You should have a normal level of fitness, swimming ability, and enjoy the outdoors. Some previous skating experience (e.g. rollerblades) is required for scheduled tours. For private groups, the tour can be adapted to accommodate novice skaters.

Minimum age 16 for scheduled tours. For private tours, younger children (min. 8 years) can be accommodated depending on experience.

Group size:

- Minimum number required for tour to run: 3 persons
- Maximum number of participants for scheduled tours: 8 persons

Groups:

This experience is ideal for groups. Private tours can be arranged at standard prices for groups of min. 6 persons. For smaller groups, please contact us to discuss your requirements.

Information about the area:

Depending on the location of the best ice conditions, you will normally be skating in the counties of Östergötland and/or Södermanland.

Östergötland a county in south-east Sweden, bordering Småland to the south, Västergötland and lake Vättern (Sweden's second largest lake) to the west, Närke and Södermanland to the north and the Baltic Sea to the east. The northern part of the county is hilly and heavily forested with a large number of lakes. To the east of Östergötland lies an archipelago of around 118 sq.km.

The landscape of Södermanland varies a great deal from area to area. It is a region rich in water, with several rivers and more than one thousand lakes. There is also a beautiful archipelago with thousands of islands, a paradise for adventurers. Södermanland is the province for those who appreciate lowland nature. Its history is strongly reflected in all its numerous well-preserved historical remains, from runic stones through to modern age architecture.

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.allemanstratten.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:

You can choose to fly to:

- Stockholm Skavsta (NYO)
- Stockholm Arlanda (ARN)
- Stockholm Västerås (VST)

NB: Stockholm Skavsta is by far the most convenient destination airport. Your tour begins from here. Your guide will meet you from Skavsta for transfer to your accommodation. It is also possible to arrange for pick-up/drop-off at Nyköping station.

For details of flight connections see www.naturetravels.co.uk/holidays-in-sweden.htm. Click on the airport icons to see connections to/from each airport.

Many airlines offer discounts on rental cars in connection with their flights.

Without flying:

- **London-Nyköping by train:** Lunchtime Eurostar to Brussels, train to Cologne, overnight sleeper to Copenhagen and connecting trains to Nyköping.
- **Harwich-Nyköping by ferry and train:** DFDS ferry Harwich to Esbjerg (Denmark), then onward train to Nyköping via Copenhagen. DFDS ferries can be booked online through us at www.naturetravels.co.uk/add-ons-dfds-seaways-ferries.htm.

Travel within Sweden:

From Skavsta airport: Your tour begins from here. Your guide will meet you for transfer to your accommodation.

From Stockholm Arlanda or Stockholm Västerås airport: Flight bus to Stockholm Central station (40 mins), flight bus from Stockholm Central station to Skavsta airport (80 mins). Flight buses can be booked online through us at <http://www.naturetravels.co.uk/add-ons-flygbussarna.htm>. From Stockholm Arlanda, you can also travel into central Stockholm by the Arlanda Express train.

From Nyköping station: Pick-up/drop-off from Nyköping station can be arranged 30 mins after/before start and end times at Skavsta airport.

By Car:

Please let us know if you plan to travel by car and we will forward driving instructions.

If you have any questions do not hesitate to contact us. More details and advice on local transport will be provided after booking.

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 or call us on 01929 463774.

Additional Notes

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