



Nature Travels

outdoor experiences in Sweden



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HIKING ON THE KING'S TRAIL FROM ABISKO TO KEBNEKAISE - 8 DAYS

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Hiking on the King's Trail from Abisko to Kebnekaise

8-day tour

Experience Code: STF8TS1

The northern section of the King's Trail ("Kungsleden" in Swedish) in Lapland is probably the most famous part of this historic 440km long-distance walking path. From its start point at the tourist station in Abisko, the trail leads south towards Kebnekaise which, at 2105m, is Sweden's highest mountain.

Along the way, the landscape is constantly changing but always spectacular, as you travel through a natural valley surrounded by mountains. The Abisko-Kebnekaise route is one of the "classic" tours for walkers seeking an inspiring and uplifting mountain hiking experience without the need to be exceptionally fit. The tour is accessible to anyone in general good physical condition, though in order to enjoy the experience to its full you should be a moderately experienced hiker.

Your accommodation along the route will be in mountain huts. Swedish mountain huts are comfortable and welcoming places to come to after a day's walking and blend in well with the natural surroundings. In the huts there is a spirit of teamwork and you will cook your meals together with your fellow hikers and share washing up duties, etc.

Daily distances covered on this section of the King's Trail will be 12-23km, with maximum height difference on a single leg around 300m (day-tour to Kebnekaise summit 1400m). As you will be staying in cabins, there is no need for a particularly heavy backpack, and the weight of your pack should not exceed 10-12kg. In addition to the standard tours, there are also special dates for participants aged 18-35 and over 55 as well as a special autumn tour.

The King's Trail is Sweden's best-known long-distance hiking path, and the majesty of scenery and the beauty of this wild and open landscape provides for a unique hiking adventure.

Day 1:

Gather at Abisko Tourist Station at 18.00. Dinner in the station restaurant and information about the hike.

Day 2:

The start of your journey on Kungsleden. You follow the Abisko river to lake Abiskojaure.

Distance: 15km

Height difference: +100m

Day 3:

This day takes you up into the high mountains to the cabins at lake Alesjaure, with the chance for an evening sauna to soothe your muscles!

Distance: 20km

Height difference: +300m

For the age 18-35 tour (see below) you will follow a slightly different route, leaving the King's Trail for a while to see a "little extra". You will rejoin the trail again in the afternoon.

Distance: 22km

Height difference: +450m, -150m

Day 4:

Hiking to the mountain cabin at Tjäktja.
Distance: 13km
Height difference: +200m

For the age 18-35 tour (see below) this day features a day-tour in the area around Lake Alesjaure. Depending on conditions, this may include summit tour to Kåtoktjåkka-massivet or visit to Alesjaure Sami settlement.

Day 5:

Crossing the Tjäkta Pass at 1140m, the way opens up into the Tjäktjavagge valley.
Sauna in the evening.
Distance: 12km
Height difference: +150m, -300m

For the age 18-35 tour (see below) this day has a longer route to reach the cabins.
Distance: 25km
Height difference: +450m, -300m

Day 6:

Stunning views over mountain peaks and glaciers as you head for Kebnekaise Mountain Station.
Distance: 23km
Height difference: -50m, +250/300m

For the age 55+ and autumn tours (see below) this day features an easy day's walk through the Tjäktja valley to the cabins at Singi, with dramatic mountain views all day.
Distance: 12 km
Height difference: -100m

Day 7:

Possibility to participate in guided day-tour from Kebnekaise Mountain Station to the summit of Mt. Kebnekaise, Sweden's highest mountain at 2105m (weather conditions permitting). This should be booked in advance through us. Payment to be made locally on arrival (see Optional Extras). For participants who choose not to do the summit tour, the guide will lead a less challenging day hike in the area.

For the age 18-35 tour (see below), summit tour to Kebnekaise is part of the standard tour itinerary and is included in the price.

For the age 55+ and autumn tours (see below), this day takes you to Kebnekaise Mountain station, surrounded by high peaks and glaciers from morning to evening.
Sauna, showers and dinner in the restaurant.
Distance: 14km
Height difference: +150m, -150m

Day 8:

After breakfast you will walk the 9km to lake Ladtjojaure, take a boat across the lake and then walk the final 5km stretch to Nikkaluokta for a meal at a local restaurant and the chance to take a shower. Bus to Kiruna departs around 17.00. This bus will allow you to connect with the night train to Stockholm. Earlier buses from Nikkaluokta may also be available – please check with us for timetable information.
Distance: 14km hiking (19km including boat)
Height difference: -200m

Please note that the programme is subject to change depending on weather conditions.

Other information:

The midnight sun does not shine all summer long but it is daylight 24 hours a day from around mid May to the end of July. In August and September, bring a small torch or headlamp.

There are only emergency telephones in the cabins. The phone is directly connected to the police. Mobile phones generally do not work out in the mountains.

Fixed dates for 2010 summer season:

29.06-06.07.10, 06.07-13.07.10
13.07-20.07.10
24.07-31.07.10*
30.07-06.08.10
21.08-28.08.10**
11.09-18.09.10***

*special tour for participants aged 18-35 (price incl. guided day tour to summit of Mt Kebnekaise)

**special tour for participants aged over 55

***special autumn tour

The price:

29.06-06.07.10, 06.07-13.07.10	£567
13.07-20.07.10	£605
24.07-31.07.10*	£645
30.07-06.08.10	£628
21.08-28.08.10**	£544
11.09-18.09.10***	£544

*special tour for participants aged 18-35 (price incl. guided day tour to summit of Mt Kebnekaise)

**special tour for participants aged over 55

***special autumn tour

What The Price Includes:

Accommodation

Accommodation at Abisko Tourist Station, Kebnekaise Mountain Station and beds in mountain cabins along the route.

Cabins: The beds are fitted with mattresses, pillows and blankets. During the summer season you should bring a light sleeping bag or a set of sheets. The cabins are comfortable but of basic standard and there is no electricity or running water. You will all need to help each other with domestic duties, cleaning, cooking, doing the dishes etc. Wooden fires or gas heats the cabins. The cooking is done on gas stoves. The cabins you will visit during this hike have 20-78 beds (rooms with 4-10 beds, male/female mixed). There are also extra mattresses and blankets in case the cabin gets full. Everyone will get shelter - in the event that all the beds are occupied you will get a space on the floor and a mattress. It is not possible to reserve beds in advance.

Meals

Full board accommodation at Abisko Tourist Station and Kebnekaise Mountain Station. Meals along the route and final meal in Nikkaluokta.

Food for sale: In Alesjaure and Sälka there are small shops where you can buy dried and canned food, drinks and snacks, etc. There is no fresh food for sale in the mountain cabins. There is also a small shop at Abiskojaure where you can find some food, but the range is not as wide as in Sälka and Alesjaure.

Transfer

Boat on Lake Ladtjojuare. Bus transfer Nikkaluokta–Kiruna Centrum.

Guides:

Experienced and knowledgeable local guide.

What The Price Does Not Include:

Alcoholic drinks.

Optional extras:

If you would like to extend your stay before or after the tour, please contact us and we will be happy to discuss the alternatives with you.

For standard tours, a guided day-tour to the summit of Kebnekaise on Day 7 can be added at a cost of 950 SEK (around £82). This should be booked in advance but payment should be made locally on arrival. *NB: This option is not available on the 55+ and autumn tour itineraries.*

Backpacks are also available to hire for the tour. Please contact us for prices and to reserve equipment.

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.

The right equipment in your backpack gives you a more enjoyable experience. Check your equipment at home, and make sure that everything is in good condition.

Transport of clothes: You can send things not needed for the hike by bus to Nikkaluokta. Bring a small bag to pack your things in. You will find necessary transport documents on the buses and at reception at Abisko Tourist Station. Luggage transfer is included in the price of your tour, but there is a storage fee of 25 Skr (around £2.20) per item in Nikkaluokta. This is an important source of income for the local Sami community.

Equipment: Below you will find a suggestion for what to bring for the hike. Pack light! Most people bring too many clothes. The weight of your backpack should not be more than 10-12 kg during the hikes between cabins. Choose travel-sized toiletry items.

Map: A suitable map for the whole hike is Swedish Mountain Map BD6 (latest edition 2006). We do not recommend a particular supplier, but you may wish to contact The Map Shop at www.themapshop.co.uk.

Fluids: It is essential to keep your fluid levels up. If you do not, you will feel tired and "gluey". Bring a thermos for warm drinks, a water bottle and a mug. You will find crystal clear water along the trail most of the time but in the high mountains and in the later parts of the summer it could be several kilometres in between the creeks.

Packing list (recommended):

Toiletries:

A small bar of soap, toothbrush and paste, wipes, toilet paper, a small towel, plasters, moisturiser, sun-cream, painkillers, blister tape, mosquito repellent (see the "About Sweden" page on our website for further information about mosquitoes).

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.

- Woollen socks, 2 pairs
- Light base layer (long-johns and top) made of wool or synthetics, 2 sets
- Quick-drying sweater/shirt
- Rainproof and windproof jacket and trousers
- A pair of gloves/mittens
- Cap
- Hiking boots
- Indoor clothes and shoes for use in cabins

Equipment:

Poorly-fitting rucksack or boots can make your hike uncomfortable. Make sure you go for a trial hike with your equipment beforehand. When packing your rucksack, you should plan to leave space for food, including bulky items such as bread.

- Backpack with rain cover, approximately 60 litres with hip belt
- Light sleeping bag or sleeping sheet (beds with pillows and thin duvets are provided in the cabins)
- Unbreakable thermos
- Drinking mug
- Water bottle
- Plates, cutlery, cups and cooking utensils are provided at the cabins, but you may wish to bring a camping set with plate, fork, knife and spoon, cup for soup, etc for lunch stops.

Additional:

Compass, map, sunglasses, matches or lights, torch or head torch, candles, sitting pad, knife, camera, binoculars, waterproofing for boots, spare laces.

Health requirements/experience:

To enjoy this hike you should have some previous experience of walking with a backpack and be in good physical condition. Recommended minimum age 16 years. Participants must be min. 16 to participate in summit tour of Kebnekaise.

Distances between the mountain cabins vary from 12 to 23 km. Please see itinerary above for daily height differences.

Group size:

Minimum 6 and maximum 14 participants. This experience is open to travellers from all over the world. Groups may be made up of participants from a number of countries, around 60% of whom are likely to be from Scandinavia.

Groups:

Private groups of minimum 5 persons can book this experience at standard prices on other dates by arrangement. Smaller groups are also possible at an additional rate - please contact us for a price quotation.

Information about the area:

Created by the Swedish Tourist Association at the end of the 19th century, the King's Trail was made to introduce hikers to the beauty and majesty of the Lapland scenery.

The trail runs 440km from Abisko in the north to Hemavan in the south, passing through some of the world's most spectacular mountain landscapes. Taking day-tours from the main route allows for an ascent of Sweden's highest mountain, Kebnekaise, or excursions into the pathless wilderness of the mighty Sarek National Park.

Despite the remote hiking possibilities afforded by the trail, altitude differences are relatively small, which makes the King's Trail an ideal long-distance walking path accessible to anyone in general good health.

The name "Kebnekaise" comes from a Sami word meaning "Cauldron Crest". The mountain has two peaks, the highest of which is glaciated and reaches to a current height of 2105m. As with glacial peaks worldwide, the glacier is showing signs of receding, and the oldest measurement of Kebnekaise puts the height of the mountain at 2117m.

At the foot of the mountain lies Kebnekaise Mountain Station, the starting point for ascents of the mountain via the western (4-6 hours) or eastern (3-5 hours) routes. Kebnekaise is the highest peak in Europe in such a northerly position, and on a clear day an area of land almost the size of the Netherlands can be seen from its summit.

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

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

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.

Flight buses from Swedish airports into the city can be booked online through us – see www.naturetravels.co.uk/add-ons-flygbussarna.htm

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

Without flying

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

Travel within Sweden:

The experience begins at Abisko Turiststation and ends in Nikkaluokta for bus transfer to Kiruna.

First travel to Stockholm as shown above.

Stockholm to Abisko Turiststation:

By train: Night train to Abisko Turiststation (travel time around 17-18 hours, direct or with changes). From Stockholm Arlanda airport, you can catch the train directly under the airport terminal. From Stockholm Skavsta or Stockholm Västerås, take the flight bus into central Stockholm (travel time about 90 minutes, can be booked online through Nature Travels - see www.naturetravels.co.uk/add-ons-flygbussarna.htm) for onward connections.

By air: SAS (www.flysas.com) and Norwegian (www.norwegian.com) both operate flights from Stockholm Arlanda to Kiruna. Abisko Turiststation is 1.5 hours by bus from Kiruna. Please contact us for timetable information.

Nikkaluokta to Stockholm:

By train: Bus transfer to Kiruna (included in the price). Train to Stockholm (17-18 hours, direct or with changes).

By air: SAS (www.flysas.com) and Norwegian (www.norwegian.com) both operate flights from Kiruna to Stockholm Arlanda. Local buses serve Kiruna airport from Kiruna town. Please contact us for timetable information.

Trains in Sweden are run by national train operator SJ. For train connections and to book your tickets, see www.sj.se. Click "In English" in the top right corner. Please note that the most affordable tickets are released 90 days before departure.

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 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.