



ICE PEAKS

Follow wolf tracks, skate by starlight, visit the Arctic cathedral... our pick of frosty fun

1 Norway's islands with Inntravel

Rising dramatically from the sea, Norway's snow-capped Arctic Islands are best explored aboard one of its Hurtigruten coastal steamers. This seven-night trip takes in three islands, from Austvågøya in the Lofotens, where you can go orca, dolphin and porpoise spotting on a boat trip or hike into the hills in snowshoes, to the island city of Tromsø, with its iceberg-shaped Arctic cathedral and the Polar Museum. Here, you can head out into the Arctic tundra on a dog-sledding or reindeer safari. The seven-night trip costs from £1,650 including international flights, transfers, B&B, some dinners and journey by coastal steamer in an outside cabin (inntravel.co.uk).

2 Transylvania winter walk and snowshoe in Romania with Exodus Travels

A land of Gothic castles and craggy mountains, Transylvania could not be a more atmospheric location for a small group winter-walking holiday. During the week you will travel through ancient forests and villages, hike to Dracula's castle and follow wolf and bear tracks in the snow, returning each day to a comfortable guesthouse and home-cooked meals in the pretty village of Măgura. This eight-day trip, which has departures

throughout January and February from London, costs from £999 per person based on two sharing, including flights, transfers, B&B, most meals, hiking equipment and all scheduled activities (exodus.co.uk).

3 Winter sports and culture in Japan with InsideJapan

This largely self-guided but meticulously planned trip to Japan combines time in both Tokyo and Kyoto with five days in the famous ski resort of Hakuba (where you can ski, snowboard or just bob about in the hot springs), a stay in a Buddhist temple and a chance to see wild snow monkeys in Yudanaka. The 13-night trip costs from £2,550 per person based on two sharing a twin room, B&B, a 14-day Japan Rail Pass and all other transfers, a private guide for a day in both Tokyo and Kyoto and ski passes. International flights to Tokyo are not included. Departure dates between January and March (insidejapantours.com).

4 Trip skating in Sweden with Nature Travels

Ice skating fanatics will love this four-day small group 'trip skating' adventure (that's travelling cross-country on skates), which makes the most of Sweden's extensive

network of frozen lakes. Under the leadership of experienced local guides, you will get to glide your way through the spectacular, peaceful Swedish winter landscape, sometimes even under the stars. Scheduled tour dates are in February. Additional tours can be offered on request between January and March. From £613 per person, based on two sharing (single supplement, £37), including transfers from Stockholm, equipment, guides, hostel accommodation and meals. See naturetravels.co.uk for dates and prices.

5 Family winter adventure in Canada with Explore

This wintry small group trip offers the perfect blend of cosmopolitan city break (Montréal and Ottawa) and wilderness adventure with the chance to ice skate, snowshoe, cross-country ski, ice fish and even learn how to build a shelter, make a fire and cook traditional bread. Accommodation is in hotels in the cities and wooden cabins during the wilder parts. This eight-day trip for families with children aged eight and above departs on 21 December from Gatwick or Heathrow and costs from £1,969 per person, including international flights and transfers, B&B, scheduled activities and some lunches and dinners (explore.co.uk). ♦