

The Arctic Challenge 2026

An inspiring adventure into the heart of Lapland



Set in the heart of Arctic Lapland, this is a land of vast wilderness, frozen lakes and rivers, the extraordinary Aurora Borealis, herds of reindeer, the occasional moose, snow dusted tundra and endless Boreal Forest. Ice and snow are the norm for many months of the year and the dog and ski are still essential for everyday use during the long winters. Here, just north of Kiruna (67°51'N 20°13'E) and 150 km into the Arctic Circle is where the Arctic Challenge is held.

The Arctic Challenge is an inspiring wilderness endurance challenge, held over four days, which incorporates a 35km dog sled race, 20km hike, ice fishing, orienteering, woodland fire lighting and a light-hearted Swedish quiz. Participants need have no previous experience of any activity, as all instruction will be provided in situ by your guides. The Arctic Challenge is open for up to five teams of four people, each event being scored to encourage healthy competition! The Challenge concludes with a visit to the bar at the Ice Hotel at Jukkasjärvi, a well-earned finish to your efforts spent in this unique and unspoiled landscape, followed by prize giving to the winning team.

Key information

Duration:

4 Days

Country:

Sweden

Start/finish:

Kiruna, Lapland

Activities:

- Orienteering
- Dog sledding
- Hiking
- Ice Fishing
- Fire lighting
- Swedish Quiz

Cost:

£2,000 min fundraising
per person

£300 registration fee per
person (excluding flights)



“Wow - what an incredible and unforgettable experience... meeting everyone from the charity and organisations who support it, was amazing. I will definitely be raving even more about the work you all do and how important this charity is!”

Itinerary

Day 1

An early start to catch the flight to Stockholm and onwards to Kiruna, Sweden's most northerly city, located in the province of Lapland. At Kiruna, the group will be met by the in-country team and a short transfer takes us to our base camp lodge. After coffee and a safety briefing, you will be issued with arctic clothing and given an introduction in driving and sled dog handling before helping harness your dogs and heading to the wilderness camp by the light of your own head torch.

Once at the wilderness lodge, you'll be given map reading instruction, and we'll all have dinner, wine, and a chat about tomorrow's events to complete the evening.

Day 2

Your day starts with a short (1/1.5 hr.) orienteering challenge, finishing on the frozen lake where, armed with an auger you drill a hole through the ice and try your hand at fishing Arctic style. You return to camp for a quick coffee where teams will again harness their dog teams and compete in time trials over a 35km circuit across frozen lakes and through arctic forests.

There will be a brief midday break for refreshments and recuperation before the time trials continue in the afternoon under torchlight. Your group will arrive back at the wilderness camp by early/mid-afternoon. After a brew and warm up, there's a fire lighting challenge using only naturally occurring materials and a box of matches. The day finishes with a sauna (and optional snow roll), Swedish quiz and dinner.

Day 3

Today is the 'Big One'. It's time to commence on the Nordic hike where you will set off on a 20km race, starting from the wilderness camp. The marked route will take you through the back country via Karpasjarvi and finish back at the base camp lodge some 3.5 – 5.5 hours later. With all groups safely back in the warmth, you'll be given hot soup and showers, and we'll visit the Ice Hotel for some decidedly chilly cocktails in ice-sculpted glasses. Finally, back to base camp for tallying scores, prize giving and a celebration dinner.

Day 4

A relaxed breakfast and transfer to Kiruna airport for the flight to Stockholm and your onward connection to the UK.





Conditions

The Arctic is a harsh environment, and temperatures can drop to as low as -35 or more. In the event of a light breeze, it is likely to feel even colder. The sun doesn't rise above the horizon from late-November to mid-January and we will have approximately five to six hours of twilight per day. As a result, a large portion of the main events will be undertaken in near darkness, adding to the challenge. However, on the plus side, this is also the best time to see the extraordinary Aurora Borealis, or Northern Lights.

Difficulty

Participants need to have a reasonable level of fitness with good endurance and stamina. A sense of humour always helps too! As in all challenges, the fitter you are and the more you get involved, the more enjoyable it is.

Fitness

Although the days will be relatively short, the activities you take part in will test you physically - especially the hike. Therefore, some pre-challenge fitness and endurance training is strongly recommended, such as time spent on the cross trainer and hill walking / running.

Instruction

Instruction for all activities will be provided by the local guides in all disciplines. They are based in the area, so are very knowledgeable about the area and the conditions, so you will be in good hands. This is a challenging weekend with a steep learning curve. However, it's eminently achievable and with a bit of fitness training and preparation, will provide you with a huge sense of personal achievement, as well as an opportunity to build some lasting friendships.

The Main Events

Dog sleds

These are one-man sleds that you drive standing up with a team of three or four dogs, mainly Greenland dogs and huskies.

Food and shelter

You will spend two nights at the wilderness lodge where you will be sleeping in team dormitories lit by candlelight and kept warm by wood burning stoves.

There will then be one night spent at the base camp lodge where there are showers, electricity, and again team rooms and dormitories.

The food provided will be typical for the region, including moose or reindeer and salmon. Vegetarians and Vegans are easily catered for.

In country transport

Pick-ups and drop offs by minibuses or other suitable vehicle equipped with snow tires will be provided.

Skidoos are used by safety staff and will be on hand to pick you up if you'd like to stop or take a break at any point during the challenges.

Practical details

Flexibility and safety

At times we shall be in a remote wilderness area with poor communications. Issues such as natural disasters, political disturbances, mechanical breakdown, poor acclimatisation, client fitness or accidents can occasionally delay or interfere with the challenge. The weather can be unpredictable, and, where necessary, the programme may have to be changed to suit the conditions. The guides and instructors have the final say on whether individual participants are able to continue in any of the activities for safety reasons. Although every effort will be made to ensure the smooth running of the Arctic Challenge, you must be aware of the above and accept both the risks and possible delays and take all necessary precautions yourselves.

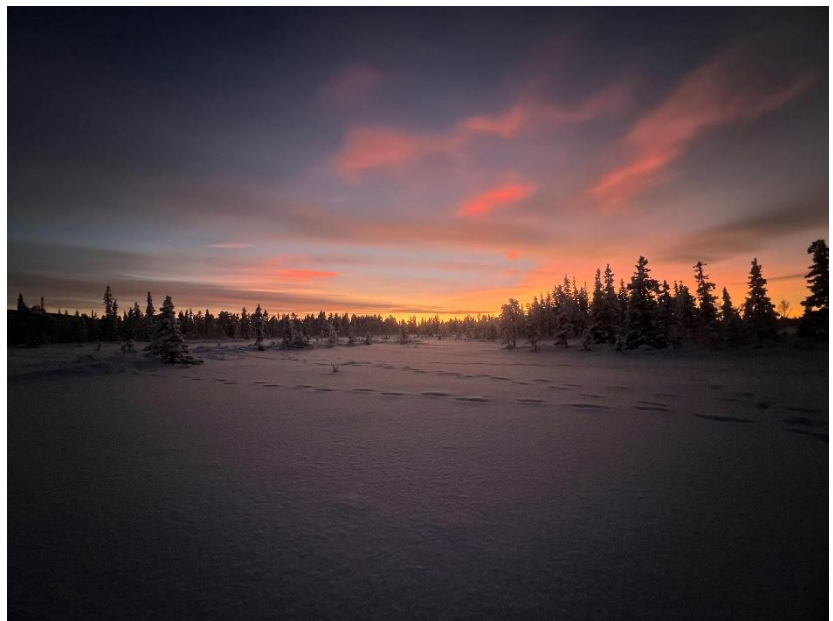
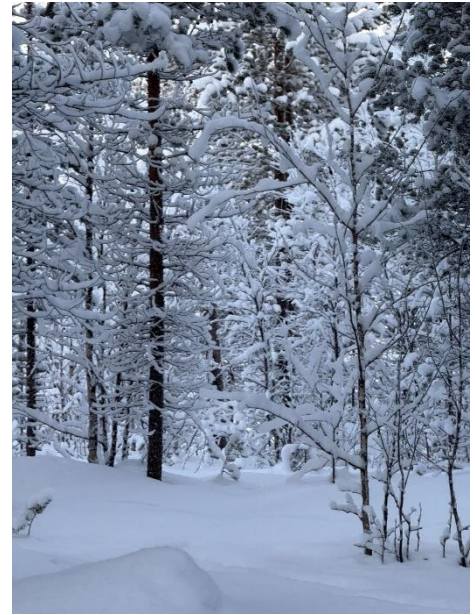
What the trip includes

Included: Kiruna airport transfers to and from base camp lodge at Kaupinnen, accommodation and all meals from dinner on Friday up to and including breakfast on Monday. All activities during the Challenge, guiding, equipment and instruction as per the programme.

Not Included: Flights to and from Kiruna, lunch on days one and four, drinks at the Ice Hotel or alcoholic and soft drinks other than teas and coffee at base camp and wilderness lodges.

Insurance

All participants must have rescue and repatriation insurance.



*The itinerary may vary slightly depending on weather conditions.

Day	Schedule	Accommodation
Day 1	An early start to Kiruna. On arrival you'll be given a safety briefing, Arctic clothing will be distributed, and you'll be introduced to your dog team. After instruction on how to handle the dogs and sled, it's out into the wilderness by torchlight to the wilderness lodge.	Wilderness lodge. Dormitory style rooms
Day 2	A brisk start to the morning with some Arctic orienteering, finishing on the frozen lake for an ice fishing challenge. A quick break and then onto the dog sled race from mid-morning to mid-afternoon. Sauna and snow rolls and then into the warm for dinner and a relaxed Swedish quiz. A chance to see the northern lights after dinner amidst the darkness of the Boreal Forest.	Wilderness lodge. Dormitory style rooms
Day 3	The Nordic hike. From the wilderness lodge to base camp, 20km across frozen lakes and along forested tracks. Tea, showers and prizes for the winning team. We'll nip into the Ice Hotel for well-earned drinks pre or post dinner.	Base camp lodge. Dormitory style rooms
Day 4	It's time to pack up, say goodbye to the dogs and fly home.	Home sweet home



“When I saw the Aurora, it was a dream come true!”



Packing list

Essential	Provided	Optional
Expedition duffel/backpack is easier than a suitcase.	Insulated all in one sledding overalls	Hot water bottle
Sleeping bag liner / single duvet cover	Thick / heavy duty winter hats and gloves	Battery /phone charger
Daysack / backpack - 35/45L	Sleeping bag	Alcohol/drinks for the evening –
Snow/walking boots	Heavy duty cold weather boots	
Duvet/Ski/down jacket		
Winter weight or ski trousers		
Fleece		
Wicking or merino tops to use as base layers		
Thick and long trek/ski socks x3		
Thermals/long johns		
Gloves, mittens (both thick and thin)		
Woolly hat/beanie		
Head torch & spare batteries		
Water bottle (note that a camelback is likely to freeze)		
Thermos		
Balaclava		
Ski goggles		
Hand warmers		
Lip salve		
Towel		
Wash kit		
Personal first aid kit (including plasters and Compeed for blister treatment)		
Swimsuit/shorts for the sauna		
Day clothing - For travel and in the lodges		
Hut shoes / trainers		
Snacks – something high energy and bite-sized that is less likely to freeze (e.g. homemade flapjacks)		
Personal medication		

“At times I found it tough. It was hard work, but at the end of the day I had such a feeling of satisfaction. It was a once-in-a-lifetime experience.”

