

FINLAND · WINTER SPORTS · ADVENTURE · WILDLIFE · HIKING

Finnish Lapland

Finnish Lapland is where UK families go to meet Santa and couples go to chase the northern lights: husky and reindeer sledding, snowmobile safaris, glass-roofed cabins and dependable snow from late November to early April. December is peak season; February and March bring longer days, deep snow and good aurora odds. Midwinter nights average around -14°C in Rovaniemi and can drop below -30°C.

 Read the UK government's travel advice for Finland and entry requirements before you go.

 COUNTRY Finland	 BEST TIME Dec–Mar	 FLIGHT FROM LONDON 3h 30m direct ~£280–£750 return	 DAILY BUDGET £85–£400 £££ Expensive
 WARMEST MONTH July (20°C)	 SEA TEMPERATURE —	 TIME ZONE Helsinki +2h vs UK now	 CURRENCY Euro £1 ≈ €1.19

Most trips are three to seven nights in one base. Rovaniemi, on the Arctic Circle, has the most flights, Santa Claus Village and plenty of hotels; Saariselkä, near Ivalo airport, is smaller and darker, better for the aurora; Levi and Ylläs, reached via Kittilä, add downhill and cross-country skiing. Activities are sold as half-day safaris with thermal suits provided, and they make up much of the cost. December delights children but is short on daylight, and in the far north the sun doesn't rise for weeks; February and March are brighter, with deep snow. September's autumn colours and first auroras suit hikers.

Highlights

- 1

CULTURE

Santa Claus Village

Straddling the Arctic Circle just north of Rovaniemi, with Santa's office, his official post office and reindeer rides. Entry and meeting Santa are free but the photos are not; go early on a weekday in December to dodge the longest queues.
- 2

ADVENTURE

Husky safaris

Driving your own team of huskies through snow-laden forest is the experience most visitors remember. Half-day safaris run from every resort and start with a short lesson; multi-day trips with overnight stays in wilderness cabins go much deeper.
- 3

NATURE

Northern lights around Saariselkä

Above about 68°N the aurora appears on most clear, dark nights between late August and early April. Saariselkä's glass igloos made the idea famous; an aurora alert app and a guided chase by minibus to find clear skies raise your odds.
- 4

NATURE

Pallas-Yllästunturi National Park

A chain of rounded fells running north from Ylläs past Pallas to Hetta, just west of Levi, with marked ski and snowshoe trails in winter and the Hetta–Pallas hiking route in summer and autumn. The bare fell tops give wide views over snow-loaded forest.

5

CULTURE

Siida, Inari

Inari is the heart of Sámi culture in Finland, and Siida, its Sámi museum and nature centre in Inari village beside Lake Inari, explains reindeer herding, Sámi crafts and life through the Arctic seasons. It's an easy trip from Saariselkä.

Where to stay

WHERE TO STAY

Rovaniemi

Families on short trips: the most flights, Santa Claus Village, a range of hotels and every activity, though it feels more town than wilderness.

WHERE TO STAY

Saariselkä

Compact fell village about 30 minutes from Ivalo airport, with dark skies and Urho Kekkonen National Park on the doorstep; best for aurora hunters.

WHERE TO STAY

Levi

One of Finland's two biggest ski resorts, about 15 minutes from Kittilä airport, with lifts, bars and restaurants in the village; suits groups and keen skiers.

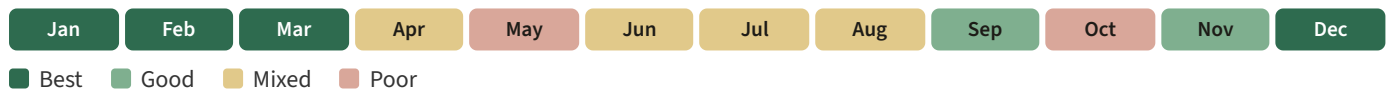
WHERE TO STAY

Ylläs

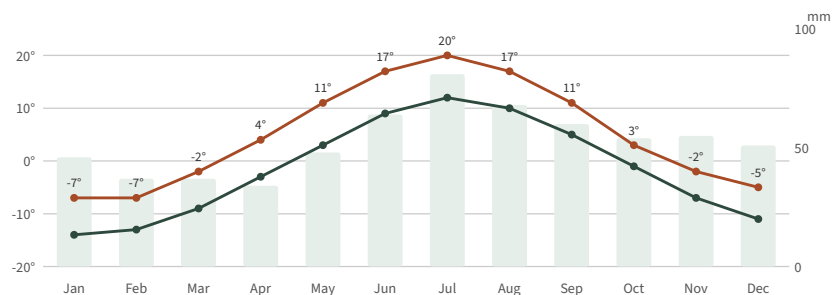
Two quiet villages either side of a big fell, with long pistes and vast cross-country trail networks; good for active couples wanting space.

When to go to Finnish Lapland

Best time: **Dec–Mar**.

**Average climate in Rovaniemi**

— High °C — Low °C — Rain (mm)



How much does Finnish Lapland cost?

SHOESTRING

£85

per person / day
≈ €101

MID-RANGE

£190

per person / day
≈ €226

COMFORTABLE

£400

per person / day
≈ €476

Per person per day excluding flights. Return flights from London typically cost £280 off-peak and £750 in school holidays.

Visas & entry for Finnish Lapland

Shown for a British passport.

No visa needed

You can travel without a visa to the Schengen area, which includes Finland, for up to 90 days in any 180-day period without a visa. This applies if you travel: as a tourist; to visit family or friends; to attend business meetings, cultural or sports events; for short-term studies or training.

The requirements for working in Finland are different.

From the UK government's FCDO entry requirements for British passport holders — read the full page for passport validity, permits and exceptions.

Health & vaccinations

See a travel health nurse, GP or travel clinic **6–8 weeks before you go**. Make sure routine UK vaccinations (such as MMR and diphtheria-tetanus-polio) are up to date.

RECOMMENDED FOR MOST TRAVELLERS

Tetanus

SOMETIMES ADVISED — DEPENDS ON YOUR TRIP, ACTIVITIES AND HEALTH

Bat Lyssavirus Tick-borne encephalitis

YELLOW FEVER CERTIFICATE

No yellow fever certificate is required to enter.

MALARIA

No malaria risk

Source: TravelHealthPro (National Travel Health Network and Centre), checked 21 October 2026. This is a summary, not medical advice.

Public holidays in Finland

The next 12 months. Banks, offices and some sights may close, and transport and hotels get busy around these dates.

Sat 31 Oct 2026	All Saints' Day
Sun 6 Dec 2026	Independence Day
Thu 24 Dec 2026	Christmas Eve
Fri 25 Dec 2026	Christmas Day
Sat 26 Dec 2026	Second Day of Christmas
Fri 1 Jan 2027	New Year's Day
Wed 6 Jan 2027	Epiphany
Fri 26 Mar 2027	Good Friday
Sun 28 Mar 2027	Easter Sunday
Mon 29 Mar 2027	Easter Monday
Sat 1 May 2027	May Day

Thu 6 May 2027	Ascension Day
Sun 16 May 2027	Pentecost
Fri 25 Jun 2027	Midsummer Eve
Sat 26 Jun 2027	Midsummer Day

National holidays only. Dates based on lunar calendars can move by a day or two depending on official announcements.

Know before you go

Operators lend thermal suits, boots and mittens for activities, but bring merino base layers, a warm hat and spare phone batteries, as the cold drains them fast.

Book December Santa trips and glass-igloo nights months ahead. For the northern lights, choose a base north of Rovaniemi, stay at least four nights, and watch cloud forecasts as well as aurora forecasts.

Plugs, money, phrases, emergency numbers and more: see our Finland guide.

Visa, health and safety rules change. Before you book or travel, check the FCDO travel advice (gov.uk/foreign-travel-advice) and TravelHealthPro (travelhealthpro.org.uk). Costs are estimates. © 2026 Pick My Trip.