

# Kungsleden Trek - The Kings Trail of Sweden

Trip Code: SKT

Version:



WALK & TREK



GUIDED GROUP



CHALLENGING



## HIGHLIGHTS

- Guided ascent of Sweden's highest mountain, Kebnekaise (2104m)
- Relax in saunas and experience the delights of the midnight sun in Swedish Lapland
- Spectacular Arctic Circle landscapes and wildlife

- One of the wildest and most remote trekking holidays in Europe

## AT A GLANCE

## ACCOMMODATIONS & MEALS

[VIEW DATES, PRICES & BOOK YOUR HOLIDAY HERE](#)

# Introduction

Trek through Swedish Lapland and climb its highest peak on one of Europe's most wild and remote hikes, the 'King's Trail' or 'Kungsleden', on this superb walking holiday. The King's Trail is situated 200 kilometres north of the Arctic Circle deep in Swedish Lapland. In summer, the approach to Kebnekaise (2117m) Sweden's highest mountain, crosses an unspoiled land of flower-carpeted birch forest and spectacular glacial valleys where the indigenous Sami people tend their herds of reindeer. Starting out alongside the Abisko River, we trek to the wonderful viewpoint of the T'tja Pass (1100m) and continue via the impressive waterfalls of the Tj'ktajakka Valley. Carrying light backpacks, we overnight at a series of comfortable mountain huts, some of which have saunas to help soothe the limbs after a day's walking. Upon reaching the Kebnekaise Mountain Station, we have time for a glacier trek and for the ascent to the exposed and snowy summit of Sweden's highest peak. Superb trekking and the unforgettable experience of daylight at midnight makes this a unique adventure holiday.

Note: This holiday will be 1 day longer (10 days long) from 2025 onwards. Please select the correct version of this tour from the drop down box on the Itinerary section of this page.

## Is this holiday for you?

The days on the King's Trail (excluding the ascent of Kebnekaise) involve straightforward walking on well-defined paths. However some of the days are reasonably long with the longest being 25 kilometres. Additionally, you will need to carry all of your personal equipment and a minimal supply of the communal food. For this we recommend that you take a comfortable 50-60 litre backpack. We estimate that you should be able to keep the weight of your pack to no more than 10-12 kgs, since you will not be carrying either a sleeping bag or a camping mattress. The modest altitudes attained on this holiday will not have an effect on the strenuousness of the hiking. The longest and most strenuous day of the trekking holiday will be on the ascent of Kebnekaise. Group members will be issued with a climbing harness and a climbing helmet. With the local guide leading, the group will be roped together when crossing the lower glacier and on any snow-slope sections of the route. Because this route is regularly climbed there are usually big foot-steps in the snow to follow. Sections of the route involve easy scrambling, with the assistance and security of fixed ropes, which you will clip in to. The ascent of Kebnekaise is entirely optional.

# Itinerary

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Version:

## Holiday Information

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### What's Included

- A professional and qualified tour leader
- STF Guided ascent of Kebnekaise
- Single timed airport transfers on arrival and departure
- All accommodation as described
- Meals as described in the Meal Plan
- All land transport required by the itinerary
- Boat trips on Lake Alesjaure (July/Aug departures only) and Lake Ladtjojaure

### What's not Included

- Travel insurance
- Tips
- Airport transfers other than group transfers
- Some meals as described in the Meal Plan
- Miscellaneous expenses - drinks and souvenirs etc

### Joining Arrangements & Transfers

The group will meet at the Abisko Mountain Station. On Day 1 of the itinerary there will be a single timed transfer from Kiruna airport to Abisko Mountain Station. This transfer will be timed to meet the SAS flight from Stockholm arriving in the early afternoon. The journey takes 1.5 hours.

On the last day of the Land Only itinerary there will be another single timed transfer from Kiruna to Kiruna Airport timed to meet the check in of the SAS flight to Stockholm departing in the late morning.

Anyone may join the group transfers by prior arrangement. Travelling as a group or on public transport saves energy. If your flight schedule does not allow you to take advantage of the arrival transfer you should make your own way to the Abisko Mountain Station. There is a reliable airport bus service which will meet every flight.

Accommodation contact details and an emergency number will be provided with your booking confirmation.

## Meal Plan

All meals except 1 dinner are included in the holiday price.

## Food & Water

It is not recommended to drink untreated water from the taps. If you are on a trekking or cycling holiday, water is supplied to fill up your individual bottles. This will be boiled, filtered or provided in large jerry cans or 5 litre bottles. Additionally you should take purification tablets or a filter bottle (such as a [Water-To-Go bottle](#)) to treat your water when in towns or where water is not supplied. We do not encourage the purchasing of single use plastic bottles.

Whilst staying at the mountain huts, everyone will be expected to assist with preparing meals. The Tour Leader will organise a rota for these communal duties. The huts have basic cooking facilities. Breakfast will consist of bread, porridge or muesli with dehydrated milk, coffee, tea, hot chocolate and some jam. Lunch will be bread, sandwiches and soup, made up from hot water from a thermos. Dinner will be coordinated by the Tour Leader and will also be mainly dehydrated and processed food. The fresh food that we carry from Abisko is estimated to last to Alesjaure cabin. The rest of the food for this hike will be cached in the Alesjaure cabin and in the Silka cabin. There is no shop in the Tjktja cabin so the group will carry food from Alesjaure to Tjktja. Whilst staying at the mountain stations, all meals will be taken in the restaurants.

## Accommodation

We will spend 3 nights in "Mountain Stations", at Kebnekaise and Abisko, which are more like lodges and have great facilities. Here the group will sleep in 6 berth rooms, with shared toilet and shower facilities and communal seating areas. All bedding is provided. Each station has a separate male and female saunas, a good restaurant and a bar.

During our time on the trail we will stay each night in a different mountain hut. These are maintained by the Swedish Tourist Association (STF) and each has its own host in residence. The huts are simple, but comfortable, and each has its own unique personality! There is no electricity, running water or mobile phone coverage, this is all part of the special and unique experience of staying in the remote Swedish wilderness.

The biggest hut has spaces for around 90 people, split over several smaller individual cabins, others are much smaller. Our group will usually have exclusive use of one of the lodges, though at busy time we may be required to share. Inside each of the huts you will find a combined kitchen and cosy day room, bedroom and drying room.

We will sleep in mixed dorms of 4 -10 people. Pillows and blankets are provided and all rooms have a wood-burning stove or gas heater. For comfort we recommend taking your own pillow case and a sleeping bag liner.

Each hut has a shared outside toilet block. These are well maintained and have plenty of toilet paper and antibacterial hand wash available.

Most of the mountain huts also have their own wood-fired sauna. The saunas will have split session times in the evening: female only, male only and mixed. Towels are not provided at the huts so we recommend taking a travel towel that is large enough to wrap around you. Each of the saunas will have and a small basic washroom attached to it, where bowls and hot water (from the sauna) are provided for you to wash. It is possible to wash your hair here if there is enough water.

One of the most fun aspects of this holiday is getting involved in the hut chores. Chores include fetching water, cooking dinner, preparing breakfast and packed lunch items, and clearing up. The tour leader will coordinate. It is expected that you leave the hut in the condition you found it with fresh water and wood for the next weary travellers.

Single rooms are not available..

## Group Leader & Support Staff

The group will be led by a professional and qualified tour leader.

## Altitude

The altitudes on this holiday are not extreme and the maximum altitude attained is no more than the equivalent of a pressurised cabin on an international flight. You may 'feel' the altitude the first time you trek above 2000 metres but all that is required is a slower pace to compensate. You should pay particular attention to your hydration levels while trekking above 2000 metres.

## Spending Money

Approximately £100 (or equivalent in US dollars, Euros etc.) should be allowed for miscellaneous expenses, drinks and souvenir purchases. This amount will allow you to pay for the final dinner in Kiruna and also to pay a tip to your local guide. Additional baggage which you do not need for the trek is transported from Abisko to Nikkaloukta where it is stored until your arrival. There is a 40 SEK (£4/\$6) additional cost for this bag storage which is paid directly to the Sami people living in Nikkaloukta, and this service is a vital part of their earnings. We recommend that you carry your travel money in the form of currency (Swedish Krona) since there will be not be any opportunities to change it once you leave Kiruna. There is no ATM in Kiruna airport, but you can withdraw cash at ATM's at Stockholm/Arlanda airport when you change flights. If you are intending to buy considerable quantities of soft drinks or beer, or expensive souvenirs you should budget accordingly.

## Guidance on Tipping

Tips are the accepted way of saying 'thank you' to your local guides. They do not form part of their wages. KE always pays local crews the best rates of pay, no matter what country they are in and any tips they receive are seen as a personal thank you from group members. For our part, we advise local teams that tips are not a duty or a prerequisite but are a bonus and entirely dependent on the service that was given. For your guides we recommend that you give a tip if you feel that their services have met your satisfaction.

## Baggage Allowance

You should try to keep the weight of your equipment to a minimum. A reasonable overall weight for your packed rucksack during the trekking is 10 kgs / 22lbs. You need to allow space in your backpack for an extra 1-2kgs (2 - 4lbs) of fresh food you will be carrying from Abisko. After the first night in Abiskojaure the extra weight is reduced to approx 1 kg. The fresh food from Abisko is estimated to last to Alesjaure cabin. The rest of the food for this hike will be cached in the Alesjaure cabin and in the Sälka cabin. There is no shop in the Tjäktja cabin so the group will carry food from Alesjaure to Tjäktja. The weight of the food is estimated to approx 0,5-1 kg/person (1-2lbs). Luggage not required for the hike (your main luggage and travel clothes) will be transported from the Abisko mountain station to Nikkaloukta where it is stored until your arrival. There is an additional charge for luggage to be stored here whilst you are on your trek (see spending money).

## Group Size & Holiday Status

For each holiday there is a minimum number of participants required to enable it to go ahead. Once the minimum number is reached, the trip status will change from 'Available' to 'Guaranteed to run'. You can check the trip status for each departure in the 'Dates and Prices' table. Other than in exceptional circumstances, we will not cancel a trip once it has achieved this guaranteed to run status so you are free to proceed with your international flight booking and other travel arrangements.

# General Information

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## Passport & Visas

### Europe

Your passport must meet 2 requirements. It must be:

- less than 10 years old on the day you enter (check the 'date of issue')
- valid for at least 3 months after the day you plan to leave (check the 'expiry date')

For the latest details on visiting countries within the EU or the European Economic Area (EEA), please check the UK Government website

The information that we provide is for UK passport holders. A passport with 6 months remaining validity at the end of your stay is generally required, and you should have at least 2 blank pages for each country that you visit.

**It is your responsibility to ensure that you have the correct travel documents and visas for your holiday.** Please ensure that you check for the latest advice before travel. For the most up to date information on entry requirements, please visit the [UK Government website](#).

## Health & Vaccinations

If you have a severe allergy please inform the KE office before you travel. We will do all we can to help, but we cannot guarantee an allergy free environment on KE trips. You will need to carry your own treatment for the allergy with you, as 'adrenaline auto-injectors' are not carried as standard by KE leaders and staff. You should inform your leader on arrival of your allergy, and let them know where you keep your adrenaline pen.

## Vaccinations

You should contact your doctor or travel clinic to check whether you require any specific vaccinations.

## GHIC / Medical cover

UK residents should carry a free Global Health Insurance Card (GHIC). This entitles you to state provided medical treatment when you're visiting an EU country or Switzerland. This is not a substitute for medical travel insurance which is vital when travelling overseas.

## Climate

The summer months from June to early September offer the only timeframe to trek the Kungsleden. Daytime temperatures in Kiruna in July and August range from 8°C / 46°F to 18°C / 64°F. Sunny weather can be expected, with occasional rainfall, although it is more likely to be wet in August. It can also be cold at night and in more exposed areas. There can also be some snow patches remaining on the trail, and muddy, boggy sections of trail, so boots need to be suitably waterproofs. The midnight sun shines from late May to mid-July, and it is daylight 24 hours a day from mid-May to the end of July. The summer sun is never far below the horizon.

## Travel Aware

As a reputable tour operator, KE supports the British Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office's '[Travel Aware](#)' campaign to enable British citizens to prepare for their journeys overseas. The 'Travel Aware' website provides a single, authoritative source of advice for all kinds of travellers and we recommend that before travel, all KE clients visit the official UK Government website at [travelaware.campaign.gov.uk](http://travelaware.campaign.gov.uk) and read the FCDO Travel Advice for their chosen destination. North Americans can also check out the U.S. Department of State website: [www.travel.state.gov](http://www.travel.state.gov) for essential travel advice and tips.

KE treat the safety and security of all clients as the most important aspect of any trip we organise. We would not run any trip that we did not consider reasonably safe. Should the FCDO advise against travel for any reason, we will contact everyone booked to travel to discuss the situation. We receive regular updates directly from the FCDO and are in constant touch with our contacts on the ground. If you have any questions about government travel advice, please call our office.

## Single Use Plastic

KE do not encourage the use of single use plastic items. We are ensuring that our agents all over the world are working together to reduce the problem and educate those around them. We are leading by example in our KE office by reducing our plastic use.

## Books

- The Rough Guide to Sweden. James Proctor and Neil Roland.
- Sweden - Lonely Planet Guide. Carolyn Bain and Graeme Cornwallis.
- Kungsleden: The Royal Trail Through Arctic Sweden - Claes Grundsten

## Maps

### **Fjallkarta. Abisko - Kabnekaise - Narvik. Lantmteriet (Sweden Survey) 1:100,000**

A detailed topographic map in colour, at a smaller scale than most UK hikers' maps but with a useful 25m. contour interval. The map is in Swedish with an English legend.



## Travel Insurance

It is an essential condition of joining a holiday with KE Adventure Travel that you have a valid travel insurance policy to cover the cost of medical treatment and to protect the value of your holiday in the event of cancellation. When taking out insurance please ensure the policy you choose covers you for the activities and altitude included in your itinerary.

For appropriate insurance cover we recommend Campbell Irvine Direct. Please go to our [Travel Insurance](#) page for further information and to get a quote.

# Equipment Information

## Equipment List

Please try to keep the weight of your baggage to a minimum. See the 'baggage allowance' section for further details.

### You **SHOULD** bring the following items:

- Hiking boots (approach shoes will not be suitable for the ascent of Kebnekaise)
- Gaiters
- Socks
- Trainers or slippers for use in the huts.
- Walking socks (2 or 3 pairs)
- Spare laces
- Trekking trousers
- Lightweight waterproof overtrousers
- Underwear
- Shorts

- Thermal baselayer shirts
- T-shirt / casual shirt
- Fleece jacket or warm jumper
- Lightweight waterproof jacket
- Sunhat
- Warm hat
- Sunglasses
- Sun protection (including total bloc for lips, nose etc.)
- Thermal gloves
- Backpack 50 - 60 litres
- Mug and spoon (for lunches)
- Antibacterial hand wash
- Vacuum flask ½ litre
- Water bottles 1 Litre (x2) (we encourage re-filling water bottles rather than single use plastic)
- Water purification tablets
- Insect repellent

Basic First Aid Kit which should include: Antiseptic cream, throat lozenges, diarrhoea treatment (Imodium), painkillers, plasters and blister treatment, Insect repellent (DEET), and re-hydration salts (Dioralite). Glucose tablets and multi-vitamin tablets are also a good idea.

**The following items are optional:**

- Foam sit mat (for lunch stops)
- Washbag and toiletries
- Small towel
- Sleeping bag liner
- Travel clothes (can be left in main luggage)
- Cameras
- Selection of dry bags (to keep kit dry)
- Trekking poles
- Pen-knife (remember to put all sharp objects in hold baggage)
- Reusable cloth bag for shopping (to avoid plastic bags)

**Notes:**

Your main luggage and travel clothes will be transported from the Abisko Mountain Station to Nikkaluokta where they will be stored, and then transported on to the hotel in Kiruna. There is a small charge of approx 40 SEK for this baggage storage which you will need to pay directly to the local Sami people living in Nikkaluokta.

You need to allow space in your backpack for an extra 1-2kgs of fresh food you will be carrying from Abisko. After the first night in Abiskojaure the extra weight is reduced to approx 1 kg. The fresh food from Abisko is estimated to last to Alesjaure cabin. The rest of the food for this hike will be cached in the Alesjaure cabin and in the Salka cabin. There is no shop in the Tjaktja cabin so the group will carry food from Alesjaure to Tjaktja. The weight of the food is estimated to approx 0.5-1 kg/person.

Although the summer months from June - early September offer the best conditions to trek the Kings Trail with day time temperatures of between 8 - 18C (46 - 64F), it can be cold during this period and warm clothing should be packed. There can also be some snow patches remaining on the trail, and muddy, boggy sections of trail, so boots need to be suitably waterproof.

## **Cotswold Outdoor**

Many of the equipment items listed above are available from [Cotswold Outdoor](#) - our '**Official Recommended Outdoor Retailer**'. When you book a holiday with KE you will receive a 12.5% discount

with Cotswold Outdoor, Snow+Rock and Runners Need. The discount code can be downloaded from your MyKE account and you can use this code at the checkout, either in store or online.

## Land Only Information

The LAND ONLY dates and prices are for joining at the Abisko Mountain Station and ending in Kiruna. Single timed transfers are included from/to Kiruna Airport are provided.

## Flight Inclusive Information

The FLIGHT INCLUSIVE dates and prices are based on UK flights from London to Kiruna with SAS via Stockholm. Outbound flights will depart the UK in the morning arriving later the same day. Return flights will depart Kiruna airport in the morning of the last day of the itinerary, arriving in the UK later the same evening.

# Why Choose KE

## Why KE

This trip was recently featured in The Telegraph's article: Great escapes in Europe's last empty places. KE is one of the few tour operators in the UK, and the world, who offer the King's Trail as a fully guided and inclusive package.

**Please Note** This document was downloaded on 21/11/2024 and the trip is subject to change