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# BETWEEN LAKES AND TAIGA

Immerse yourself in a land of taiga and lakes, a quiet wilderness where new hikes await you each day and welcoming fire pits greet you each evening. This non-guided adventure is for nature lovers who want to experience total autonomy in a breathtaking world of Finnish flora and fauna.

 Region	Hossa
 Activity	Hiking Self-guided Summer
 Duration	8 days
 Code	IND01
 Price	From €600
 Level	3/5
 Comfort	2/5

# ITINERARY

## Day 1 Arrival in Kuusamo



Transfer by bus or car to Hossa (about 1 hour) and time to get settled in to your hostel accommodation.

Accommodation : hostel

## Day 2 Trekking



Today we recommend hiking to Ala-Valkeinen - keep your eyes open for wild birds and animals like ptarmigan, red squirrels and mountain hares on this route! The forest is bountiful, you will find plenty of arctic berries and blueberries to snack on.

Accommodation: tent

## Day 3 Trekking



Today, we suggest hiking from Ala-Valkeinen to Laukkujärvi. Our team will meet and refuel you at the crossroads of Peurapirtti (meeting point to be confirmed with our team on Day 2 before departure)

Accommodation: tent

## Day 4 Departure for your trek



This morning we will provide you with all the equipment needed for your adventure. Then you will be free to explore Hossa National Park at your own pace following clearly marked hiking trails. For the first day we recommend starting from your accommodation and heading to a fireplace at Jatkonjärvi. Here you can camp by the water's edge and enjoy a peaceful evening by the fire.

Accommodation: tent

#### Day 5 **Trekking**



From Laukkujärvi you can go up to Varikalio and then Julma-ölky. At Varikalio you can observe impressive cave paintings which have been preserved since 3000 BC. Your journey through the magical taiga forest will take you past lakes of all shapes and sizes... a peaceful, isolated environment for you to relax and enjoy.

Accommodation: tent

#### Day 6 **Trekking**



Today we recommend hiking around Julma Olkky Canyon Lake - one of Hossa National Parks 'must-sees'! With stunning views of the vast Russian taiga it is a perfect setting for the last day of your trek. Our team will collect you at the end of today in and transport you back to the hostel in their car.

Accommodation: hostel

#### Day 7 **Free day**



Today is a free day to relax after your hike. We recommend joining a bear watching tour in the South of the boreal forest, close to Russia. This area has more brown bears than anywhere else in Europe and the bear watching conditions here are second to none! Please see 'Dates & Prices' for a full list of optional activities available today.

Accommodation: hostel

NB: Bear-watching is only available until mid-august



Coach transfer to Kuusamo airport

This itinerary, including walking distances and times, is indicative and fully flexible.

### ***Other trips you may like***



Multi-activities under the midnight sun: Go canoeing, mountain biking and hiking; observe reindeer, moose and bears -this multi-activity summer trip is one to remember and includes overnight mountain biking and canoeing trips in the heart of Hossa National Park...

beautiful views of landmannalaugar, Iceland

Scenes of Iceland: Become part of the landscape and explore the ultimate selection of Icelands most famous hiking locations with maximum freedom and flexibility. Camping accommodation coupled with vehicle hire is a combination which enables total freedom, add our carefully planned suggestive itinerary and you have a winning formula...

## PERIOD & BUDGET

### When to travel?

The best period for travelling is during the following months:

Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
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### Price

Two people: From €665

*The budget is an indication of the price per person, subject to availability. Your local agent will send you a customized quote with the exact price. The price can vary according to availability, level of services, period of travel, number of participants, booking time frame and other items.*

### Included

- Transfers from/to Kuusamo airport
- 3 nights in hostel accommodation and 4 nights in trapper huts / tents
- Full board from D1 dinner to D8 breakfast
- Trekking equipment : ultra-light 2 man tent + ultra light mattress + sleeping bag + cooking equipment (plastic dishes + stove)
- Transfer from Julma Ölkky to our basecamp

### Not included

- Flights

### Additional Options

Please let us know if you would like to reserve any of the following options:

- Single room supplement: from €220
- Reindeer farm visit: €10 (+meal €40)
- Canoeing: prices vary
- Bear Watching: prices vary
- Mountain biking: prices vary

### Notes

#### Comfort: 2/5 Basic

This trip includes 3 nights in a hostel and 4 nights in trappers huts of tents. We love our back to basics no frills accommodation options which enable us to get close to nature. Examples of 2/5 comfort accommodation include mountain huts and refuges with shared kitchen and bathroom facilities

#### Level: 3/5 Challenging

For our suggested itinerary you should be in good physical shape. You should have a sense of adventure, a positive attitude and be prepared for a full-on action packed programme including 6+ hours of activity per day. However, this is your adventure, you can choose how strenuous or how relaxing each day is. Please note that our difficulty ratings may vary depending on the weather.

### International flights

Flights are not included, please contact us if you require transfers to/from destinations other than Kuusamo airport

### Terms and conditions

#### Booking conditions

Booking a trip with Norwide implies acceptance of the terms and conditions of sale. Each customer is required to complete a registration form and, subject to availability at the time of registration, travellers are expected to pay a deposit of 35% of the total price to complete their booking. Payments can be made online or by bank transfer. You will receive an e-mail with your booking confirmation.

#### Invoice procedure

Once your booking is confirmed you will receive an invoice by e-mail. The full balance of the trip must be received at least 35 days before your departure date. Norwide reserve the right to cancel your booking, free of charge, if this deadline is not respected.

## ***Cancellation policy***

If for any reason you have to cancel your trip, Norwide require written confirmation of your decision. The money you have paid will then be refunded according to the following deductions:

- Cancellation received more than 30 days prior to the departure date: a sum of €50 per person will be retained
- Cancellation received 30 to 21 days before the departure date: your deposit, 30% of the total trip price will be retained
- Cancellation received 20 to 14 days before the departure date: 50% of the total trip price will be retained
- Cancellation received 13 to 7 days before the departure date: 75% of the total trip price will be retained
- Cancellation received less than 7 days before the departure date: 100% of the total trip price will be retained

### **Special cases:**

Please note that, regardless of the date of cancellation or modification if you have agreed to pay for services such as hotel reservations, flights or additional activities, these services are usually non-refundable so additional fees may apply.

- Fixed airfares: if your airline ticket was issued in advance, often done to avoid significant surcharges, you will be charged 100% of any non-refundable fees if you wish to change or cancel your flight plan.
- Fixed in-country costs: early charges for firm bookings will be charged if you cancel or modify your trip.
- Insurance costs: if you have taken out comprehensive or cancellation insurance, the cost of insurance is due and cannot be refunded.

**Please note that fees apply according to the date we receive your cancellation or modification request in writing.**

If we have to cancel a departure due to an insufficient number of participants, you will be informed no later than 21 days before departure and a full refund will be issued, you will not be entitled to further compensation. We reserve the rights to cancel departures due to exceptional circumstances which may impact the safety of participants. Such circumstances include those amounting to 'force majeure' in which case participants will receive a full refund but they will not be entitled to any compensation.

## ***Changes to travel contract***

If you wish to make a change to your booking please contact us in writing; you will be expected to pay any fee which might arise from this change. In the event of unforeseen external events, Norwide may change some aspects of the travel contract. If any changes are necessary you will be informed as quickly as possible.

## ***Pricing***

The prices on our website are updated regularly and all of the prices we advertise are accurate when published. We reserve the rights to make changes to any of these prices. Before you make a booking we will give you the up-to-date price of your chosen holiday including any supplements, upgrades or additional activities you may have requested. If the number of travellers is fewer than the indicated number of participants on the website, a small group surcharge may be applied. For all of our trips we include details of services, prices and what is/is not included but please be aware that changes to the prices may be necessary in accordance with exchange rates or price changes of various components of the journey.

## ***Contract transfer***

If you are unable to travel for any reason, you can transfer your booking to another person in which case our modification conditions apply. Both the transferor and transferee will be jointly and severally liable for payment of the total holiday price and other associated expenses. Some airline carriers treat name changes as cancellations and you may be required to pay for the cost of a new ticket.

## ***Insurance***

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We strongly recommend that you take out personal travel insurance for your trip with Norwide as soon as your booking is confirmed. We advise you to purchase a travel insurance policy which covers flight cancellations, luggage loss and emergency health care. Please look carefully at which activities are covered by your insurer and do not forget to bring all necessary documents and information with you (name of the company, name of the contract, insurance policy number, telephone number...)

## PRACTICAL INFO

### Staff

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This trip is a non-guided adventure. Armed with an abundance of experience and a wealth of knowledge our professional team know Finland inside out. We are here to ensure you have the best possible trip so ask us anything, we love sharing our local knowledge!

### Food

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This trip includes full board from dinner on day 1 to breakfast on day 8. You will have the chance to try some traditional Finnish meals like smoked fish, salmon soup, reindeer stew and traditional cakes - please be aware that fresh fruit and vegetables are rare in our isolated northern location.

- **At the Hostel:** Generous buffet style breakfasts and dinners with hot drinks and lots of options are served at the hostel
- **Whilst trekking:** We will provide you with easy to cook light-weight food for your trek including food to be cooked on open wood fires. You will have the chance to forage for treats like fresh berries and mushrooms and to add to your meals.

Please let us know about any dietary requirements when you book the trip and we will work with you to cater for your needs.

### Accommodation

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Our basecamp is located in the heart of Hossa National Park, more than 60 miles (+100kms) away from a village or shop - no mass tourism hubs or Santa Claus Village here with us! There are 23 inhabitants in and around Hossa, most of them are reindeer farmers and yes, there are more bears here than people! We live here peacefully and we work closely with authorities to protect and preserve this stunning National Park. During your stay, you will not have many opportunities to meet local people since there are very few of them but you may cross paths with ice fishers or Nordic skiers and visit local reindeer farms.

**This trip includes hostel accommodation and nights in tents / basic trappers huts.**

**Hostel accommodation:** shared kitchen and bathroom facilities, sauna access

**Camping:** we provide tents, mattresses and sleeping bags. We recommend always setting up camp near a fire - an ideal way to get closer to nature and to enjoy this beautiful wilderness environment

Bedding and towels are provided by Norwide but we recommend that you bring an extra towel for use in the saunas.

### Transportation

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This trip includes transfers by minibus / 4x4s / coach

### Budget & exchange

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The currency in Finland is the euro. Please budget for the following:

- Personal expenses and drinks
- Any additional activities/supplements

### Supplied equipment

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We will provide you with all technical equipment needed. We will supply you with the following for the duration of your trip:

- Bedding and towels
  - we recommend bringing a small additional towel to use in the sauna
- An ultra-light 2 man tent
- A light thermal sleeping mat
- A warm sleeping bag
- Cooking equipment including plastic dishes & a stove

### Vital equipment

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You must bring with you:

- A sleeping bag liner
- Sturdy walking boots
- Sunglasses (minimum UV 400)
- Sun cream
- Any personal medication
- A headtorch with spare batteries (from August)
- A suitable water bottle/flask (min 1L)

## **Material**

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We prefer that you do not wear any cotton clothing, including underwear, when participating in activities. When cotton gets wet from water or sweat it ceases to insulate and it does not dry fast. The best materials for outdoor activities are fast drying materials like polyester or materials which are warm when wet like wool. The most powerful materials against the wind and rain are 'breathable' materials like Gore-Tex or Nikwax.

### **Our advice for keeping warm**

Winter in Finland can be very cold, please think carefully about what clothes you bring, although we will provide warm outer layers, the layers you wear next to your skin make the biggest difference. We recommend:

- No cotton
- Bring dry spares of everything, including underwear and gloves
- Wear multiple layers including:
  1. A warm breathable base layer
  2. A second thermal layer
  3. Wind and waterproof protective out layer (we provide a quality jacket and over trousers for activities)

## **Helpful equipment**

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We recommend packing:

- A pair of rubber boots or water shoes for river crossings
- Wool socks
- A wind and waterproof jacket with a hood
- A warm jacket
- Warm fleece/jumper
- Suitable underwear and thermals
- Waterproof trousers
- A swimsuit
- Suitable t-shirts, trousers & shorts
- A hat or cap
- A towel for the sauna
- Appropriate pyjamas
- A pair of gloves
- Slippers or comfortable shoes for in the cottage/hostel
- Bug spray/mosquito net

You may also consider packing:

- Wetwipes
- Blister plasters
- A camera (and suitable protective case)
- Plastic bags for wet/dirty clothing
- A knife
- Toilet paper + lighter
- A Notepad and pencil



## ***Luggage***

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You may bring a hold bag (up to 20kg) as well as a cabin bag.

For you hold luggage please bring a soft bag like a ruckack rather than a hard cased suitcase because it is more practical. We also recommend that you pack your clothes in plastic bags inside your rucksack so that they stay dry in the event of bad weather.

Do not forget to bring a small rucksack to use as a day bag (25/30L). You can bring this as hand luggage on the plane. You will carry your lunch, water, spare layers and any personal medication with you each day in this bag.

## ***Medicine***

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Your guide is trained first aider and will carry a full appropriate first aid kit. We recommend that you bring with you a small first aid kit as well as any medication you may need with you such as inhalers, plasters and painkillers.

A valid [European Health Insurance Card \(EHIC\)](#) will insure that you can access state-provided healthcare for free or at a reduced cost.

## ***Passport***

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You will need a passport that is valid for at least three months after your return date.

## ***Visa***

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UK passport holders do not require a VISA to visit Finland which part of the Schengen cooperation.

The [Ministry for Foreign Affairs of Finland](#) lists the accepted travel documents and visa requirements for every country.

## ***Mandatory vaccines***

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There are no specific health risks

## ***Weather***

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Between early June and early August, temperatures reach +20°C (+68°F) in the day and sometimes even +30°C (+86°F) (37°C (98.6°F) in Joensuu in July 2010!).

The summer is relatively warm but also very bright - Finland enjoys long sunny days. In the far north, the sun does not set from mid-May to the end of July. In the center and the south, the summer sun shines for 18 to 20 hours.

The temperature of the lake water is between 18 - 24°C, the waters are shallow and warm up quickly with the long sunny days and the good Finnish summer temperatures. The midnight sun is visible in summer in Lapland and in the regions above the Arctic Circle.

## ***Electricity***

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Finland uses the standard Europlug socket with two round prongs (50Hz/230 volts)

## ***Local time***

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Finland uses Greenwich Mean Time (GMT)+2 and observes Daylight Saving Time making it GMT+3 during the summer months

## ***Topography***

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Area:+130502 square miles (+338,000 km<sup>2</sup>) which consists of around 10% water, 69% forest and only 8% cultivated land

Size: It is the seventh largest country in Europe,+720 miles (1160km) North to South and +335 miles (540km) East to West

Borders: Sweden, Norway, Russia and the coast

There are said to be 187888 lakes here in Finland and 179584 islands including a concentration of islands off the South West coast which forms the largest archipelago in Europe.

## ***Sustainable tourism***

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As adventure and wilderness travel experts who run trips to some of the most remote parts of the world, we take responsible

tourism very seriously.

Here in Finland we work in partnership with Metsähallitus to protect Finnish waters and forests - an exclusive agreement which enables us to use the roads of Hossa National Park. Our kennel is cleaned daily and subject to regular veterinary and we work with MyClimate to offset all carbon emissions produced by snowmobiling activities and transfers.

We respect the 'Leave No Trace' outdoor ethical code and try to explore this beautiful location whilst causing minimal environmental damage.

The Leave No Trace policy can be summarized in 7 simple steps which we hope you will follow during our trip...

1. Be prepared
2. Stick to trails and camp overnight right
3. Stash your trash and pick up waste
4. Leave it as you find it
5. Be careful with fire
6. Respect wildlife
7. Be considerate of other visitors

Over the years we have built up good relations with our local suppliers and we are keen to support local businesses as much as possible. We are a small company and we pay our local partners and suppliers directly insuring fair rates. Our small group sizes not only provide a more intimate adventure but also cause less impact on the environment and local communities.

We expect all who travel with us to support and uphold our Sustainable Tourism philosophies.