



Saija - Husky Safari



HOLIDAY TYPE: Small Group
VISITING: Finland

BROCHURE CODE: 5026
DURATION: 7 nights

In Brief

Saija is not about going wild, but about being free. Escape to this snowy wilderness over seven nights and enjoy an epic dog sledding adventure. You'll return home feeling refreshed and invigorated having recharged your batteries Saija-style.

Our Opinion

“ If it wasn't for the central heating and electricity here at Saija, you could be forgiven for thinking you had stepped back in time. This is a simple place, there's no rush, no hurry and no wild night life. Go dog sledding by day and enjoy a sauna and the chance to catch up on your reading at night – unless the Northern Lights make an appearance of course!! ”

Ali Mclean



What's included?

- **Transfers:** return group airport transfers*
- **Accommodation:** 6 nights' in en-suite wooden cabin with sauna, 1-night wilderness cabin
- **Activities (order subject to change):** introduction day, 2-3 hour husky safari, 4-6 hour husky safari and overnight husky safari, visit the smoke sauna and a Northern Lights information session (departure dates after 15/01/2024 also include a night in a snow igloo, subject to availability)
- **Meals:** 7 breakfasts, 6 lunches, 7 dinners
- Cold weather clothing for the duration of your stay
- Fully qualified wilderness guides and instructors during activities
- *Arrivals and departures which don't meet the group transfer times will be subject to a private transfer supplement.

Trip Overview

Saija is a vision of just how you imagine the Finnish wilderness to be. Located on the shores of Lake Jokijärvi, this trip combines the excitement of dog sledding with spectacular surroundings and time to relax.

When it comes to the husky safaris, you will take charge of a team of four to six dogs. You will drive with the same husky team for the duration of the trip so that you can build a trusting relationship with them throughout the week. You will never forget the thrill of driving with these eager, dedicated animals through North-East Finland's huge forests and over its frozen lakes and marshes. At Saija, the scenery is ever-changing and awe-inspiring all the way.

Around the lodge, there are many cross-country ski and snowshoe trails for exploring on your free day. There's also a chance to try out additional activities – see the '[Personalise](#)' tab for more details. A highlight among these is snowmobiling, which is a thrilling option.

From the moment you step through the door of Saija Lodge, you will sense the restful and homely atmosphere that the team here work so hard to maintain. Instant relaxation is inevitable, as you are welcomed into what feels like home and introduced to the other guests. From meals to activities, and

even during your free time, you will feel part of a community in this cosy accommodation.

Staying in pretty log cabins at the all-wooden Lodge, your own private sauna helps you unwind and feel even more refreshed. The cosy restaurant is a short walk away and is where you will enjoy traditional Finnish home-cooked specialities and can chat with other guests after a day of dog sledding adventures.

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Agenda

Please note the order of activities is subject to change

DAY
1

WELCOME TO SAIJA

You will be met on arrival at the airport and transferred directly to Saija Lodge. After some time to settle in, your welcome dinner will be served in the main building. Enjoy Finnish homemade food and the chance to meet fellow guests about to embark on a week of – what is for most – first-time experiences and adventure.

During your stay at Saija, the guides will gather the group to host a discussion about the Northern Lights. They will speak to you about the science of the Northern Lights and some of the fascinating myths and legends the local people believed before science was able to explain this incredible natural phenomenon. This special evening will be confirmed upon your arrival at Saija.

An afternoon in a smoke sauna is also included in your holiday price and will be arranged on arrival. From 14th January, Saija builds a small snow igloo and the chance to spend a night in the igloo is included in the cost for all guests staying at the lodge. The night it is available to you will be confirmed upon arrival (subject to availability) – this truly unique experience really is yet another memorable highlight for many of our guests in Saija.

Included Meals: Dinner

DAY
2

INTRODUCTION DAY

Your guide will discuss your itinerary with you and get you kitted out in all of the cold-weather clothing that you require for the duration of your stay. You can also join a tour of the facilities with your guide and see what there is to do in and around Saija – now is a good time to book any extra activities for your last day back at the lodge.

Included Meals: Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner

**DAY
3****HUSKY TRAINING RUN**

After breakfast, your guide will take you through all aspects of the husky safari, outlining the all-important safety and giving advice on how to best work with and guide your dogs. You will then get to meet your eager team of huskies.

Each participant has a team of four to six huskies. You are responsible for the dogs' care throughout the safari. You will have the chance to practice with them and begin to build up a relationship on a 13km training run in the area around the lodge.

The feeling you get from working with and encouraging your dog team is something that will stay with you forever. The adrenalin and the feeling of excitement as you head away from the husky farm and into the wilds is second to none. In an intriguing contrast, there's an intense feeling of peace and serenity that most people experience at the same time.

Included Meals: Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner

**DAY
4****FULL DAY HUSKY SAFARI**

You've had the training, now it's time for the real thing. Step up the pace on your first full-day safari, driving your team through snow-laden forests and across frozen lakes and rivers. Lunch will be served en route around an open fire. By the end of this thrilling day, you will have covered 25km to 35km with your team of huskies.

Included Meals: Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner

**DAY
5****OVERNIGHT HUSKY SAFARI**

Taking full responsibility for your dedicated dog team, you head out on an overnight trip into the wilderness. Driving through this unforgettable landscape, with the gentle swish of the sled's runners and the padding of the huskies' paws on the snow, you know you're creating memories that will be very hard to beat. As you and your dogs cross this dramatic winter world, add a little extra momentum by pushing off with your feet on the inclines and you will enjoy the boost in reaction from your team.

At your overnight base, you are in charge of caring for the dogs; they need to be fed, watered and settled in for the night. At your cabin, once you collect firewood and water, the hard work is rewarded with a delicious dinner cooked over an open fire. There's a sauna you can use and the cabin is really cosy once the fire is blazing. After such an exciting day and in the quiet of the wilderness, you should enjoy a blissful night's deep sleep.

Included Meals: Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner

DAY
6

HUSKY SAFARI

Your team will probably wake you with impatient barks. Once you and your dogs have had breakfast, it's back out onto the sled for more breathtaking scenery. There will be a lunch stop around an open fire and more mushing all the way back to the lodge. A shower and a hot dinner will feel like luxuries after your time in the wilds.

Included Meals: Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner

DAY
7

FREE DAY

A final full day to spend however you please – and you may well want to just take it easy and relax after your husky adventure. If you still have some energy and want to make the most of every moment, take advantage of the cross-country ski and snowshoe trails which surround the hotel, exploring the landscape on a guided tour (see the '[Personalise](#)' section). You can also try an additional guided activity such as snowmobiling and visiting a reindeer farm.

Whatever you do, make sure you take some time to sit back, relax, and just "be" in one of our planet's most enchanting places.

Included Meals: Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner

DAY
8

DEPARTURE

Say goodbye to Saija and transfer to the airport for your return flights.

Included Meals: Breakfast

Personalise this tour

Our pick



Fat Bike Rental

The landscape surrounding Saija is full of fantastic trails to enjoy. Fat bikes can be hired for either 4 hours, or the whole day, however, we recommend taking part in the guided fat biking activity, prior to renting your own equipment.

Please make sure to speak with the lodge staff about the local conditions, inform them of your plans and take a mobile phone with you on any trip that you take independently.

4 hours: £28 per person per day

Day rental: £44 per person

Other options

ACTIVITIES



Snowshoe hike

Snowshoeing offers the chance to get up close to nature and experience it at a slower pace. On this trip, your guide will lead the way on snowshoes and you will be out in the wilderness for around three hours. Your guide will highlight any animal tracks and provide you with information about the region as you walk amongst the snow-covered trees. En-route you will break for warm drinks around the campfire.

Duration: Approx 3 hours



Visit to a reindeer farm

Reindeers are synonymous with Lapland and have been herded for centuries, forming an intrinsic link with both the Sámi people and North Finland. This insightful activity will allow you to experience a working reindeer farm.

At the farm, you will be able to get up close with these gentle creatures and there will be opportunities to take photographs. You can also ask the herder any questions you may have about his reindeer and life up here above the Arctic Circle. This is sure to be an interesting experience for the entire group.



Ice fishing

Venturing to the frozen lake you will be given an introduction to the classic Nordic pastime of Ice Fishing. Your guide will explain the techniques which include drilling a hole through the ice and setting up a line. Hot Drinks will be served around a campfire as you wait patiently for a fish to bite. It is incredibly rewarding to make a catch, but the surrounding scenery and stunning snow-covered horizon add to this unique experience.

Duration: Approx 2.5 hours



Guided Fat Biking

For those who desire a more unconventional method of exploring the snowy wilderness then why not enjoy a unique tour by Fat Bike.

This relatively new activity has grown in popularity over the last few years and allows for cycling through deep snow, on frozen lakes and through forested tracks. The chunky tyres have extra grip and allow you to cut through the snow with relative ease. This unique activity will allow you to cycle towards spectacular snow-covered horizons with incredible views of Finnish Lapland.

The tour will include a stop for a coffee break near the rapids where you can spot various birdlife and other natural wonders in this stunning winter wonderland.

Duration: Approx 3 hours



Cross-country ski tour

Cross-country skiing is nothing short of an obsession for many Finns and it is only when you experience the joy of gliding through the silent forests and fells that you really begin to understand why it is such an addictive pastime. Your guide will provide you with complete instruction so no experience of any kind of skiing is required. You will head out onto the trail for around two hours and explore the stunning scenery around Saija Lodge.

Duration: approx 2 hours



Snowmobile safari (60km)

If you are keen to keep the adventure going following your husky safari then why not try a thrilling snowmobile safari on your free day – a completely different way to experience this landscape? Following a full safety briefing, you'll depart on a safari covering around 60km with **two people travelling per snowmobile**. There will be spectacular views as you travel across frozen lakes and over the tops of fells. You will enjoy lunch around an open fire in a traditional wooden kota before returning to Saija lodge.

Please note: You must be 18 years old or over and hold a full driving licence to drive a snowmobile.

Duration: 60km (the time on the trail depends on conditions)

Drive your own snowmobile: £66 per person supplement



Snowmobile safari (30km)

If on your free day you would like to try something completely different to dog sledding, then a snowmobile is not only an efficient way to make the most of the vast scenery here but also exceptionally good fun. Following a full safety briefing, you will set off on one of the many trails that criss-cross the forests and fells, travelling **two people per snowmobile**. This 30km safari is a great introductory snowmobile tour and there will be a break for coffee around a campfire.

Please note: You must be 18 years old or over and hold a full driving licence to drive a snowmobile.

Duration: 30km (the time on the trail depends on conditions)

Drive your own snowmobile: £44 per person supplement

LITTLE EXTRAS



Snowshoe and cross-country ski hire

Saija has a range of snowshoes and cross-country ski tracks on the doorstep with various lengths from 4km to 25km. The incredible landscape of frozen lakes and forest-covered fells provide a wonderful opportunity to enjoy a scenic route across the snow. The snowshoes or cross-country skis will be yours for the day. **You must speak with the staff about the local conditions, inform them of your plans and take a mobile phone with you on any trip that you take independently.** You should have completed a guided snowshoe or cross-country ski trip previously if you would like to hire the equipment.

Hire for the day: £22 per person per day

Weekly rental: £110 per person

SPECIAL NIGHTS



Sky Cabins

Why not spend an evening gazing at the Arctic sky from the warmth of your bed by staying overnight in one of Saija's 'Sky Cabins'?

Designed with a panoramic window that stretches to the roof and with a double bed positioned beneath it, the cabins provide excellent views of the firmament above.

There is something wonderfully relaxing about watching snowflakes drift past the glass roof, or on a clear night, admiring the glittering stars from the warmth of your cabin. Add the excitement of watching out for the

Northern Lights into the mix, and you have yourself a perfect evening.

Saija's cabins are positioned on a lakeshore, offering a vast expanse of the non-light polluted sky to act as the perfect backdrop for a potential display. They are just as well-equipped as a hotel room would be, with a double bed, a sofa bed, an ensuite bathroom and a private sauna.

Please note: prices are based on you spending any night of your holiday in this unique accommodation and keeping your original accommodation.

©Saijia Lodge

Included Accommodation

Saija Lodge (Nights: 1-7)



Delightfully located on the shores of Lake Jokijarvi, Saija Lodge offers the much-welcomed guest a genuine sense of peace and quiet in the remote wilderness of Northeast Finland. The lakeside location also offers astounding views of snow-covered fells.

Crafted completely from wood, Saija Lodge has a cosy, homely and comforting feel. A roaring fire and candlelight really set the tone. This ambience is accompanied by welcoming staff, wonderful home-cooked food and plentiful space for unwinding after activities.

All in all, it is the ideal location to really escape from the hustle and bustle of everyday life and serves as an excellent base for either a multi-activity adventure or a specialist husky safari into the surrounding wilderness.

Hotel facilities

- With traditional Finnish style, the main building of the lodge and its cabins are constructed entirely from wood, offering guests a rustic and warm charm.
- The restaurant is located in the main building, where your meals will be served. Here you can enjoy a variety of dishes including local produce such as reindeer and fish, in addition to delicious homemade pastries and bread.
- The lodge also boasts an on-site husky farm.
- With over 25km of managed cross-country ski trails close by, you can hire skis for a small fee from reception if you have some experience.
- There is also a traditional smoke sauna on-site, which can be heated on request for guests to enjoy.

Guest bedroom types

LODGE ACCOMMODATION

The accommodation at Saija consists of 20 suites, which are located in several winter cottages, separate to the main building. Each suite consists of a living area, shower room, toilet and private sauna. The sleeping area is situated on a separate mezzanine level.

WILDERNESS CABINS

For trips including an overnight husky safari, one night will be spent at Harजारvi wilderness cabin. This is a very remote site with no electricity or running water, however, you will experience instant warmth from a log burning fire and the sauna. Experience a wonderful sense of escapism. All meals will be prepared by your guide over the open fire.

During your time in the wilderness, you will also be responsible for your own team of dogs and will prepare their food.

The Specifics

Holiday group size (approximate)

Approximately 2 - 8 people

Group Size

We always try to provide an approximation of the group size you can expect to be with for the duration of each of our holidays. It may be that you are joined by others for parts of your holiday (such as transfers and particular activities) but the above number reflects those you can normally expect to be with from beginning to end. If group size is something which is particularly important to you, please speak to our Travel Experts and they can suggest the best holidays for you.

Tailor-made holiday group sizes will vary for all activities as will the group size for any additional activities you book.

Minimum and maximum age

If a specific minimum age applies to this holiday, it can be found in the Key Facts box on the holiday Overview page.

Unless otherwise stated in the in the Key Facts box on the holiday Overview page, the minimum age for participation in an Artisan holiday is typically 8 years old (there may be younger children in some destinations who have booked with other companies). If an adult-only environment is important to you, then please contact our Travel Experts and they will advise on the best dates and destinations for you. If you are looking for a holiday designed specifically for families then please see our sister company www.activitiesabroad.com

Itinerary amendments

The order of activities listed in this agenda is provided for guidance only, your final and detailed itinerary will be provided either with your final travel documents (which are uploaded into your online account around a week prior to departure) or upon arrival.

Terms and Conditions

Our full booking terms and conditions can be found on our website: <https://www.artisantravel.co.uk/booking-conditions>

Minimum travellers 10, Maximum travellers 20