



# Kirkenes - Northern Lights And the Snowhotel



**HOLIDAY TYPE:** Small Group  
**VISITING:** Norway

**BROCHURE CODE:** 5202  
**DURATION:** 3 nights

## In Brief

Travel to Kirkenes and enjoy some unique Arctic experiences. During three nights, you'll experience the best of this frontier land when you go dog sledding, ice fishing and Northern Lights hunting. There's even a visit to the famous Snowhotel.

## Our Opinion

*“ Kirkenes is a unique destination and this short break offers you the chance to see all of the main highlights. For me, one of the best experiences is the combination of the snowmobile tour, king crab fishing and Northern Lights hunt. Spending an evening in a delightfully wild setting and gorging on the freshest king crab is magical enough but if the Aurora appears overhead it becomes utterly exceptional. ”*

Alex Charlton



## What's included?

- **Flights:** return flights from London Heathrow to Kirkenes (via Oslo). Routes are subject to change.
- **Transfers:** return airport transfers
- **Accommodation:** 3 nights at Thon Hotel or Scandic Hotel
- **Meals:** 3 breakfasts, 1 lunches, 2 dinners
- **The following activities and equipment are included:** walking tour/tour with kick-sledge, ice fishing, fishing for king crabs and Northern Lights hunt by snowmobile, husky safari, visit to the Snowhotel **(the order of activities is subject to change)**
- Services of experienced guides and instructors
- Winter clothing is provided for the activities

## Trip Overview

Kirkenes has so much to offer visitors and for those who are short on time, this three-night winter holiday is sure to deliver.

Only 15 kilometres from the border with Russia, Kirkenes feels like a real frontier town. As you walk by the harbour you will hear Russian and Finnish voices mingling together and the signs will also feature Cyrillic text - it is truly unique. Surrounded by wilderness, Kirkenes acts as an ideal hub from which to sample the unforgettable experiences that this remote region can offer.

With a rugged coastline and a mountainous backdrop, this is a playground which promises some truly memorable activity days. The town also offers some rather distinctive attractions which draw people from all over the world. These include the famous Kirkenes Snowhotel and the delectable delicacy that is king crab.

This may only be a short break of just three nights but we make sure that you get to enjoy all of the must-try winter activities. You will dog sled through the outdoors, visit the Russian border, try your hand at ice fishing, dine on the freshest possible king crab and witness the Snowhotel.

Of course, one of Kirkenes' other attractions is its location in prime Aurora territory. You will try and

exploit its excellent Northern Lights record during a night of Aurora hunting in the remote Pasvik Valley.

With a choice of modern accommodation available, you will return to a centrally located base each night following a day of unforgettable experiences in the Arctic. This may be a short break but you will head back home with a wealth of wonderful memories.

Image credits: Kirkenes Snowhotel, Trym Ivar Bergsmo

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## Agenda

Please note the order of activities is subject to change

DAY  
1

ARRIVAL AND INTRODUCTION

Upon arrival at Kirkenes Airport, you will be greeted by a local guide who will transfer you to your hotel. You have a choice of two hotels here in Kirkenes with either the Rica Hotel or Thon Hotel at your disposal; both offer excellent facilities.

There are no lengthy transfers and the drive from the airport will take roughly 15 minutes. Your guide will assist you in checking into the hotel and run through the details of your upcoming holiday. You can settle in and relax this evening ahead of tomorrow's adventures.

As you will be arriving in the late evening we recommend dining at the hotel tonight (payable locally).

**Included Meals:** None

DAY  
2

WALKING TOUR/TOUR WITH KICK SLEDGE, ICE FISHING, FISHING FOR KING CRABS AND NORTHERN LIGHTS SNOWMOBILE SAFARI

After a hearty breakfast in your hotel, you will meet your guide not far away from the hotel (it is a 5-minute walk). There, you will start your walking tour around Kirkenes. Depending on the weather conditions the tour can also be done by kick sledges.

You can enjoy lunch at the hotel (not included) and relax ahead of this afternoon's activity.

In the afternoon, you will embark on an ice fishing experience which will take roughly three hours.

Your guide will take you to a frozen lake where they will show you the simple skills which are required for this ancient pastime. Ice fishing has grown from an essential way of sourcing food to more of a hobby for modern Norwegians, but the traditions and techniques remain relatively unchanged.

This evening you are set for a real treat as you are collected from your hotel at around 6 pm for an evening of Northern Lights hunting and delicious food.

Your local guide will take you to a nearby harbour where your purpose is to pull up the large crab pots from the freezing cold waters and hopefully encounter some of the creatures which have really put Kirkenes on the culinary map – the king crab (if the ice conditions are good, you will be driving a snowmobile to one of the catching places on the ice instead (two people per snowmobile).

A king crab's leg span can grow up to 5ft 9inches and these impressive sea creatures are prolific on the seabed of the reassuringly deep waters of the Barents Sea and have become synonymous with the region. Once your catch has been landed, you will travel on to a basecamp around 10 minutes from town for the start of your snowmobile adventure.

Snowmobiling is a thrilling activity and will allow you to see a great deal of the local area in an exciting way. Following full instructions and a safety briefing, you will set off behind your guide travelling two people per machine (driver must hold a full driving licence). To upgrade and ride one person per snowmobile see the '[Personalise](#)' section for more information. Your destination is the Siberian Taiga Forest around Pasvik. Upon arrival here, you will visit a traditional Norwegian farm dating from 1854 (as long as the trail conditions permit access) and will be given an insight into how people have made this remote part of the world their home.

As you will be in a remote region for the evening you will hopefully have excellent views of the night sky and, as this is prime Aurora territory, you could be in for a real treat if conditions are favourable.

Following your snowmobile adventure, you will return to the base camp for a very special dinner. In a traditional lavvu, you will sit around the cosy fire and enjoy the king crab caught earlier in the evening. This is sure to be some of the freshest seafood you have ever been able to enjoy and is certainly a wonderful end to the day.

**Included Meals:** Breakfast, Dinner

DAY  
3

HUSKY SAFARI, SNOWHOTEL VISIT AND DINNER

Regardless of whether you class yourself as a dog lover or not, you are almost certain to fall for the huskies you will meet today after breakfast. After a drive of approximately one hour, your guide will give you an insight into the relationship between man and husky and will provide an overview of the lives of these working dogs.

Following this introduction, you will be given a full safety briefing to prepare you for the trail before setting off in pairs. One person will be the passenger and the other will control the sled (there will be the chance to swap drivers) and together with your team you will cover around 20-25 kilometres during your safari. To upgrade and ride one person per sled, see the '[Personalise](#)' section for more information.

A hearty lunch will be served around a campfire or in a Sámi lavvu and you can sit back and recount the experience you have just enjoyed.

This evening you will be taken to the magnificent Snowhotel for an unforgettable evening. Upon arrival, you will be given a guided tour of this monument to snow and ice architecture. You will enjoy the stunning sculptures, the beautifully decorated rooms and the ice bar. There will be many photo opportunities before you head to a nearby warm restaurant for your evening meal.

For those who would like to upgrade and spend their last night in Norway at this remarkable hotel, we can arrange for you to stay in a cold room here rather than returning to your Kirkenes hotel (you will have checked out earlier in the day). The full details of this experience can be found in the '[Personalise](#)' section of the holiday page.

**Included Meals:** Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner

DAY  
4

DEPARTURE

After breakfast at your hotel (either in Kirkenes or at the Snowhotel), you will be collected for your transfer back to the airport and your return flights home.

If you would like to extend your time in Norway then we can arrange for you to enjoy a city break in Oslo on your way home. Please speak to our Travel Experts for more information.

**Included Meals:** Breakfast

## Personalise this tour

### Our pick



## Spend the night at the Snowhotel

You can choose to spend your third and final night in Norway at the wonderful Snowhotel. Following your guided tour and dinner with the rest of the group, you will return to check into your snow room accommodation.

These rooms are beautifully crafted from ice and snow and offer a unique experience for all guests who stay here.

Everyone is provided with a cosy Arctic-grade sleeping bag which will keep you warm despite an interior temperature of  $-5^{\circ}\text{C}$ . Breakfast will be enjoyed at the hotel in the morning and you can also relax in one of the saunas if your airport transfers permit.

You will be collected from the Snowhotel and transferred directly to the airport for your return flights home. This means that you will need to check out of your city centre hotel on the morning of Day 3.

**Image credit: Kirkenes Snowhotel**

## Other options

### LITTLE EXTRAS



## Drive your own dogsled

If you want to experience the uninterrupted thrill of controlling a pack of huskies, this upgrade will let you drive one per sled - rather than having to switch halfway to being a passenger.



## Drive your own snowmobile (Northern Lights king crab tour)

Snowmobiling is incredibly addictive and you may wish to have a vehicle all to yourself. This upgrade lets you do just that!

## Included Accommodation

Other options are available - see below for details.

### Thon Hotel Kirkenes (Nights: 1-3)



The Thon Hotel is located on the quayside in Kirkenes, offering spectacular views over the Bøkfjorden Fjord. The hotel is just a short distance from the Hurtigruten Terminal and is in easy walking distance from the main shops, cafés and restaurants of the city. The hotel has a bright and modern Scandinavian feel and offers guests a comfortable base for a wonderful Kirkenes experience.

## Hotel facilities

- The hotel has a large restaurant and bar area, which serves an exciting and varied à la carte menu. It is a lovely spot in which to relax in the evening and a great place to sample an array of international dishes and local specialities, such as king crab
- Free Wi-Fi is available throughout

## Guest bedroom types

**DOUBLE/TWIN ROOMS:** There are 144 rooms in total. Each guest bedroom has an en-suite with shower room, a hairdryer, a phone and a TV.

**Image credit: Thon Hotel Kirkenes**

## Other accommodation options

Contact us for a personalised quote.

### Scandic Hotel



The Scandic Hotel (formerly the Rica Arctic) is located in the centre of Kirkenes, close to the main pedestrian street of the city and 2km from the Hurtigruten Terminal. The hotel offers simple and comfortable accommodation, which exudes a relaxed atmosphere - the ideal base for an Arctic adventure. The area surrounding the hotel has a wide range of shops, cafés and restaurants that can be explored. It is close to some of the city's most popular tourist attractions such as the Savio Museum, which has a beautiful exhibition of Sámi art.

### Hotel facilities

The hotel has a range of facilities which have been designed to make your stay as relaxed as possible.

- An indoor swimming pool is available for guest use
- A wonderfully relaxing sauna, which is the ideal place to relax after a day in the Arctic
- The restaurant serves a fantastic à la carte menu for dinner which includes a range of international dishes. Local specialities such as mouth-watering smoked salmon and king crab. Breakfast is served buffet style with a variety of hot and cold dishes
- Free Wi-Fi is available throughout



## Guest bedroom types

**DOUBLE/TWIN ROOMS:** There are 90 rooms in total at Rica Arctic Hotel. Each guest bedroom has an en-suite with shower room, a hairdryer, a phone and a TV.

**Image credit: Rica Arctic Hotel**

# The Specifics

## Holiday group size (approximate)

Approximately 2 - 24 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](http://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>