



Saija - Winter Break at Christmas or New Year



HOLIDAY TYPE: Small Group
VISITING: Finland

BROCHURE CODE: 5028
DURATION: 7 nights

In Brief

Situated in snowy, pristine wilderness with an all-wooden lodge as your base, Saija is the perfect location for a winter retreat over Christmas or New Year. This tailor-made option gives you the flexibility to choose the Arctic activities that suit you, to really make the most out of your festive holiday.

Our Opinion

“ As soon as I arrived at Saija, a stunning all-wooden lodge in the pristine snowy wilderness, I immediately got into the festive spirit! With a mixture of activities on offer, this tailor-made trip gives you the option to experience an Arctic adventure or a peaceful winter retreat over Christmas or New Year. ”

Caitlin Varley



What's included?

- **Flights:** return flights are included from London to Oulu (via Helsinki).
- **Transfers:** return group airport transfers*
- **Accommodation:** 7 nights' en-suite apartment
- **Meals:** full board
- Cold weather clothing for the duration of your stay
- Festive celebrations
- Fully qualified wilderness guides and instructors during activities

*Included transfers are based on a set arrival time of 18:05 and departure time of 14:25. Private transfers outside of these times will require a supplement.

Trip Overview

Saija is a simple place that perfectly encapsulates the Finnish wilderness and is a wonderful location for your Christmas or New Year break. Situated on the shores of Lake Jokijärvi, you will be surrounded by unspoiled nature and welcomed into Saija Lodge with home-cooked food in a charming rustic Finnish setting.

The natural surroundings also become a wonderful playground for some brilliant experiences. During this tailor-made trip, you're in charge of how you spend your time. Simply choose the activities that suit you from our list in the 'personalise' section and then enjoy your seven-night winter getaway. You could try popular pastimes such as snowshoeing and cross-country skiing or enjoy an adventurous snowmobile safari to explore more of the wilderness. We offer a range of activities to suit all tastes.

What's more, this wild location also means you're in with a chance of seeing the Northern Lights. Every night, simply step outside and keep an eye on the skies, what a way to celebrate Christmas or ring in the New Year!

During your time here, your home will be a cosy apartment with a private sauna – perfect for unwinding in after you have spent the day exploring the Arctic. All meals are served in the main building's restaurant, just a short walk away.

Whether you choose to spend Christmas or New Year here, this is sure to be an unforgettable festive break. On Christmas Eve, there will be celebrations in the main hotel building (as the Finns traditionally celebrate Christmas on the 24th) and New Year's Eve will also be celebrated – the Northern Lights may even make an appearance to really mark the occasion.

Credit: Visit Finland & Juho Kuva & Vastavalo Matti Koutonen & Daniel Ernst

Agenda

Please note the order of activities is subject to change

DAY
1

ARRIVAL AND WELCOME

Welcome to Oulu Airport where you are collected for your direct transfer to Saija Lodge. On the way, you can admire the incredible scenery of this wilderness that will be your playground for the next week.

The beauty of our tailor-made option is that you can set the pace of your trip.

The base price includes your flights, transfers, full-board accommodation for seven nights, cold weather clothing for the duration of your stay, festive celebrations, as well as fully qualified wilderness guides and instructors during your chosen activities. You select the activities you would like to do from the list shown in the '[Personalise](#)' section, ensuring your holiday can be as active or gentle as you wish.

Our Artisan Travel Experts are on hand to help you craft the ideal itinerary.

Included Meals: Dinner

DAYS
2 TO 7

FREE TIME AND OPTIONAL ACTIVITIES

Fill your days with as many or as few activities as you wish, selecting from the options listed in the '[Personalise](#)' section.

There's a wealth of Aurora hunting and Arctic experiences to choose from and should you need advice on the best options for you please speak to one of our Artisan Travel Experts. They will be able to help prepare the perfect itinerary for you.

Included Meals: Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner

DAY
8

DEPARTURE

Today you bid a fond farewell to Saija and transfer back to Oulu Airport for your return flights home.

Included Meals: Breakfast

Personalise this tour

Our pick



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

Other options

ACTIVITIES



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.

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

Drive your own snowmobile: £66 per person supplement



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.

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

Drive your own snowmobile: £66 per person supplement



Snowshoe and cross-country ski hire

Saija has a range of snowshoe 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: £15 per person



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



Extra husky safari

The thrill of husky safaris is almost impossible to resist, and it is quite likely that you may wish to add another to your itinerary.

Full instruction is provided for each activity and guests will travel one person per team of dogs.

There are three options to choose from:

13km safari - £166

20km safari - £200

30km safari - £247



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



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



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.



Dog Sledding Introduction

Complete your winter holiday by driving a team of huskies across the frozen landscape.

This introduction to dog sledding starts with a full safety briefing and instructions on how to mush your team of dogs. The huskies may be barking and howling at this time as they are extremely eager to get going but rest assured, once you're out on the trail they fall silent so you can appreciate the serenity of the surrounding nature.

You will then set off on a 13km ride into the wilderness where you will gain a real insight into life as a musher. Each person will drive their own team of 4-6 dogs.

Duration: 2-3 hours.



Hunting Northern Lights on a Snowmobile

Searching for the Northern Lights is an exciting experience in itself but pair this with a snowmobile ride into the Arctic night and you're in for a truly memorable adventure.

After a full safety briefing and instructions, you will be ready to start the hunt. As you ride along the trails with just your headlights lighting the way, your guide will stop if there are any signs of the Aurora. Along the way, you

will enjoy warm drinks around the campfire as you stop for a photo break.

Please note, you must be 18 years or over and hold a full driving licence to drive a snowmobile.

Duration: 2-3 hours (approx. 30km)

LITTLE EXTRAS



Fat Biking - Rental

Saija's wilderness is a wonderful place to explore and fat biking is a unique way to do it. The wide tyres help grip the snow as you cycle through wintery forests and on frozen lakes.

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 fat biking previously if you would like to hire the equipment.

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 Harjajarvi 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)

Minimum of 2 persons, maximum of 25

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 Numbers Required For A Holiday To Operate

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

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>