

ARCTIC CHALLENGE



AN INSPIRING ENDURANCE CHALLENGE IN THE HEART OF ARCTIC LAPLAND

CHALLENGE SUMMARY: Set in the heart of Arctic Lapland, this is a land of vast wilderness, frozen lakes and rivers, the extraordinary Aurora Borealis, herds of reindeer, the occasional moose, snow dusted tundra and endless Boreal Forest. Ice and snow are the norm for many months of the year and the dog and ski are still essential for everyday use during the long winters. Here, just north of Kiruna (67°51'N 20°13'E) and 150 kms into the Arctic Circle is where the Arctic Challenge is held.

The Arctic Challenge is an inspiring wilderness endurance challenge over a long weekend, which incorporates a 35km dog sled race, 25km Nordic Ski, Ice Fishing, orienteering, woodland fire lighting and a lighthearted Swedish quiz. Participants need have no previous experience of any activity, as all instruction will be provided in situ by your Guides. The Arctic Challenge is open for up to six teams of four persons, each event being scored to encourage healthy competition! The Challenge concludes with a visit to the Ice Hotel at Jukkasjärvi, a well-earned finish to your efforts spent in this unique and unspoiled landscape, followed by the Endex Dinner and prize giving to the winning team.

DATE:

January 13–16 2023

DURATION:

Four Days, Fri - Mon

COUNTRY:

Sweden

START/FINISH:

Kiruna, Lapland

GROUP SIZE:

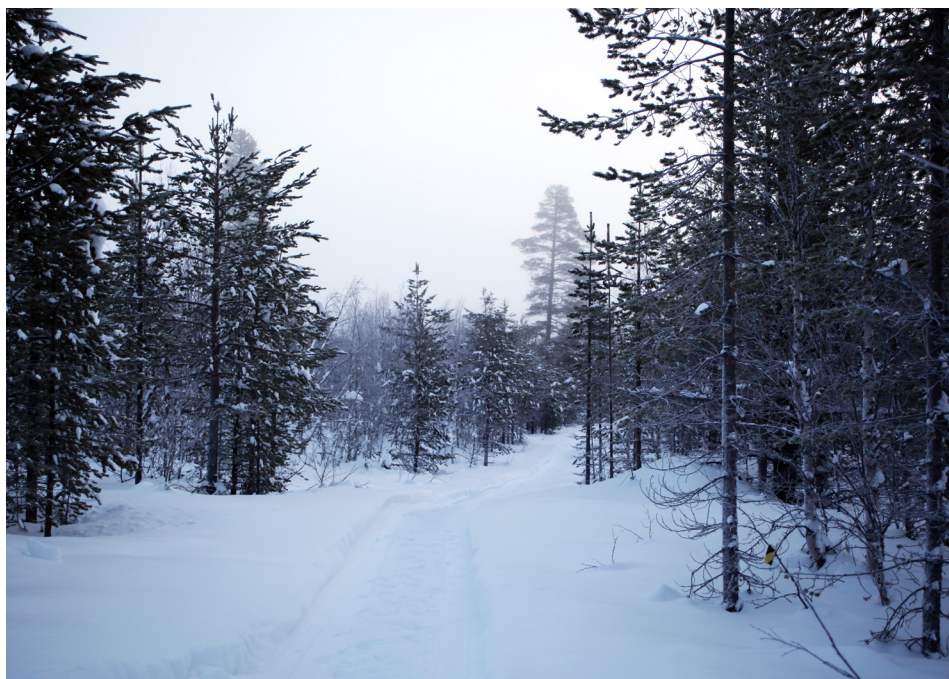
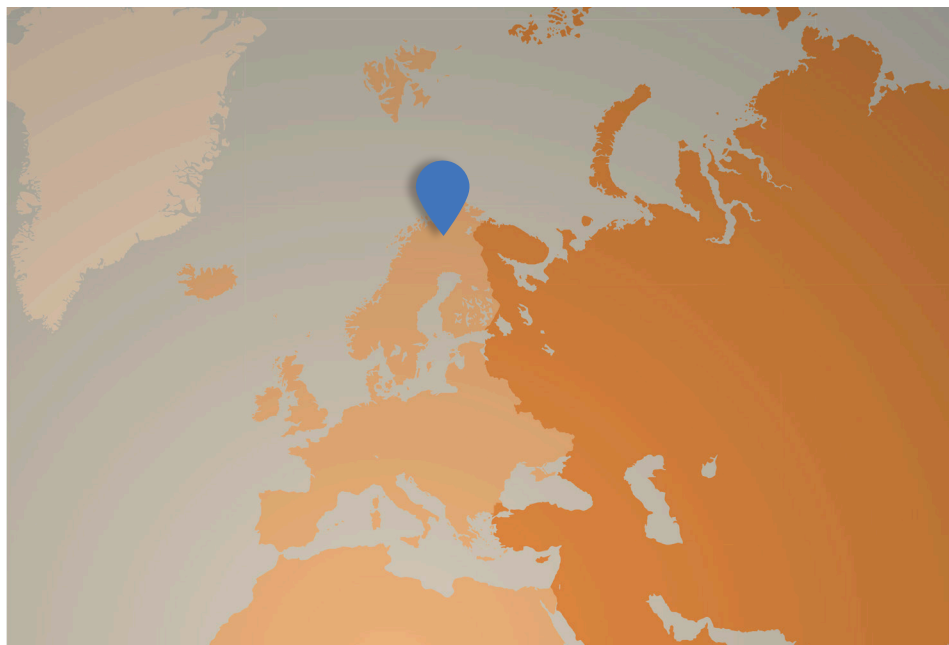
16-20, made up of
teams of four

EVENTS:

Orienteering
Ice Fishing
Dog sledding
Fire lighting
Swedish Quiz
Nordic Skiing

COST:

£2,000 min
fundraising
£250 reg fee
(Excluding flights)



PROGRAMME:

FRIDAY 13 JANUARY

An early start to catch the Norwegian flight from Gatwick or SAS from Heathrow to Stockholm and onwards to Kiruna, Sweden's most northerly city, located in the province of Lapland. At Kiruna, the group will be met by the Warthog in-country team and a short transfer takes us to our Base Camp Lodge. After coffee and a safety briefing, you will be issued with arctic clothing and given an introduction in driving and sled dog handling before helping harness your dogs and heading to the

Wilderness Camp by head torch. An hour and a half has us at the remote Wilderness Lodge. Map reading instruction, dinner, wine, and a chat about tomorrow's events complete the evening.

SATURDAY 14 JANUARY

Your day starts with a short (1/1.5 hr) Orienteering Challenge, finishing on the frozen lake where, armed with an auger you drill a hole through the ice and try your hand at fishing Arctic style. You return to camp for a quick coffee where teams will again harness their dog teams and compete in time

trials over a 35km circuit.

There will be a brief midday break for refreshments and recuperation before the time trials continue in the afternoon under torchlight. Your group will arrive back at the Wilderness camp by early/midafternoon. After a brew and warm up, there's a fire lighting challenge using only naturally occurring materials and a box of matches. The day finishes with a sauna (and optional snow roll), Swedish quiz and dinner.

SUNDAY 15 JANUARY

Today is the 'Big One'; the ski race that sorts the sheep from the goats! It's time to fit the skis and onto the Nordic Ski event. Teams will have a swift lesson in technique, after which follows a 25km race setting off at intervals from the Wilderness Camp. The marked route will take you through the backcountry via Karpasjarvi and finishes back at the Base camp Lodge some 3.5 – 5.5 hours later. With all groups safely returned to warmth, hot soup, and showers, we'll visit the Ice Hotel for some decidedly chilly vodka cocktails in ice-sculpted glasses. Finally, back to Base camp for tallying scores, Prize giving and a boozy Endex dinner.

MONDAY 16 JANUARY

A relaxed breakfast and transfer to Kiruna airport for the flight to Stockholm and your onward connection to the UK.



THE MAIN EVENTS

DOG SLEDS:

These are one-man sleds that you drive with a team of three or four dogs, mainly Greenland Dogs and Huskies.

NORDIC SKIS:

These are Swedish Army wooden skis with pine tar base and fitted with Trapper/Hunter bindings to accommodate the cold weather boot. Depending on snow and ice conditions, the circuit will be across frozen lakes and rivers and along forested tracks, with the odd sporting hill thrown in. These skis were cutting edge technology in the 1940s.

FOOD & SHELTER:

We shall have two nights staying at the Wilderness Lodge where wood burning stoves, sauna, candlelight and team dormitories are the order of the day. And one night back at the Base Camp Lodge where there are showers, electricity, and again team rooms or dormitories. Feeding will be typical for the region with an emphasis on moose or reindeer balls and salmon. Vegetarians are easily catered for.

IN COUNTRY

TRANSPORT:

Pick-ups and drop offs by minibuses or other suitable vehicle equipped with snow tires will be provided. Skidoos are used by safety staff.



FITNESS:

Although the days will be relatively short, you will to some extent be tested physically in controlling the dogs and sled and especially in the ski race. Some pre-challenge fitness and endurance training is strongly recommended, such as time spent on the cross trainer and hill running.

INSTRUCTION:

The Arctic Challenge will be led by John Howie, a military and civilian expedition leader who has more than 30 years guiding experience. Local guides and a backup team on skidoos will support him throughout the challenge. Instruction will be provided by the guides in all disciplines. Determination and a sense of humor, plus a modicum of balance are all that is required. This is a tough weekend with a steep learning curve. However, it's eminently achievable whilst in no doubt a true challenge, providing a huge sense of personal achievement and great team building ethos.

CONDITIONS:

The Arctic is a harsh environment and temperatures can drop to as low as -35 or more by the day. In the event of a light breeze, it is likely to feel even colder. The sun doesn't rise above the horizon from late November to mid-January and we will have approximately five to six hours of twilight per day, so much of the main events will be undertaken in near darkness adding to the challenge. However, on the plus side, this is also the time when one has the best chance to see the quite extraordinary Aurora Borealis, or Northern Lights.

DIFFICULTY:

Participants need to have a reasonable level of fitness, have endurance, stamina and a sense of humor always helps too! As in all challenges, the fitter you are and the more you get involved, the more enjoyable it is!

FLEXIBILITY & SAFETY:

At times we shall be in a remote wilderness area with poor communications outside of the main towns. Weather, natural disasters, political disturbances, mechanical breakdown, poor acclimatization, client fitness, accidents either our own or other peoples' can all conspire to delay or interfere with the challenge. Weather can be unpredictable, and the programme may where necessary be changed to suit snow and weather conditions. The Guides and Instructors have the final say in whether individual participants can continue in any of the disciplines for safety reasons. Whereas every effort will be made to ensure the smooth running of the Arctic Challenge, you must be aware of the above and accept both the risks and possible delays and take all necessary precautions yourselves.

THE PROGRAMME

Includes: Kiruna airport transfers to and from Base Camp Lodge at Kaupinnen, accommodation and all meals from dinner on Friday up to and including breakfast on Monday. All activities during the Challenge, Guiding, equipment and instruction as per the programme.

Not Included: Flights to and from Kiruna, lunch on days one and four, drinks at the Ice Hotel or alcoholic and soft drinks other than teas and coffee at Base Camp and Wilderness Lodges.

INSURANCE:

All participants must have Rescue and Repatriation insurance.



ANNEX A: ARCTIC CHALLENGE ITINERARY

DAY / DATE	DAILY SCHEDULE/CHALLENGE	ACCOMMODATION
Fri 13 Jan	An early start to Kiruna. On arrival you'll be given a safety briefing, Arctic clothing will be distributed, and you'll be introduced to your dog team. After instruction on how to handle the dogs and sled, it's out into the wilderness by torchlight to the Wilderness Lodge.	Wilderness Lodge. Dormitory style rooms
Sat 14 Jan	A brisk start to the morning with some Arctic orienteering, finishing on the frozen lake for an ice fishing challenge. A quick tea/coffee and onto the dog sled race from mid-morning to mid-afternoon. Sauna and snow rolls and into the warm for dinner and a relaxed Swedish quiz. A chance to see the northern lights after dinner amidst the darkness of the boreal forest.	Wilderness Lodge. Dormitory style rooms
Sun 15 Jan	The Nordic ski race on the 'wooden men'. From the Wilderness Lodge to Base Camp, 25kms across frozen lakes and along forested tracks. Tea, showers, and prizes for the winning team. Dependent on time, we'll nip into the Ice Hotel for well-earned drinks pre or post dinner.	Base Camp Lodge. Dormitory style rooms
Mon 16 Jan	A morning at leisure before the lunchtime flight back to London.	Home sweet home

ANNEX B: FLIGHTS

SAS -

Fri 13/01 LHR 06.40 / 10.10 ARN 11.45 / 13.20 KRN
 Mon 16/01 KRN 10.35 / 12.15 ARN 15.20 / 17.00 LHR

Norwegian -

Fri 13/01 LGW 06.20 / 09.40 ARN 10.50 / 12.25 KRN
 Mon 16/01 KRN 12.55 / 14.30 ARN 17.40 / 19.15 LGW

- **Bags should be checked through to Kiruna (KRN)**
- **Any alcohol must be sealed in Duty Free, with the receipt readable within the bag**



ANNEX C: CLOTHING & EQUIPMENT

ESSENTIAL KIT

Expedition duffel	C 75-100 litres
Sleeping bag (also provided)	3 - 4 season
Sleeping bag liner	
Daysack	35/45L
Snow/walking boots	
Duvet/Ski jacket	Or down jacket
Over trousers	Winter weight or ski trousers
Fleece	
Base layers	Wicking or merino tops
Trek/Ski socks	Thick, warm and long
Thermals/longjohns	
Gloves, mittens	Thick and thin
Woolly hat/beanie	
Head torch	With spare batteries
Water bottle – 1 litre	A camelback is likely to freeze
Thermos	
Balaclava	
Ski goggles	
Hand warmers	
Lipsalve	
Buff or headover	
Penknife	
Travel towel	
Wash kit	
Wet wipes	Antibacterial
Personal first aid kit	Including plasters and compeed for blister treatment
Personal medication	
Swimsuit/shorts	For the sauna
Day clothing	For travel and in the lodges
Hut shoes / trainers	



There will be no opportunity to make purchases of alcohol or energy snacks so these should be purchased in the UK before departure. The evenings are in a wilderness hut with log burning fires and a three litre wine cask of a robust claret is an excellent addition to the evening meal and apero time! In the past, we have found the Laphroig to be of great comfort in wild and woolly places.

PROVIDED KIT

Insulated all in one sledding overalls
Winter hats and gloves
Sleeping bags
Cold weather boots

Please contact fundraise@literacytrust.org.uk
with any questions and to sign up