KUNGSLEDEN WITH STF

HIKING AND CROSS-COUNTRY SKIING ALONG THE SWEDISH MOUNTAIN CHAIN
Welcome to Kungsleden

Welcome to what has been called the last wilderness in Europe, the mountain chain that stretches from northern Lapland as far south as Dalarna in central Sweden. Imposing landscapes, rich culture and magnificent experiences of the natural world. Extensive protected regions that have been classified as nature reserves, national parks, and UNESCO World Heritage sites. At the end of the 19th century, the first suggestions of creating a continuous hiking trail in the mountain domain of Swedish Lapland were raised. Then, as now, the Swedish Tourist Association (STF) was the driving force. It was planned that the trail should pass through the most beautiful locations, and in this way become the “king of trails”, which in Swedish is expressed in the name: “Kungsleden”.

Cairns were raised during the 1920s along the stretch between Kvikkjokk and Abisko, and today Kungsleden runs for approximately 430 kilometres from Abisko in the north to Hemavan in the south. The route is serviced by an extensive system of STF mountain stations, STF hostels and STF mountain cabins, which ensures that a period in the mountain realm is both easy to arrange and fun, at any time of year. Explorers of all ages hike or ski across the mountains.

The natural world of the mountains vibrates during the summer months with colours, fragrances, sound and motion. Babbling brooks extinguish hikers’ thirst and provide a haven of rest. The long days and short nights create a magical feeling, with the midnight sun being seen from early in the summer north of the Arctic Circle. The autumn decks the mountains in a blaze of red and yellow. The peaks are powdered with snow and the air is pure and clear. Winter is coming and the snow will be here soon. Winter brings with it its special snow surface and in the dark evenings the Northern Lights dance across the heavens. The days slowly become lighter and warmer, and spring brings another type of snow surface. The early spring offers many wonderful skiing trips, and magnificent experiences of primeval white mountains.

Lapland, a country within Sweden’s borders

Sweden has eleven summits over 2,000 metres and all of them are in Lapland. This part of the country also has many of Sweden’s most spectacular valleys. Together, they form a natural world of seldom seen variety, from mountain forests rich in species in the valleys to nearly sterile landscapes and glaciers high on the mountains. UNESCO has designated part of Lapland as a World Heritage Site, Laponia. This includes the national parks Stora Sjöfallet, Padjelanta, Sarek and Muddus; the nature reserves Sjåna and Stubb; parts of Kvikkjokk-Kabla; and the delta at Sulitelma and Rapadalen.

ANIMAL LIFE

The “big four” of Swedish fauna – lynx, wolverine, bear and wolf – are found here. It is also possible to see the golden eagle, white-tailed eagle, gyrfalcon, peregrine falcon, long-tailed jaeger, ptarmigan, European golden plover, bluethroat, snow bunting and many other birds. Around half of Sweden’s 400 species of birds have been sighted in Lapland. Another common sight is the king of Swedish wildlife, the elk, not least in Tarradalen and Rapadalen. Animal activity holds a low profile during the winter months, but some species change to winter coats and adapt to life in the cold. These include the Arctic fox, Arctic hare and ptarmigan. And it’s common for skiers to see the tracks of the wolverine and lynx.

GET TO KNOW THE SAMI

Reindeer husbandry and the rich Sami culture are thriving and alive along Kungsleden. Especially in the summer you can meet Sami with their reindeer out on the mountains. Do not disturb grazing reindeer and keep dogs on a leash. More information about the Sami history, language, culture and reindeer husbandry as it is practised today is available at www.samer.se.

STF also has an information folder “Realm of the Reindeer” on its website.
**Suggested tours**

**ABISKO TO NIKKALUOKTA**

The tour starts at the STF Abisko mountain station and passes through the northern entrance of Kungsleden, known as “Skapelen”. The train stops right beside the STF Abisko mountain station and the northern starting point of Kungsleden. The trek first passes through the birch forests of Abisko National Park with its rich animal life, to the STF Abiskojaure mountain cabin.

Lappporten, one of the most famous silhouettes of the mountain realm, can be seen in the distance. Boat transport is available on the Alesjaure lake during the summer season. From the STF Alesjaure cabin it is possible to continue along Kungsleden or take an extremely beautiful alternative via the STF Vistas and STF Nallo mountain cabins. Mountains rise steeply from the valley floor and the tour passes through forests of mountain birch and across the barren mountain landscape.

The terrain becomes more desolate when following Kungsleden to the STF Tjäktja cabins. At Tjäktapasset, the highest point along Kungsleden, one of the most powerful mountain experiences awaits. A magnificent view across forty kilometres of the Tjäktjavagge valley. It’s great to spend an extra day in the STF Sälka cabins and make a day-long outing into the unforgettable beautiful surroundings.

The cabin managers along Kungsleden are happy to describe how to get to luxurious wild strawberry beds. From the cabins at STF Singi you can continue southwards towards STF Vakkotavare, or make a detour to the STF Kebnekaise mountain station.

From there you can take the bus to Kiruna in Nikkaluota. Followed by 19 km walking or skiing up to the STF Kebnekaise mountain station. In the summer, it’s possible to shorten the route by 5 km by taking the boat across the Ladtfjotjvägge. Take a good meal in the STF Sälka cabins. Mountains rise steeply from the valley floor and the tour passes through forests of mountain birch and across the barren mountain landscape.

**NIKKALUOKTA TO SALTOLUOKTA VIA KEBNEKAISE**

The tour starts in the village of Nikkaluota. Fly or take the train to Kiruna, from where you can take the bus to Nikkaluota, followed by 19 km walking or skiing up to the STF Kebnekaise mountain station. The highest point along Kungsleden, glacier trekking, flora exploration tours, and weeks with special themes. Other tourist attractions are the giant caves in Ladtjojåkka, Silverfallet in Singivagge, Kittelfjällen and Tarfala. In the winter we offer courses in high-alpine ski touring and ice climbing, guided skiing trips along valleys or up onto the mountain slopes. Skilled off-piste skiers can expect to descend many metres on Jökelbäcke, Silverfall, and Singivagge. In the winter we offer courses in high-alpine ski touring and ice climbing, guided skiing trips along valleys or up onto the mountain slopes. Skilled off-piste skiers can expect to descend many metres on Jökelbäcke, Silverfall, and Singivagge.
fishing are waiting at Kaitumjaure and Teusajaire. As you approach the STF Vakkotavare mountain cabin, impo-
sing views open to the south towards Sarek. A bus runs from STF Vakkota-
vare to the Kebnats jetty, and then cross Langas by boat or on skis to the
STF Saltoluokta mountain station. Here a well-deserved shower, sauna
and excellent food await – a true reward at your goal. Many people find
the stretch of Kungsleden between
Saltoluokta and Nikkaluokta to be its
reward at your goal. Many people find
the stretch of Kungsleden between
Saltoluokta and Nikkaluokta to be its
most beautiful. The route passes across open mountain moors and
down into deep valleys. The stages are
reasonably short and the mountain cabins are all in beautiful locations.

**Information Kebnatske – Saltoluokta**
Fjällkartan (“Swedish mountain maps”): BD8
Distance: 52 km (followed by bus from Vakkota-
vare to the Kebnats jetty and Saltoluokta)
Duration: 4–6 days
No. of cabins: 4
Mountain stores selling food: Kaitumjaure, Kebnatske, Saltoluokta, Teusajaire, Vakkotavare
Saunas: Kaitumjaure, Kebnatske, Saltoluokta, Teusajaire

**Kvikjokk to Saltoluokta**
This stage can start after spending the night at the STF Kvikjokk mountain
station. In the morning, it’s time to
make your way through primeval
mountain forest. STF Pärreutigården
offers good fishing waters in both
streams and lakes, and then the route
departes diagonally through the
Rittakudalen valley. Rest for a while
when you’ve gained some height on
the open mountainscape, and point
your binoculars back down to the
forest, where elks and other wildlife
may appear in the undergrowth.
Sarekjällen rises in its magnificence
in the west at the Laitaure lake.

On the other shore, the Akke
homestead and the STF mountain
cabin await, a known staging point
on travels to Sarek. It’s a good idea to
stay an extra day and climb Skierfe, a
mountain with a glorious view across
the Rapadalen delta and the summits
of Sarek. Far into the Sarek region you
will see a place that has the exciting
name “Rovdjurstorget” (approximately
“Predator Place”, in Swedish).

The trail from the STF Akke
mountain cabin climbs relatively
steeply to barren mountain moorland
where a magical view awaits.

The summits of Sarek rise to the
west, while huge expanses of lowland
falls stretch to the east. In the sum-
mer, a boat service runs across the
Sitojaure lake, with the STF mountain
cabin on the lake’s northern shore.
Continue across the Uheti heartland
with the mountain of Kiirka and its
tooth-like profile, with the flat-topped
peak Slugga in sight. Eventually, the
tantalising goal appears – the STF
Saltoluokta mountain station, with its
sauna and tasty food.

**Information Kvikjokk – Saltoluokta**
Fjällkartan (“Swedish mountain maps”): BD10
Distance: 73 km
Duration: 4–6 days
No. of cabins: 3
Mountain stores selling food: Kvikjokk, Jäkkvik, Adolfström och Ammarnäs
Saunas: Kvikjokk

**STF Saltoluokta Mountain Station**
Address: 982 99 Gällivare,
E-mail: bokningar@stfturist.se
Website: www.svenskaturistforeningen.se/saltoluokta
Tel: 010-190 23 60
Season: March–April, middle of June–September.
Accommodation: Main building and four guest
cottages with a total of 100 beds. Double rooms,
4-bedded rooms and multi-bed rooms. Some double
rooms have en suite shower/WC.
Other rooms have showers and WC along the corridor
or in a service building.
Food: Restaurant with breakfast, lunch and dinner.
Here you can eat fish and game from the mountains,
and berries from the larder of Lapland. Fully licensed.
Service: Shop, rental of mountain equipment, guides,
sauna and self-catering facilities.
Activities: Guided wilderness tours, trips to the
night at the STF Kvikkjokk mountain
station. In the morning, it’s time to
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Fjällkartan (“Swedish mountain maps”): BD10
Distance: 73 km
Duration: 4–6 days
No. of cabins: 3
Mountain stores selling food: Kvikjokk, Jäkkvik, Adolfström och Ammarnäs
Saunas: Kvikjokk

**STF Kvikjokk Mountain Station**
Address: Slunjängen 19, 906 02 Kvikjokk,
E-mail: info@kvikkjokkfjallstation.se
Website: www.svenskaturistforeningen.se/kvikjokk
Tel: 0971-210 22
Season: Middle of February to the end of April,
middle of June to the end of September.
Accommodation: 48 beds in 2-bedded and 4-bedded
rooms. All with washbasin in the room: shower, WC
and drying room along the corridor.
Service: Restaurant with breakfast, lunch and dinner
during the tourist season, and self-catering facilities.
The STF Kvikjokk mountain station has a shop and
rents out some mountain equipment and canoes.
Canoe trips and guided delta tours are available.
Kommunikation: Train to Murjek, alternatively plane to
Gällivare or Luleå. Bus via Jokkmokk to Kvikjokk.

**STF Hemavan Hotel & Hostel**
Address: Renslagen 1, 920 66 Hemavan,
E-mail: info@hemavansfjallcenter.se
Website: www.svenskaturistforeningen.se/hemavan
Tel: 0954-300 02
Season: Open all year.
Accommodation: 178 beds, 2–4-bedded rooms.
Service: Restaurant with breakfast, lunch and dinner,
and self-catering facilities in the hostel. At the STF
Hemavan hostel and hotel, accommodation is in fully
equipped and modern hotel rooms with smart-TV, en
suite facilities and comfortable beds. The room price
includes our tasty copious and popular breakfast
buffet. We offer free WiFi to all guests, and those who
want to cook for themselves are welcome to use the
kitchens in our hostel building.
Activities: Guided wilderness tours, trips to view the
midnight sun and boat trips along the Luleälv valley,
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AMMARNÄS TO HEMAVAN

Many people start their mountain trek at Ammarnäs and finish at Hemavan, but it’s just as possible to hike in the opposite direction, or devise a shorter mountain trek starting in either location. The route mainly passes across heathland and through shallow-bottomed valleys, offering a varying landscape with birch forest, lakes, views across barren mountain landscapes, mountain moors and summits.

The trail from Ammarnäs to STF Aigertstugan starts with a climb through birch forest. STF Aigertstugan is located by a mountain lake with plenty of fish, out in the open mountain landscape. The views are magnificent between STF Aigert and STF Servestugan. Make a detour to StorAigert, 1,101 metres above sea level, which is the highest peak in the county, from STF Syterstugan. It’s possible to climb Sytertoppen, which, with its 1,768 metres above sea level, is the highest peak in the county, from STF Syterstugan.

A climb path runs from the peak down to STF Vitterskalstugan. Many people follow Kungsleden across the Sjö-Olaxeln and onwards through the flat-bottomed Syterskälet to STF Vitterskalstugan. This trail passes through an alp-like region of high moorland. According to many, the valley is the greatest asset of the region. As you walk down from STF Vitterskalstugan to Hemavan, you can see for miles across Artjärp and the glaciers of Okstindan in Norway.

STARTING AND FINISHING POINTS

Kviikkjokk to Ammarnäs

This tour is ideal for those seeking isolation, beautiful landscapes and magnificent views. The winter route, however, is not fully signposted. There is no clearly established system of STF mountain cabins along the route, and a tent and camping equipment are needed for overnighting in the wild. There are, however, some basic huts and other forms of accommodation, not run by STF.

The first stage is approximately 74 kilometres and ends at Jäkkvik. The second stage passes from Jäkkvik to Ammarnäs and is approximately 83 kilometres, passing through the Pielje-kaise National Park.

You can get to Jäkkvik by bus from Skellefteå. Further information is available from the tourist information office in Arjeplog, telephone +46 961 14520 and www.arjeplog.se.

Information Kviikkjokk – Ammarnäs

Fjällkartan (“Swedish mountain maps”): AC2
Distance: 157 km
Duration: 7–10 days
No. of cabins: 0
Mountain stores with food: Kviikkjokk, Jäkkvik, Ammarnäs och Ammarnäs. Sauna: Kviikkjokk

Ammarnäs to Hemavan

Several hiking trails in the area are designated as “Laponia”. Kungsleden and Padjelantaleden are two of the most famous, and are designated as a UNESCO World Heritage Site.

Kungsleden

Kungsleden is a 250-kilometre-long trail that runs from the town of Abisko to the Hemavan mountain station in the north of the country. The trail passes through some of the most beautiful landscapes in Sweden, including the Torneträsk lake, which is one of the largest in the country.

The trail is well-marked with wooden signs and is suitable for hikers of all levels. It is possible to hike the entire trail in one go, or to take shorter stages depending on your fitness level. Accommodation is available along the way, including mountain cabins and campsites.

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STF HEMAVAN MOUNTAIN STATION

The STF Hemavan mountain station lies nearly as far north as it is possible to come in Sweden, and has its own railway station. The location has been well chosen, and offers magnificent views of the landscape. Torneträsk (also known as “Suimilasjón”) extends to the north, while the imposing mountain formation of Lappsporten can be glimpsed to the south. The Abisko region has such unique flora, fauna and geology that it was designated a national park as early as 1909. The power of the Abiskokkck k val can never cease to attract visitors.

A trek along Kungsleden starts or ends at STF Abisko mountain station. It is also possible to spend several days here and enjoy great day-long trips, tasty food, the wood-fired sauna with swimming in Torneträsk, or top-quality off-piste skiing on the neighbouring mountain, Nuolja. It is also popular to take the train for a day-long outing to Narvik in Norway.

In both winter and summer, the chairlift can take you up on the Nuolja mountain. When the sky is free of clouds in the summer, the midnight sun shines on visitors, while the Northern Lights sweep across the heavens when winter nights are clear. Abisko is one of the places in Sweden where sunshine and clear skies are most often found, which means that visitors can frequently experience the midnight sun at the start of summer or the Northern Lights in the winter. The Nuolja mountain is a great stage for viewing the Northern Lights, and it is possible to enjoy an excellent meal and guided viewing of the Northern Lights at STF Aurora Sky Station. The Aurora Sky Station has been crowned by Lonely Planet as the best place in the world for light-based experiences.

STF Hemavan Mountain Station

Address: Fjällvägen 2, 850 06 Hemavan.
E-mail: info@hemavan@fjallstation.
Website: www.svenskaturistforeningen.se/ amnlands/STF-hemavan-fjallstation.
Tel: +46 964-300 01.
Season: Open all year.
Accommodation: 5–7 beds, 2–4-bedded rooms.
Service: Restaurant with breakfast all year.
Kungsleden

Length: 425 km from Abisko to Hemavan.
Highest point: Fjällkapscass, 1150 metres above sea level.
Lowest point: Kiviikjokk, 302 metres above sea level.
Weekly stages: 5, of which 4 with STF mountain cabins.

Staying at an STF mountain cabin

The STF mountain cabins are located in sites of natural beauty along Kungsleden, separated from each other by a one-day tour (approximately 10–20 kilometres). The cabins have self-catering facilities of a simple and pleasant standard. Guests cook their own food, fetch water, clean and chop wood. The kitchens are equipped with bottled gas cookers, cooking equipment, crockery and cutlery. There is no electricity; the cabins are heated by wood-burning stoves or bottled gas. Electricity is available at STF mountain cabins, no show that self food. A cabin manager is on hand during the winter and summer seasons. More information about STF mountain cabins is available at www.svenskaturistforeningen.se.

Season: Middle of February-start of May, middle of June–September (some cabins have other seasonal availability).

Accommodation: Multi-bed rooms (usually with four beds) with wide beds, mattress, pillow, duvet. Use your own bed linen or sleeping bag. It is not possible to book in advance, but rooms will always be made for guests. No matter how many arrive, if no beds are available, we arrange mattresses on the floor.

Payment: Payment in advance on the STF website or cash on arrival. Some mountain cabins take payment by credit card or debit card. The lowest price for your accommodation in our mountain cabins is given when you pay online.

National Parks

Eight of Sweden’s 29 national parks are located in Lapland, covering an area of nearly 6,000 square kilometres. The most famous are Sarek, Padjelanta and Stora Sjöfallet, and Njåla, together with the Mudal national park and some nature reserves, form the area designated as “Laponia”. Padjelantaleden enables you to experience this unique landscape. Trails pass through most of the national parks and cabins for overnight accommodation are available in many places. The exception is the Sarek national park, which has no trails or overnight cabins.

Starting and finishing points

Kviikkjokk to Ammarnäs

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Distance: 157 km
Duration: 7–10 days
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The STF Kebnekaise mountain station contains adventure for all tastes.

NIKKALUOKTA – A MOUNTAIN VILLAGE WITH A LONG HISTORY

Nikkaloukta is a small mountain village located where the road ends, approximately 70 km west of Kiruna. Sami people who live here are known as the Nalnrussell, and their land is called the Rago region. The village was founded in 1883 by Charles Rabot, a Frenchman who was the first to climb Kebnekaise. Since then, the village has grown and now has a population of about 600 people. In addition to the mountain station, Nikkaloukta also has a restaurant, shop, accommodation, a helicopter station, chapel and art gallery. At certain times of the year, a bus runs once a day to Kiruna from Nikkaloukta. For more information, visit www.nikkaloukta.com.

STF SALTOLUOKTA MOUNTAIN STATION – AUTHENTIC, IN NATIONAL PARK SURROUNDINGS

Mount Sarek rises on one side of the station, while Lake Langas extends from the other. STF Saltoluokta has wonderful neighbours. This is an oasis of calm and comfort, characterised by a special atmosphere and good food. People come here to experience the silence and beauty of the natural world.

AMMARNÄS – A MOUNTAIN VILLAGE WITH UNIQUE CULTURE AND NATURE

Ammarnäs is a mountain village close to Saltoluokta. The village is famous for its Sami culture and the hundreds of reindeer that graze in the area. The majority of the people who live here are Sami, and they are known for their unique way of life and their respect for nature.

STF KEBAKEKaise MOUNTAIN STATION – BY SWEDEN’S HIGHEST MOUNTAIN

Kebnekaise is the highest mountain in Sweden and comprises a mountain massif whose highest peak (Sydtoppen) consists of a glacier. This means that its height is continuously changing as the glacier grows and melts. Northrop is slightly lower and glacier free. The two largest glaciers in Sweden arise at Kebnekaise and spread each on one side of the mountain. The Sarek glacier, named after Charles Rabot, a Frenchman (in 1883), is to the west. The Björling glacier, named after Alfred Björling, is to the east. The Björling glacier grows and melts. Nordtoppen is the highest mountain in Sweden. The first trails sponsored by STF were cleared in 1887 at Spijeräk and Vallerspek, and now these offer unforgettable day-long outings with a view across Sarek.

STF Kållufjället is a mountain station with an extremely advantageous position for summer and winter tours. It is possible to trek northwards with a light rucksack, along Kungsleden towards Saltoluokta, STF Kebnekaise and STF Abisko. The trail southwards requires a tent and food supplies, and passes via Jäkkvike to Ammarnäs and Hemavan, while the trail westwards enters Laponia and Sarek. Wildlife tracking can be carried out in the Tarradalen valley, one of the valleys in the mountain realm with the richest wildlife. And the Padjelanta national park is only a few days’ walk away to the west. The folk at the mountain station will be happy to share expert knowledge about hiking trails and much more.

HEMAVAN – A MOUNTAIN VILLAGE WITH NEVER-ENDING MOUNTAIN ADVENTURES

Hemavan is in the valley of the Ume River that winds, together with “Blå vegen” (E12), as a corridor through the Vindelfjällen nature reserve. It is also close to ski slopes and skiing facilities suitable for children. In addition to its famous winter landscapes, Hemavan has a rich mountain life in the summer. Fishing, mainly for char and trout, is popular, together with other water-based activities. There are canoes for fine canoeing trips, and boats for people who want to take it easy. Hemavan offers also uncountable opportunities for cycling, and mountain bike facilities are highly developed in the region.

Everyday is here from adrenalin rich adventure to quiet rambles.

How far can you cover in a day?

Time and speed depend, naturally, on your experience and fitness, and – more importantly – how fast you want to travel. Use approximately 3 km/hour as a rule-of-thumb.

TRAILS, SHELTERS AND BOAT TRAFFIC

Lapland has more than 2,250 kilometers of national hiking trails. In the mountain areas of Sweden, there are 5,500 km. Trails for skiing use are marked with red crosses. Trails for summer use are clearly defined with black cross. Trails to the Sarek Nature Reserve are especially well marked. For information, visit the STF website for further details.

Northern Lights

At one time it was believed that some Northern Lights phenomena were reflections onto the night sky of large schools of herring and cod out at sea. We now know that it is energy that is converted to light when the charged particles of the solar wind collide with atoms and molecules in the atmosphere. Abisko is one of the best places in the world to see the Northern Lights. More information is available at www.auroraskystation.se.

What to carry?

The STF website has advice about clothing and other equipment for your trip. You do not need any highly specialised or expensive equipment to enjoy the mountain world.

It is also possible to rent equipment at several STF mountain stations, including skiing equipment, rucksacks, cookers and tents. If you buy food each day at the STF mountain cabins, your rucksack need not weigh more than around 10 kg in the summer.

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STF – OPENING THE WAY TO ADVENTURES IN SWEDEN

It is a goal of STF to enable people to discover Sweden. We want to nurture and develop our unique environment, and to guide and inspire folk to large and small adventures based on our 300 accommodation facilities. From lighthouse and mountain station to ship and hotel.

STF is one of the largest volunteer organisations in Sweden, with approximately 240,000 members. An association of committed people who seek discoveries off the beaten track, deeper into the forests, and higher up the mountain. And not least close to home, in our network of district associations. Our work never ends, because what is wonderful about Sweden is that there is always more to discover.

Join STF at www.svenskaturistforeningen.se, at an STF facility, at a district association, or by ringing Customer Services at +46 8 463 2270, and support our work, such that you and others can discover Sweden, not only today but also tomorrow.

www.svenskaturistforeningen.se/kungsleden • www.hihostels.com