

Bear watching in Finland



This four day short break is an ideal wildlife getaway to one of Europe's premier bear locations. You will be based at Martinselkosen Wildlife Centre which is family-owned and began its operation in 1991. The centre is located in peaceful surroundings close to the Russian border in Suomussalmi, next to Martinselkonen nature reserve.

The wildlife centre operates from the old 'Pirttivaara' border guard station which closed in 1990 and has been refurbished to meet modern demands. The wildlife centre has rooms, apartments, a dining room and a sauna.

The centre provides a versatile nature programme which during the summer months focuses on watching and photographing wildlife such as bears, moose and wolverines as well as birds... black kites and white-tailed eagles.

This is one of the best places in Finland to see and photograph Brown Bears in their natural habitat. The bear watching season begins on 1st of May and ends mid August.

Your Financial Protection

All monies paid by you for the air holiday package shown [or flights if appropriate] are ATOL protected by the Civil Aviation Authority. Our ATOL number is ATOL 3145.

For more information see our booking terms and conditions.

Day by day Itinerary

Day 1 – Depart UK

Depart Heathrow for Helsinki on Finnair (1020/1515). On arrival connect with the flight to Kajaani (1700/1820).

On arrival in Kajaani you will be met and transferred to Martinselkonen Wildlife Centre where you will enjoy an evening snack before retiring to your en-suite room at the lodge.

A hot coffee pot is always available for guests, meals can be arranged to order. Mainly local vegetables, berries, fish and meat is used in the meals.

Day 2 and 3 – Bear Watching

Breakfast is served in the dining room followed by some free time to enjoy a walk in the area or watch a variety of birds at the bird feeder in the garden or perhaps participate in an optional activity. The bird feeder attracts common birds but also the rare Siberian Jay and red squirrels. During the day a guide will tell you about the Bears in the area and you have the opportunity to ask questions.

At 3pm you will have an early dinner and depart the lodge at around 4pm, taking everything you will need for the evening with you. A short drive is followed by a 30 minute walk through a beautiful old-growth forest to the hide.

You will then settle into the hide which has comfortable chairs with reclining backrests, bunk beds for those who will require some sleep during the night and a dry toilet.

The hide is located in a thin pine forest by a small swamp and the shortest bear viewing range is some 5 metres. A forest is a more suitable viewing place than an open swamp as bears trust forests better, they provide many hiding places, and trees provide safety and hiding places are necessary for bear cubs.



There are two large wooden hides which can accommodate 9/10 persons. Both hides are equipped with sound amplifying audio systems and are suitable for bear photography.

For serious photographers there are 3 smaller hides' available, see additional prices below.

You will spend the whole night in the hide watching Bears as they come into view. A guide will be present and he will provide information and answer your questions. Snacks and drinks are also served.

During the night it will be possible to see various different Bears

of all ages as well as birds such as White Tailed Eagles and Black Kites which nest in the area and are very rare in Finland. The rarest visitor is the Golden Eagle.

In the morning you will leave the hide around 7am, ensuring there are no bears in the area! Return to the lodge for breakfast and maybe a few hours sleep before you repeat the experience.



Day 4 – Homeward

Return to the lodge for breakfast. Around mid morning you will transfer to Kajaani Airport to check in for your return flight to Helsinki (1350/1510), connect to the flight to Heathrow (1600/1710).

The cost of this itinerary is from £895 per person, based on twin share and is subject to availability at the time of booking.
Single supplement is £120.

Includes:

Return flights London Heathrow - Kajaani inc. Taxes
Return airport transfers
Accommodation in a twin room
Meals – breakfast, dinner, evening snack
Two nights in the bear hide
English speaking guide

Excludes:

Drinks
Travel Insurance – ask us for a quote
Items of a personal nature

There are also a couple of professional hides available. The Pro hides have been especially designed for photographers and have room for 1-3 persons. The Pro hides are located in three different places, in a swamp, a forest and a close to a small pond.

Supplement for the pro hide:

£15 per person per night, when 2 persons in a hide
£45 per person per night, when 1 person in a hide

