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Sweden's Kiruna named European Capital of Culture 2029

Kiruna in Swedish Lapland has been named one of the two European Capitals of Culture for 2029, a title that celebrates the city's cultural creativity, incredible landscapes and rich traditions.

With the concept *Movement. ´Below Ground. On Earth. In Space´* Kiruna seamlessly weaves together the many dynamic elements that define its unique character—from its deep mining heritage and collective wisdom and knowledge to its Arctic surroundings and its aspirations for the future of space exploration. Sharing the spotlight with Uppsala as a finalist, this achievement highlights the strength and diversity of Sweden's cultural offerings.

What is the European Capital of Culture?

Each year, the European Union selects two or three cities to carry this title, giving them a chance to showcase their unique culture and contribute to Europe's cultural conversation. In 2029, Kiruna will share this honour with Lublin in Poland. Sweden has previously been represented by Stockholm in 1998 and Umeå in 2014. More about Kiruna's candidacy and bidbook here.

Why visit Kiruna?

Located above the Arctic Circle, Kiruna offers a blend of natural wonders and cultural heritage. The city's ongoing transformation, as it relocates due to mining, adds a fascinating dimension to its story. Kiruna's program will explore resilience, creativity, and the interplay of indigenous and modern influences.

Cultural highlights in Kiruna

- **Icehotel in Jukkasjärvi**: A world-renowned hotel crafted from ice and snow, on the banks of the Torne River, it serves as a hub for a blend of Arctic and international art and design.
- **Sámi culture and handicrafts:** Explore traditional Sámi crafts, music, and storytelling, celebrating Sweden's indigenous heritage. Meet with the reindeer.
- Visit the LKAB mine: Go underground to explore the world's largest iron ore mine. The tour offers a deep dive into the mine's history, current operations, and its role in Kiruna's relocation.
- **Annual snow festival (snöfestivalen):** Held each January, this event features dog sledding, reindeer racing, and the Kiruna International Snow Sculpture Competition, a true highlight of the winter season. In 2025, Kiruna Snow Festival celebrates 40 years!
- **Aurora Sky Station Abisko:** Experience the magic of the northern lights at Aurora Sky Station in Abisko, a scenic 90-minute drive from Kiruna, offering one of the world's best locations for aurora viewing. Turn off your lights and let the chairlift transport you one step closer to space, up to Mt. Nuolja. Slowly you glide up to STF Aurora Sky Station, 900 meters above sea level, to gaze at the Northern Lights and the stars.

A shared celebration

"We at Kiruna Lappland are delighted with this recognition and see great potential for the tourism industry. This platform allows us to continue developing and showcasing cultural experiences within our destination," says Peter Salomonsson, CEO of Kiruna Lappland.

While Kiruna takes on this title, Uppsala's position as a finalist underscores its own cultural richness. Both cities represent the best of Sweden's vibrant and diverse culture, and both are must-visit destinations.

Learn more about Kiruna visitsweden.com and Kiruna in Swedish Lapland

How to get to Kiruna from the UK

Fights to Kiruna are available with SAS from LHR and Norwegian from LGW. Prices currently start at £73 for one-way flights and £173 for round trips. Subject to availability and change.

It is also possible to travel by train using Eurostar, Hbf in Germany and then 2-night trains from Hamburg via Stockholm. An adventure, for sure.

Press images Kiruna

- https://imagebank.sweden.se/my-selections/2j1dkd6m36

- https://swedishlapland.mediaflowportal.com/press/search/?Kiruna

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Welcome to Sweden, a destination of a different nature.

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