

**GOOD TO KNOW**

**START/FINISH**

Kilpisjärven Retkeilykeskus  
(aka Kilpisjärvi Hiking Center)

**SEASON**

May to October

**ACCOMMODATIONS**

Kilpisjärvi offers camping and a range of indoor accommodation options.

**HIGHLIGHTS**

- 1. The 360-degree panorama views from the top of Saana Fell
- 2. Walking along the shores of Lake Saanajärvi.



**HELPFUL HINTS**

**GETTING THERE & AWAY**

Kilpisjärvi is serviced by daily buses from Rovaniemi during the peak summer season (8 hours). The nearest airport is in Kittilä, from where you can catch a bus or take an airport taxi (3.5 hours).

**DO I NEED TO PAY A FEE, OBTAIN A PERMIT, OR HIRE A GUIDE?**

No, on all counts.

**WHAT TO BRING**

Daypack, trail running or lightweight hiking shoes, rain jacket, beanie or buff, merino wool or synthetic hiking shirt, hiking shorts or pants, fleece or synthetic insulation layer, water bottle, sun hat and sunscreen, small first aid kit, map and compass, or GPS app on your smartphone, and trekking poles (optional).

**KILPISJÄRVI VISITOR CENTER**

The visitor center has a wealth of information on the geology, history, and recreational opportunities of the Käsivarsi high-fell area. The center also has a selection of films for children and adults in Finnish, English, and French on topics such as the history of the village, the Lapland War, the Sami people and their reindeer-herding traditions, the unique geographical formations of the area, as well as local flora and fauna.

**OUTDOOR MECCA OF NORTHERN FINLAND**

In addition to the featured Saana Fell hike, Kilpisjärvi acts as a base camp or resupply point for two of Lapland’s other most prominent hiking trails—the Arctic Trail (p. 40) and the Three Countries Trail (see Bonus Track). Kilpisjärvi is also a popular year-round destination for fishers, kayakers, cross-country skiers, and snowmobilers. Along with its multiple accommodation options, Kilpisjärvi boasts a super-market, outdoor store, restaurants, and regular bus services to towns in Finland and Norway. Because of its isolation and dry weather, between September and March it is considered one of the best places in Lapland from which to view the northern lights.

**BONUS TRACK**

**THE THREE-COUNTRIES TRAIL**

Beginning and ending in the village of Kilpisjärvi, this wonderful four-day trek visits the famous Three-Country Cairn of Finland, Norway, and Sweden, before continuing on a circular journey around some of Lapland’s finest terrain. During its 50-km (31.1-mi) course, hikers will overnight (either in huts or tents) in all three countries as they navigate remote, glacially carved valleys with roaming reindeer, lonely lakes, starkly beautiful mountains, and icy cascades.

For more information on the Three-Countries Trail, see the Bonus Hikes section at the back of the book.

**BACKGROUND**

**THE ILLUMINATION OF SAANA FELL**

In December 2017, Saana Fell made international headlines when its entire bulk was illuminated with blue light to celebrate the 100th anniversary of Finnish independence. In total, a whopping 2.5 million sq meters were lit up, making it the largest art illumination in history.



**FLORA & FAUNA**

**MALLA STRICT NATURE RESERVE**

Located at Kilpisjärvi in the municipality of Enontekiö, Malla Strict Nature Reserve has been a protected area since 1916 and a strict nature reserve since 1938. Covering an area of 30 km² (12 mi²), Malla is notable for its fells, young geology, and calcium-rich soil, which produces a wide array of arctic plant species. Among the flora is the beautiful glacier buttercup (*Ranunculus glacialis*), which is the reserve’s emblem and, in Finland, is only found on the slopes of Enontekiö’s fells. You are also likely to see mountain hares, Norway lemmings (illustrated), snowy owls, and—if you are lucky—arctic foxes.

