

ICE CLIMBERS GO UNDERGROUND IN NORTHERN SWEDEN



Global warming forces extreme sports enthusiasts underground. Sweden extends its profile in winter sports.

Sweden is no stranger to winter sports and is one of the best in any sporting activity, which involves either ice or snow. The ice hockey team is world famous for being one of the greatest challengers to Canada's dominance, Anja Parson has done more than her fair share for Swedish figure skating and now the Swedes are the front runners in the relatively new sport of **ice climbing**.

Whereas the above-mentioned disciplines usually take place in comfortable arenas, ice climbing takes place in **underground caves in Northern Sweden** where blocks of ice weighing as much as 10 tonnes can fall any second. It is certainly for the extremists.

The reason for going underground is the effect of global warming. In an age when bears can be spotted in the woods while they should be hibernating, glaciers are disappearing, sea levels are rising and white mountain tops are becoming either green or brown, it is understandable that ice needs to be found elsewhere. Most know that cold air sinks so underground is the logical place to go looking for such entertainment.

The sport is gathering popularity in Sweden. There are more and more active climbers and the level of equipment is rising as it is becoming more modern. Its popularity, naturally, increases the sales. The sheer beauty of the surroundings attracts many. The frozen waterfalls and ice slabs are well worthy of attention even without the need to participate in climbing. Some Swedish enthusiasts have even gone so far as to say that the sport beats global warming, thus being proud of their decision to use the underground area.

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