

UK TRAVELERS TO SPEND THE WINTER IN LAPLAND



Come Christmas and Northern Finland will see a surge in the flights and the number of tourists. Unlike other countries, the Christmas rush begins in a matter of six weeks; tourists from all over the world will begin to throng the quaint little country.

According to Finpro, the former Finnish Foreign Trade Association, **more and more tourists are expected to fly from Britain to Lapland, with the onset of the winter.** Finpro's London representative, Riitta Balza reported that in mid-November, more and more travel agencies chart out elaborate travel itineraries to send tourists to Lapland, Northern Finland.

In a survey conducted by Riitta Balza, it was observed that the travel packages for Christmas, New Year and year end weekend trips are all sold out in the UK. She conducted the survey extensively among a dozen travel agencies all throughout UK. However, she duly noted that new packages for Lapland would need to be booked way after the New Year sets in, as all other packages are already sold out.

Balza remarked that new routes bring new business. The new Snowbird airline has done its bit by transporting more and more tourists from London to Enontekiö in Finland, thereby, improving sales considerably throughout the winter season.

Finland does not get all its tourists from Britain only; many others come from Germany as well. **The new flight setup between Munich, Hannover and Kittilä is adding its own share of tourist revenue to the Finnish economy.**

A lot of people are travelling to and fro from these countries; however, Russia is lagging fairly behind in its contribution, considering the political and socio-economic conditions in the country. What is yet to be seen is when the sales from the Russian area rise! The increasing number of bankrupt Russian tour operators is not a very encouraging sight for the Finnish tourism industry at this point of time.

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