

Swedish mountain

Contributed by Josef Arnfjell

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The Swedish mountain Ryfjället (the mountain of Ry) is one of the most characteristic mountain ranges in southern Lapland. Here we follow the mountainleader and backpacker Josef Arnfjell on a one week tour up in the Swedish montains. This exciting trip took him through storm, whirling snow and sunshine.

Swedish mountain in
southern Lapland

Ryfjället (the mountain of Ry)is one of the most characteristic mountain ranges in southern Lapland. With it’s 1412.5 m.a.s.l (meters above sea level), the peak Ryivegaise, reaches far over the tree level. The “real” peak of the range, named Ryfjället, are at the southeast part of the range and reaches “only” 1130 m.a.s.l. In the background Ryivegaise.

The mist are thick when I’m aproaching Ryfjället. It’s in the beginning of february.

The rime frost have, on many places, built up like a thick layer around stones, trees and bushes. The ice crystals are forming beautiful patterns and reminds in it’s structure of fractals.

The mist are so thick that everything that are on a distance greater than 50 m disappears in a haze and make it very difficult to navigate.

In moments like this it's good to have a professional guide that knows where he's heading and how to find the way. For example a Swedish mountain leader (fjälledare).

The islets on the mountain lakes show themselves from their most mysterious side.

After rain comes sunshine and it's the same with mist. The cold february winds drives the mist "on the run" but the whining wind also drives up small drifts in my way. I judge the windspeed to 7-8 m/s. The cold effect make the -15 degrees celsius to -30 degrees so I have to watch out for the cold. In the background the quite low Vallehobben, 873 m.a.s.l

Even the wind slackens from time to time and a couple of mornings it's possible to enjoy the calmness while I'm airing my sleepingbag and my lungs. The sun gives a little heat and with the Ryfjället in the background it's impossible that the day can be better.

If you look to the north you can see the natur preservation of the Vindel mountains. With it's 560 000 ha (more than 1000 000 acres) it's one of the largest protected areas in Europe.

One of the peaks in the mountain range of Ryfjället.

Southeast of Ryfjället are Järvfjället (the Wolverine Mountain) with Rödingträsket (Arctic Shar Marsh) in the foreground and Nedre Boksjön (Lower Book Lake) in the background.

The wind comes swiftly in the mountain and when it begins I realise that it's time to go back to the camp even if it's just after lunch. This time the wind lashes considerable more than 8 m/s, it feels more like storm (24 m/s) in the gust. I take the opportunity to take some pictures between the gusts. It's good to have the wind in the back and that the steel edges on my skiis are sharp so they seize the icy ground. It's a pure downhill race, but on flat ground.

After further a good nights sleep I awake to a blue sky and a weak breeze. The “Lapland taxi” arrives and my week on the “Ry mountain” is over. In the background the “real” peak of Ryfjället.

Text and Photography Josef Arnfjell