

The Reserve of Vindelfjällen

Contributed by Josef Arnfjell

Vindeln river is a tributary to Ume rive. The river has it source-tributary up in the mountain near the norwegian border in the Reserve of Vindelfjällen. Here can we follow the mountain leader Josef on a tour with some enthusiastic tourists.

We, Edvin, Emil, Kalle, Martin, Tobias and me, the professional outfitter of this tour, arrived to the trail of Victoria in the middle of July. We were about to spend almost a week together in the beautiful reserve of Vindelfjällen, one of the greatest reserves in Europe.

The trail is in good condition and even if it´s impossible to wear shoes, you have to wear some sort of boots, the most critical points have small bridges.

In Kopparberg there is a small site, belonging to the saami people, the ancient people of the north. The saami hut on the picture is one of the typical huts that were built with a roof of grass. Even huts of turf and huts with birch bark or a combination of these were used frequently in the past.

Lunch in the grass. This time something delicious is served. Pasta with smoked ham, cheese and garlic on the menu. In the background we can see one of the more modern buildings in the site.

Pyrola minor. This cosy little flower is to be found in some places in the mountains. This Pyrola has a red stem compared with the the green stems in the flora. Maybe it´s some sort that´s more common in the mountains.

We are standing and admiring the sunset. The sun has disappeared behind the clouds, and although it´s 8 a clock in the evening the sky is bright.

Kalle is admiring the view with the dog Amigo at his side. Amigo has to carry his own share of the burden, that is his own food and some smaller equipment. He can carry more than 1/4 of his own weight without any problem.

The blue and grey tones between the mountains is caused by the high moist in the air. Even if it's moisty in the air you don't become uncomfortable because the temperature in the mountain seldom raise ove 20 degrees celsius because of the altitude. Its only hazy and humid, not hot. The few days in the year i gets hot, it's never hazy and humid. Very comfortable in other words.

The whole group is gathered just below the top of Stångfjället for a shorter rest. As always the view is amazing, and often you sit an extra half an hour only for admire the views.

There is nowhere you feel such freedom as in the mountains. Sometimes it feels like you're going to sail away in the wind.

The camp is chosen so that you have shelter and near to water, and if the views are magnificent that counts as a bonus. To get out from the tent in the mornings and stretch the sleep out of your body as you almost are touching the sky is one of the good things one the hiking tour.

The reindeer has been wandring here for houndreds and thousands of year. First the wild reindeer and when the saami people finally domesticated the reindeer, the wild type disappered from the swedish mountains. Here is a smaller herd heading for the bare mountains.

Is there any better way to cook the menu of today, then by using pure mountain water? Hardly. You can also enjoy the water by drinking it like it is. It's so pure that not even bottled water can compete with it.

Chocolate pudding. This is one of the deserts that can be made if you want to have something extra after the dinner.

Geranium sylvaticum, the swedish botanist and scientist Carl von Linné made up the whole system of naming plants and animales and gave most of the plants their names himself. "Not even Solomon in all his glory was dressed like one of them", and not even my Leica lenses on the camera could reflect the colours and the natural beauty of this flower.

Finally even this fantastic tour ends. My guests were very happy with the tour and apreciated my guiding. We're leaving for this time and say "so long" to the Vindelfjällen.

Text and photo: Josef Arnfjell / Mountain Leader