

Inside, though, all was warm — height apparently proving no obstacle to underfloor heating or a pellet-burning stove. And space, in contrast to the other treehouses, is lavish. In the tiny, micromanaged interiors of Bird's Nest, Mirrorcube and UFO, beds, tables, basins and loos have been shaped and squeezed to fit awkward curves and corners; by comparison the 7th Room feels distinctly palatial. This is less fantasy land and more designer chic, boasting classic Norwegian chairs from the 1950s, lighting by the contemporary Swedish studio Ateljé Lyktan and a futuristic shower system that promises minimal energy and water consumption.



If the overall look at Treehotel is a masterclass in pared-back Scandinavian functionality and restraint, a few miles up the road at Loggers Lodge, the style is completely different. The Lodge, which opened on Christmas Eve, is owned and run by Eric Borg, a young, local entrepreneur whose small company, Pure Lapland, provides activities and excursions in the area, often on behalf of Treehotel. Part of the grand plan, in fact, is to encourage guests to combine the two hotels, transferring from one to the next by husky-drawn sleigh.

Yet to describe Loggers Lodge as a hotel is a little misleading; this is a one-room retreat, alone in the middle of a wood, miles from anywhere. With the modernisation of Sweden's prolific logging industry, this simple bunk house, once the base for 16 tree-fellers, slipped into a state of neglect, used only occasionally by the owner and his family as a rough-and-ready summer house. Then Borg bought the neighbouring property and recognised the potential to develop the cabin into something truly unique. Fortunately the owner agreed and offered him the lease.

Painted on the outside in the familiar falu red (the pigment historically associated with the copper mines and used on wooden buildings to mimic brick facing), Loggers Lodge looks every bit the traditional Swedish cabin. Open the door and where once there would have been eight double bunks and a simple wood-burning stove, now there is a huge central fireplace around which is a sumptuous arrangement of vast bed, seating area and dining table — cosy, candlelit and inviting. Borg has thrown his heart and soul (and bountiful Swedish kronor) into this room, determined to deliver an unrivalled level of comfort and quality to the

discerning guests he hopes to attract. Take, for example, the easy chairs — a classic 1956 design in pale oak and sheepskin by the Swedish furniture designer Yngve Ekström (and which cost £1,500 a pop). And then there's the wood-fired sauna (a snowy 20-metre dash away) in a cute little hut with a bubbling hot tub outside, carefully positioned in an open glade to catch the Northern Lights should they be dancing overhead.



The nearby Loggers Lodge

Contact with the outside world is minimal except via WiFi (surprisingly good given the frozen isolation) and the occasional interaction with Borg or his business partner Jörgen Drugge, who pop in with food. Drugge, in fact, is an astonishing cook, conjuring healthy three-course dinners at night and hearty breakfasts each morning. Moose, reindeer and Arctic char are Lapland staples, along with berries of every kind — cloudberry, juniper berries, Arctic raspberries — foraged during the summer and autumn months and turned into jams, cordials and liqueurs. On daily excursions — included in the overnight price — you can guarantee that in the icy grip of a ski touring or snowshoeing expedition a fire will be lit in the snow and the Swedish ritual of *fika* (thick coffee served with a sweet cinnamon bun) will get under way.

While Drugge leads most excursions, Borg tends to take on the photographic tours offered by Pure Lapland because, as it turns out, among his various skills he's a professional

photographer, too. There's a night-sky print of his above the bed in Loggers Lodge but his most exciting piece of work to date is at Treehotel — at the 7th Room, of course. Before the treehouse was hauled towards the sky, Lindvall commissioned Borg to take a photograph of the view looking upwards from the ground into the tree canopy. The resulting image has been reproduced in life-size panels and fixed to what Lindvall calls the 7th Room's sixth façade — the underside of the cabin. Cast your eyes upwards from directly below and the room magically disappears as if it was never there.

Borg and Lindvall make quite a duo. It crosses my mind that Borg is the young pretender, keen to evolve and expand his business in other parts of Swedish Lapland. But Lindvall, who is 62 and talks openly about retiring, isn't finished just yet. I ask if there are to be more treehouses at Treehotel or perhaps a new Treehotel altogether, at which point I'm coolly presented with some of the most exciting, ambitious plans I have ever seen. Forget the forest: Lindvall's next grand scheme — its complex design already approved by all the relevant authorities — is a floating hotel on the Lule River. Arctic Bath, it's going to be called, and, should the final piece of the financial jigsaw fall into place, it will be up and running by the end of the year.

Details

Pamela Goodman was a guest of [Treehotel](#) and [Loggers Lodge](#). The Treehotel's 7th Room sleeps up to five and costs from SKr12,000 (£1,088) per night. Loggers Lodge sleeps two, from SKr13,400 (£1,215) per night, full-board, including activities, guiding and sauna. Both are about 90km from Luleå airport, which is an 80 minute flight from Stockholm. For more on the region, see swedishlapland.com

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