

Northern Lights to Your Mobile Phone

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If you are touring in Finnish Lapland, you no longer need to shiver outside when watching the heavens in order to see the Northern Lights. Information about the Northern Lights can now be received directly into a mobile phone via the world's first Aurora Borealis Alarm System.

"This is a service in which local beliefs, the natural surroundings, and technology are combined in an interesting way. Asian tourists in particular are interested in the system," says Miikka Raulo, the managing director of the Lapland Centre of Expertise for the Experience Industry.

In practice the service operates fairly simply. A tourist can order the service on the Internet in his own country. Having come to Finland, he hires a telephone for the service at the airport. At the hotel the tourist receives information about seeing the Northern Lights in the form of a text message on his telephone. The information is transmitted by a sensor monitoring the sky.

Raulo says that the best time to see the Northern Lights in the Rovaniemi area is between November and March - on average every other day.

The northern lights - What are they?

The Northern Lights are a phenomenon that is seen in the skies on clear, dark nights in the Arctic and Antarctic regions. Scientists say that they are normally created at a height of 100 kilometres, when electric particles (electrons and protons) accelerated by the Earth's magnetic field collide with molecules of air. These release some of the energy that

is obtained in the form of visible light.

Different cultures hold many beliefs about the Northern Lights. Lapps have believed that the Northern Lights have a special quality to settle disagreements. Asians believe they increase fertility, while the Japanese believe that children conceived under the Northern Lights are lucky.

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