

READING CHALLENGE

The Hotel Made of Ice

A hotel that melts every spring and is built again every winter

Level	A1 — Beginner
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Age Group	Teens (11-16)
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Topic	True Stories
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Duration	~8 min read
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Skill	Reading
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Imagine a [hotel](#) made of ice. The walls are ice. The beds are ice. The chairs are ice. Even the glasses you drink from are ice. This hotel is real. It is in Sweden. And every year, it [melts](#). Then every year, people build it again. This is the Icehotel.

Where Is the Icehotel?

The Icehotel is in a small village called Jukkasjärvi. It is in the very north of Sweden. It is about 200 kilometres above the Arctic Circle. In winter, it is very, very cold here. The [temperature](#) can drop to minus 30 [degrees](#) Celsius. The sun does not come up for weeks. It is dark almost all day. But it is also very beautiful. The snow is white and clean. The sky is full of stars. And sometimes you can see the [northern lights](#) — green, purple, and blue lights dancing in the dark sky.

About 900 people live in Jukkasjärvi. It is a quiet place. But every winter, thousands of visitors come from all over the world. They come to sleep in a hotel made of ice.

How It All Started

The Icehotel started by accident. In 1989, a man named Yngve Bergqvist brought some ice artists to Jukkasjärvi. They built a small building from ice to show their art. One night, some visitors asked if they could sleep inside. They had [sleeping bags](#) with them. They slept on the ice floor. They loved it! They said it was an [amazing adventure](#).

Yngve had an idea. What if he built a real hotel from ice? A hotel where people could sleep, eat, and drink — all in rooms made of ice and snow? The next year, he built the first Icehotel. It was small. It had only a few rooms. But people loved it. And every year after that, the hotel got bigger and better.

Building the Hotel

Every October, work begins. First, workers go to the Torne River. This river runs through Jukkasjärvi. In winter, the river [freezes](#). The ice is thick and strong. Workers cut large [blocks](#) of ice from the river. Each block weighs about two tonnes. That is as heavy as a small car!

They also use "snice." Snice is a mix of snow and ice. Workers spray water into the cold air. The water freezes instantly and falls as tiny ice crystals. They mix this with snow to make snice. Snice is very strong. It is perfect for walls and [ceilings](#).

About 100 workers build the hotel. It takes about six weeks. They use around 2,500 blocks of ice and 30,000 cubic metres of snice. That is a lot of ice! The hotel has about 35 rooms, plus a church, a bar, and an art gallery. Every room is different.

The Artists

Every year, artists come from around the world to [design](#) the rooms. Each artist creates a different room. Some rooms have ice animals on the walls. Some have ice flowers on the ceiling. Some have ice furniture that looks like it comes from a fairy tale. The artists are [sculptors](#). They use special tools to cut and shape the ice.

The ice is beautiful. It is clear, like glass. When light shines through it, the ice glows blue and white. At night, coloured lights make the rooms look magical. Every wall, every corner, every detail is made by hand. No two rooms are ever the same. And no two years are ever the same. Because the hotel melts, every version is unique. It exists for only one winter. Then it is gone forever.

Sleeping on Ice

What is it like to sleep in the Icehotel? The temperature inside the ice rooms is about minus 5 degrees Celsius. That is cold! But it is much warmer than outside, where it can be minus 20 or minus 30.

Guests sleep on beds made of ice blocks. On top of the ice, there are reindeer skins. The skins are soft and warm. Then there is a thick sleeping bag. It is a special sleeping bag made for very cold weather. You wear warm clothes and a hat. You put your face inside the bag. Only your nose and mouth stay outside so you can breathe.

Most guests say the first few minutes are cold. But then the sleeping bag gets warm. Many people say they sleep very well. The room is silent. There is no noise. The ice walls are thick. You cannot hear other guests. It is very peaceful.

In the morning, a hotel worker wakes you up with a cup of hot juice. Guests then go to a warm building next door. They have a hot shower and eat a big breakfast. Everyone smiles. They did it! They slept in a hotel made of ice!

The Icebar

The Icehotel has a famous bar. It is called the Icebar. Everything in the bar is ice. The walls are ice. The bar counter is ice. The seats are ice. And the glasses are ice too! You hold a glass made of ice and drink from it. The drinks are very cold, of course!

Guests wear special gloves to hold the glasses. If you hold an ice glass for too long without gloves, your fingers get very cold. The bar serves juice, hot chocolate, and some special drinks for adults. It is one of the most popular parts of the hotel. Many people visit just for the bar, even if they do not sleep in the hotel.

The Ice Church

There is also a church made of ice inside the Icehotel. It is small and beautiful. The walls shine with soft blue light. Some people get married here. Yes, real weddings in a church made of ice! About 20 couples get married in the ice church every winter. They stand on the ice floor. The seats for guests are covered with warm reindeer skins. It is cold, but people say it is the most beautiful wedding they have ever seen.

When the Hotel Melts

The Icehotel opens in December. It stays open until April. Then spring comes. The days get longer. The sun comes back. The temperature rises above zero. And slowly, the hotel begins to melt. The beautiful ice rooms turn into water. The ice sculptures become puddles. The walls collapse. By May, the Icehotel is gone. The water flows into the Torne River — the same

river the ice came from.

This is not sad. It is part of the plan. The hotel returns to nature. The water goes back to the river. In winter, the river will freeze again. Workers will cut new ice. Artists will design new rooms. And a completely new Icehotel will be born. It has happened every year since 1990. That is more than 30 ice hotels!

Icehotel 365

In 2016, the Icehotel opened something new. It is called "Icehotel 365." This is a part of the hotel that is open all year — even in summer. How? The rooms use solar power to keep them cold. Big machines keep the temperature at minus 5 degrees, even when it is warm outside. So now you can sleep in an ice room in July, when the sun does not set for weeks!

The Icehotel 365 has about 20 rooms. They are as beautiful as the winter rooms. Artists designed them. They have ice sculptures and coloured lights. But unlike the winter hotel, these rooms do not melt. They stay frozen all year.

Why People Love It

Every year, about 50,000 people visit the Icehotel. Some come to sleep. Some come just to look. Some come for a wedding. Some come for the Icebar. They come from Japan, America, Brazil, Australia — from everywhere.

Why do people love it? Because it is different. It is something you cannot see anywhere else. A hotel that is born from a river, lives for one winter, and then melts back into the river. A hotel where you sleep on ice, drink from ice, and walk through rooms made by artists from around the world. A hotel that reminds you that beautiful things do not last forever — and that is what makes them special.

Vocabulary

#	Word	Definition
1	hotel	a building where people pay to sleep when they travel
2	guest	a person who stays at a hotel when they travel
3	temperature	how hot or cold something is, measured in degrees
4	degree	a unit for measuring temperature, like 20°C
5	melt	to change from ice or snow into water because of heat
6	freeze	to change from water into ice because of cold
7	block	a large, solid piece of something, like a block of ice
8	sculptor	a person who makes art by cutting or shaping materials like ice, stone, or wood
9	design	to plan and draw how something will look before making it
10	ceiling	the top part of a room, above your head
11	reindeer	a large deer that lives in cold places like Sweden and Finland
12	sleeping bag	a warm, thick bag you sleep inside, often used for camping
13	northern lights	beautiful coloured lights in the night sky, seen in countries near the North Pole
14	amazing	very surprising and very good; wonderful
15	adventure	an exciting or unusual experience

Comprehension Quiz

1. Where is the Icehotel?

- A) In Norway, near Oslo
- B) In Sweden, in a village called Jukkasjärvi
- C) In Finland, near Helsinki
- D) In Iceland, near Reykjavik

2. What happens to the Icehotel in spring?

- A) They paint it white
- B) They move it to another country
- C) It melts and the water goes back to the river
- D) They cover it with a roof

3. What is the temperature inside the ice rooms?

- A) About 20°C
- B) About 0°C
- C) About minus 5°C
- D) About minus 30°C

4. What do guests sleep in at the Icehotel?

- A) Normal beds with blankets
- B) Warm sleeping bags on ice beds covered with reindeer skins
- C) Hammocks hanging from the ceiling
- D) Sleeping bags on the floor outside

5. Where does the ice for the hotel come from?

- A) They buy it from a factory
- B) They bring it from the North Pole
- C) From the Torne River near the village
- D) They make it with special machines

Answer Key

Q	Answer	Question
1	B	Where is the Icehotel?
2	C	What happens to the Icehotel in spring?
3	C	What is the temperature inside the ice rooms?
4	B	What do guests sleep in at the Icehotel?
5	C	Where does the ice for the hotel come from?