

## Media release

Page 1 / 4

### Seamless access to a wonderland of ice



Rümlang, 12 March 2026 – About 380 kilometers (236 miles) north of the Arctic Circle, at the Sorrinsniva resort in Alta, Norway, Arctic nature, pioneering craftsmanship, and innovative access technology merge to create a unique experience. With courage, perseverance, and an entrepreneurial, pioneering spirit, brothers Hans Ulrik and Tor Kjetil have built a year-round resort here, with an elegant lodge for overnight guests, an excellent restaurant, and the world's northernmost ice hotel. In addition to other access solutions, dormakaba is testing for the first time an automatic sliding door that is directly integrated into the dynamic structure of ice and snow. The pilot project shows how intelligent access solutions enable energy efficiency, comfort, and a seamless connection between indoors and outdoors, even under extreme conditions.

"This is the most beautiful place in the world," says Tor Kjetil, looking out over the frozen Alta River with his brother Hans Ulrik. Their family has lived in Sorrinsniva since 1885. "Our great-grandfather came here on foot – over the mountains – more than 150 years ago. Back then, no one wanted to live here. There were no roads, no bridges." Many left. "Only we stayed."

Over generations, a vision emerged from agriculture and salmon fishing. Their father gave the brothers some crucial advice: "The work must come to you. Create your own jobs." That's exactly what they did.

**Link to the film about the story of ice hotel:**

[The story of Hans Ulrik and Tor Kjetil – Access solutions for every place that matters](#)



Since the 1970s, Hans and Tor have gradually expanded their tourism offerings to include river safaris through the spectacular gorge of the Alta River, becoming the first providers of snowmobile safaris in Norway, and in 1992, opening the iconic Lavvu restaurant, whose architecture recalls the traditional Sami tent. In 1999, they came up with an idea that many initially thought was crazy: Norway's first ice hotel.



"More than once, we were on the verge of giving up. But we always believed in our idea," recalls Hans.

What began as 550 square meters (5,920 square feet) is now an architectural masterpiece covering almost 2,600 square meters (27,986 square feet) – the world's northernmost ice hotel. Every year from late December to early April, it is completely rebuilt and designed almost exclusively by local artists and craftsmen. Up to 15,000 guests from almost 50 countries travel here annually – some for a day visit, others for a night on reindeer skins at minus 4 to minus 7 degrees Celsius.



"There is a special silence here," says Tor. "You hear nothing – only your own breath. It's a moment you will never forget."

#### **A hotel that lives**

Construction begins on a frozen lake near the Sorrisniva resort. Workers cut large blocks of ice from the water using chainsaws. "Each block of ice is lifted out of the lake by hand – weighing 400 kilograms," explains Hans, who is helping out himself. "Only clear ice, without air bubbles, is suitable for walls and columns."



A total of 400 tons of ice and more than 7,000 cubic meters of snow are processed. The ice is sensitive: if it is too cold, it breaks. If it is too warm, it melts.

In addition to massive columns of ice, the brothers have developed their own system for the construction consisting of arched modules that are encased and compacted with artificially produced snow. Every year, the hotel has a new theme and is redesigned with artistically crafted sculptures, an ice bar, and an ice chapel.



The interior temperature remains constant at minus 4 to minus 7 degrees Celsius, even when it is minus 30 degrees outside. But the ice hotel is not a rigid structure. Snow and ice are constantly moving. Ceilings sink by up to a meter, and structures change. The building is alive, and this dynamic makes the entrance area the biggest challenge.

#### **Technology meets the Arctic**

The requirement was for a door that could withstand extreme temperatures of up to minus 30 degrees Celsius, compensate for material movements, keep the interior temperature stable, and at the same time comfortably control visitor flows.



What long seemed impossible became part of an extraordinary pilot project by dormakaba, which is testing innovative access systems under extreme climatic conditions throughout the resort. In December 2025, an automatic sliding door was integrated directly into the structure of the ice hotel for the first time. The new solution minimizes the time during which cold outside air enters, contributes to a stable indoor climate, allows a transparent view of the interior, and creates a seamless connection between inside and outside.

"We have installed a door for this location that is adapted to the conditions," says Tor. "Everything is organized so that our guests can move around seamlessly everywhere."

Several of dormakaba's latest innovations are being used. The focus is on the technology MotionIQ, which optimizes automatic door operation and can reduce energy consumption and CO<sub>2</sub> emissions by up to 50%. Complementary solutions ensure an efficient and barrier-free flow of visitors. Testing is not only being carried out at the ice hotel entrance, but also throughout the entire resort, from the restaurant to the central entrances of the lodge.

The aim of the pilot project is to gain new insights for the further development of technologies that make buildings around the world more energy-efficient, reliable, and comfortable.

### **More than just a hotel**

The Sorrisniva resort offers premium year-round accommodation right on the riverbank at the Arctic Wilderness Lodge. Spacious glass facades bring nature inside, while the cuisine focuses on local specialties such as salmon, cod, reindeer, moose, and wild berries. Northern lights, midnight sun, snowmobile safaris, and riverboat excursions complete the experience for visitors from all over the world.

But the heart of the resort remains the ice hotel.



"What we have created here is unique," say Hans and Tor. And when they see guests marveling, laughing, and experiencing this special place, they know: "We've done something right."

Further information for:

**Media**

Patrick Lehn

Press Officer

T: +41 44 818 92 86

[patrick.lehn@dormakaba.com](mailto:patrick.lehn@dormakaba.com)

**About dormakaba Group**

dormakaba is a leading global provider in the access solutions market. The company reimagines access by setting industry standards for smart systems and sustainable solutions across the lifecycle of a building. More than 15,000 employees worldwide provide their expertise together with distribution partners to a growing customer base in more than 130 countries. dormakaba supports its customers with a broad, innovative portfolio of integrated access products, solutions and services that easily fit into building ecosystems to create safe, secure and sustainable places where people can move around seamlessly.

dormakaba is listed on the SIX Swiss Exchange and is headquartered in Rümlang near Zurich (Switzerland). It generated a turnover of CHF 2.9 billion in financial year 2024/25.

SIX Swiss Exchange: DOKA

Further information about dormakaba Group on [www.dormakabagroup.com/en](http://www.dormakabagroup.com/en)

Insights and inspirations from the world of urbanization [blog.dormakaba.com](http://blog.dormakaba.com)

The latest on corporate topics, products and innovation from dormakaba at [www.dormakabagroup.com/en/newsroom](http://www.dormakabagroup.com/en/newsroom)

---

#### Disclaimer

This communication contains certain forward-looking statements including, but not limited to, those using the words "believes", "assumes", "expects" or formulations of a similar kind. Such forward-looking statements reflect the current judgement of the company, involve risks and uncertainties and are made on the basis of assumptions and expectations that the company believes to be reasonable at this time but may prove to be erroneous. Undue reliance should not be placed on such statements because, by their nature, they are subject to known and unknown risks, uncertainties and other factors outside of the company's and the Group's control which could lead to substantial differences between the actual future results, the financial situation, the development or performance of the company or the Group and those either expressed or implied by such statements. Except as required by applicable law or regulation, the company accepts no obligation to continue to report, update or otherwise review such forward-looking statements or adjust them to new information, or future events or developments. This communication does not constitute an offer or an invitation for the sale or purchase of securities in any jurisdiction.

dormakaba®, dorma+kaba®, Kaba®, Dorma®, Ilco®, LEGIC®, Silca®, BEST® etc. are registered trademarks of the dormakaba Group. Due to country-specific constraints or marketing considerations, some of the dormakaba Group products and systems may not be available in every market.