



SCANDINAVIA AND ICELAND

FOLLOW THE LIGHTS (SOUTHBOUND) (TOUR CODE: 11743)

STARTS AND ENDS

Ivalo to
Oslo

TRAVEL PERIODS

14 Oct 2022 - 19 Mar 2023

EXPERIENCE

Cruising
Rail

TRAVEL STYLE

Ocean Cruising

Experience some of the world's most beautiful landscapes and the wonder of the Northern Lights on this 14-day adventure through Finland to Norway.

Highlights

- A **small group tour maximum of 24 Guests** during the land tour!
- Husky and reindeer experiences
- The Northern Lights and insight into Sami culture
- City tours of Bergen and Oslo

Begin from Saariselka on this southbound search for the Aurora Borealis. During the voyage you will cross Finland and Norway, visit charming hamlets, sail through picturesque fjords and with plentiful opportunities to see the magnificent Northern Lights on this journey into the heart of Norway. Along the way, rest within accommodation befitting to its surrounds and activities that incorporate recreation and culture. Your journey also includes the amazing journey by rail, coach and ferry on the famous 'Norway in a Nutshell' route between Bergen and Oslo.

INCLUSIONS

- 4-star accommodation standard
- 8 nights hotel accommodation (includes 1 night in Aurora cabin, 1 night in Gamme cabin)
- 5 nights cruise accommodation in a cabin category of your choice
- English speaking tour manager from start to finish
- Breakfast daily, 6 lunches, 9 dinners
- Entrance to Troidhaugen (Edvard Grieg home – Bergen)
- City Tours of Bergen & Oslo
- Norway in a Nutshell tickets including rail and ferry
- First class touring coach from Saariselkä to Kirkenes
- Reindeer Safari (sled ride – dependant on weather)
- Husky Safari (sled ride – dependant on weather)
- SIIDA Museum visit (outdoor exhibition)
- Luggage service from hotel in Bergen to hotel in Oslo (1 bag per person)
- Luggage service at all hotels (starting with luggage OUT in Saariselkä and ending with luggage in Oslo)
- Welcome drink in Saariselkä

ITINERARY

Day

1

Arrive in Ivalo

On arrival at Ivalo Airport you will be transferred by bus to the nearby village of Saariselkä.

Check-in to the hotel and enjoy the remainder of the day at leisure.

This evening meet your tour leader and fellow travellers in the lobby of the hotel for a welcome drink.

Overnight in Saariselkä.

Day

2

Saariselkä

Enjoy breakfast at the hotel before taking a visit to a local husky farm. Meet the huskies and learn about their life and training with a local guide. Enjoy a sled ride (weather dependant) with your new furry friends. Before returning to the hotel enjoy a hot beverage at Lappish Kota.

This evening join the group for dinner in the hotel restaurant.

Overnight in Saariselkä.

Breakfast, Dinner

Day

3

Saariselkä – Inari

After breakfast we continue our journey north through Finnish Lapland. Along the way take part in a Reindeer Safari. Listen to stories about Sami culture, browse handicrafts and the meet the reindeers. Enjoy a sled ride (weather dependant). A light lunch is included in the Kota restaurant. Our journey continues by coach to the small township of Inari.

This afternoon we take a visit to the SIIDA museum including a guided tour of the open-air exhibition. This museum is home to acolection featuring the spiritual and material culture of the Finnish Sami presented it to the public through exhibitions

and publications.

After the museum visit we check in to the hotel located on the shoreline of Lake Inari. Tonight you will sleep under the northern sky in the comfort of an Aurora Cabin. If you are lucky, you may witness the Northern Lights from the comfort of your bed.

Dinner is included at the hotel restaurant.

Overnight in Inari.

Breakfast, Dinner

Day 4 Inari, Finland – Kirkenes

After breakfast we depart Inari and continue north into Norway where we check in to the Snowhotel in Kirkenes. The hotel is home to reindeer and huskies. Entrance to the Snowhotel is included along with a welcome drink. We will enjoy dinner at the unique farmhouse restaurant, Laven.

Tonight you will sleep in a Gamme cabin, inspired by the traditional hunting and fishing hut known as 'gamme' typical in the Lapland wilderness.

Overnight in Kirkenes.

Breakfast, Dinner

Day 5 Kirkenes – Cruise Embarkation

(Day 1 of the voyage)

Enjoy breakfast and the morning at leisure. In the late morning we take a transfer to the Hurtigruten pier in Kirkenes where we board the ship and prepare for our sea voyage south.

After departing Kirkenes, we head due north, arriving at Vardø in the afternoon. Weather permitting, brave swimmers may want to take a dip in the icy Arctic Ocean (strictly optional of course!).

We now head due west, cruising along the Varanger peninsula to Båtsfjord and Berlevåg, home to Norway's most famous male choir, comprising local fishermen.

Overnight on board our ship.

Breakfast

Day 6 Mehamn – Tromsø

We make a late night stop at Mehamn. In winter, you can join an optional snowmobile trip through the vast Arctic wilderness. Experience snowy plains and valleys, crisp winter air and very possibly the Northern Lights in the starry sky above.

During the day we pass through various ports including Honningsvåg and Hammerfest where you can visit the UNESCO-listed Meridian Column, erected in 1854 to honour the first precise geographic measurement of the globe.

We proceed south to Øksfjord, stopping briefly at the old trading post of Skjervøy. Late in the evening we dock at Tromsø, in time to enjoy a magical Northern Lights concert at the Arctic Cathedral in winter (optional).

Overnight on board our ship.

Breakfast

Day 7 Tromsø – Stamsund

This morning, we arrive at Harstad, where you can join one of our classic excursions - A Taste of Vesterålen (optional). Discover history, beautiful scenery, and cultural heritage sites on this tour then rejoin the ship further south at Sortland.

Those who stay on the ship experience our passage through the Risøyrenna, a shallow channel built for Hurtigruten in the 1920s.

Prepare for some amazing scenery as we sail through the world-famous islands of Lofoten and Vesterålen. Lofoten is known for its natural beauty, steep mountains, wilderness and picturesque fishing villages. Our daylight route through the region is the voyage highlight for many of our guests.

After a short stop at the tiny village of Risøyhamn, we continue to Stokmarknes, where Hurtigruten began more than 125 years ago. You may wish to visit the Hurtigruten Museum here.

Continuing south, it will look like we're headed straight into a mountain, but don't worry, we are in fact sailing through a passage into the narrow Raftsund, flanked by peaks rising 1000m out of the sea.

We now arrive at amazing Trollfjord. If conditions allow, we will sail between sheer cliffs that seem close enough to reach out and touch. It's an unforgettable experience!

Next we arrive in Svolvær, where you can choose from several optional excursions or just relax in town at one of many cafés, pubs and restaurants.

Overnight on board our ship.

Breakfast

Day

8

Bodø – Rørvik

Crossing the Arctic Circle is an important 'rite of passage'. Today we celebrate the occasion on deck with a taste of Arctic tradition – a spoonful of cod liver oil.

Sailing along the Helgeland coast, you see the strange mountain, Torghatten (258m above sea level), famous for the distinctive hole through its centre. The hole is 160m long, 35m high and 20m wide, and was formed during the ice age.

Another highlight is sailing past the Seven Sisters mountain range. It is easy to see how the peaks influenced ancient legends. The story goes that seven beautiful troll sisters were caught out at sunrise and turned to stone, thus creating the seven beautiful mountaintops.

Next, we briefly stop at the idyllic trading post of Nesna before moving on to Sandnessjøen.

In Brønnøysund, join an optional excursion to the Norwegian Aquaculture Centre for an informative tour and taste of fresh salmon.

Even though we're south of the Arctic Circle, there may still be good opportunities to see the Northern Lights.

Overnight on board our ship.

Breakfast

Day

9

Trondheim – Ålesund

Today you have a chance to explore the wooden city of history: Trondheim. Be sure to visit the majestic Nidaros Cathedral, built over the burial site of King Olav II who reigned from 1015 to 1028.

As we sail along the coast, you will realise the importance of fishing to Norway's coastal communities.

Kristiansund is regarded as Norway's 'dried cod capital' because of its long-time export of salted dry fish. Here you can join an excursion along the Atlantic Road, a National Scenic Route. The 8km stretch of highway spans eight bridges, crosses picturesque landscapes and is surrounded by open sea.

Another interesting excursion is to the Bergtatt marble mine, which takes you inside a mountain and across an illuminated subterranean lake before serving you a meal in the mine's 'Grand Hall'.

Those who remain aboard at Kristiansund will experience the ship's open sea crossing towards Molde - Norway's 'City of Roses'. From there, you can see the distant pointed peaks of the Romsdal Alps across the fjord, called 'the Molde panorama'.

Overnight on board our ship.

Breakfast

Day 10 Ålesund – Bergen

During the night, the ship calls at Ålesund, Torvik and Måløy, as our voyage draws to a close. Before docking in Bergen, there is fascinating scenery to see, including picturesque Nordfjord beneath Jostedal Glacier. Here the fjord widens to the east and forges 90 km inland.

In the morning, we dock at Florø, Norway's westernmost community.

A few nautical miles south of Florø, we cross the mouth of the mighty Sognefjord, taking in superb views of the magnificent island-studded coastline en route. Finally, you disembark in the Hanseatic city of Bergen in the early afternoon. We will transfer to hotel and the remainder of the day is at your leisure.

Overnight in Bergen

Breakfast

Day 11 Bergen

After breakfast in the hotel we will take a city sightseeing tour of Bergen, which includes a walking tour of the UNESCO World Heritage listed Bryggen, St Mary's Church, and Håkon's Hall, before heading to Trolldhaugen, the home of Norway's most famous composer, Edvard Grieg.

The remainder of the day is at your leisure, perhaps enjoy a journey on the Funicular railway, up to the top of Mt Floien where you can enjoy stunning views over the city, and surrounding waterways.

Overnight in Bergen

Breakfast

Day 12 Bergen – Oslo (Norway in a Nutshell)

Today enjoy an amazing journey by rail, coach and ferry on the famous 'Norway in a Nutshell' route between Bergen and Oslo. We start with a rail journey from Bergen to Voss, from here we travel by coach to Gudvangen. Waterfalls line the road as we weave our way through the valley.

In Gudvangen board a ferry and enjoy a fjord cruise along the narrow and dramatic UNESCO protected Nærøyfjord, ending in the quaint village of Flåm. From here we board the famous Flåm Railway, one of the world's most scenic rail journeys. We climb three thousand feet on the train to the mountain station of Myrdal. From here we change trains and head to Oslo for a late evening arrival.

Overnight in Oslo.

Breakfast

Day 13 Oslo

Enjoy breakfast in the hotel and prepare for our final full day on tour. We will enjoy a city sightseeing tour of Oslo including the Vigeland Sculpture Park, Viking Ship Museum, Oslo Opera House, Holmenkollen Ski Jump and more.

Spend some time on your own in the afternoon and join the group again for our farewell dinner in a local restaurant.

Overnight in Oslo.

Breakfast

Day **14** Oslo

After breakfast at the hotel our tour ends.

Breakfast

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

OFFICIAL LANGUAGE

Danish, Swedish, Norwegian, Icelandic, and Faroese

LOCAL CURRENCY

Danish Krone (DKK)

Excluded

- International airfares and taxes
- Domestic airfares and taxes, unless otherwise specified in our holiday package
- Visa expenses, processing and issuance fees
- Meals other than as specified in our holiday package
- Travel Insurance or expenses of a personal nature (mini-bar, phone call, laundry, etc.),
- Tips or gratuities to guides, drivers, porters, hotel, restaurant or boat staff, etc.
- Or any other travel expense that has not been included in our holiday package