#### 50°NORTH NORDIC DESTINATION SPECIALIST

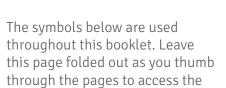
Authentic Nordic experiences



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SYMBOLS IN THIS BOOK





Temperatures: average winter/summer

Temperature ranges and daylight hours are marked on the maps. They are marked in order as: winter/summer ranges as a guide for that approximate area.

Full temperature and daylight hours tables are featured on page 53.

Please speak to us about what clothing and gear to bring on your Nordic experience.

### Our world, our regions

50 Degrees North is a tour operator that specialises in holiday travel to Northern Europe: Scandinavia, Finland, Iceland, Greenland, the Arctic, the Baltic states, and Russia. We specialise regionally, because we believe it is not possible to be good at everything. And we specialise in the Nordic region, because it is what we know best: Most of us at 50 Degrees North are natives of that region and bring a lifetime of knowledge and passion into planning your holiday.

The fact that we are natives of the Nordic region sets us apart from other travel providers, and we are proud to call ourselves true destination specialists. Although we can also book your international flights as a full-service travel agent, we specialise in everything that takes place once you have reached your destination: Accommodation, tours, activities, transportation, and so on. We have a wide variety of existing itineraries and tours on offer (available at https:// fiftydegreesnorth.com/ tours), all of which have been designed with the desire to create something special and authentic – something you will look back on for the rest of your life. However, we are equally happy to put our love, knowledge and energy into creating something tailormade to ensure that your experience is the very best it can be.

We owe our success to our very experienced and knowledgeable staff as well as our innovation and creativity: We continue to create unique trips that frequently provide inspiration within the industry. We look forward to planning Your holiday of a lifetime!







# Welcome to authentic travel

We are deeply motivated by our core values of authenticity, innovation, inspiration, and trust - both in our travel options and in our relationships with our customers and partners.

When it comes to our relationship with you, our customer, authenticity means that we are honest with you from the start, offering genuine, practical advice and not promising things that we cannot deliver. It also means that we try to capture within your holiday something unique and genuine about the culture you are about to visit, while being mindful of who you are and where your interests lie.

When it comes to our travel packages, innovation and creativity stand out. We are passionate about creating new solutions, more authentic experiences, and finding the right options for each customer, whether they wish to travel alone or in a group; by land, air, or sea; in winter, spring, summer, or autumn; and with a focus on anything from culture to nature, exercise, family, or food.

So, tell us about your preferences, timescale and budget, and we will get to work. We are prepared to spend considerable time and effort making sure that your holiday is right for you, ensuring your time away is fun and hassle free.

# Travelling in our region





All over Scandinavia and northern Europe, some of the best roads in the world await you. Our roads are well signed and our drivers are calm and civilized. When it comes to driving and travelling independently, most people you meet will speak English and are usually more than happy to assist you.

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All Nordic and Baltic nations border to a sea and we are proud of our seafaring heritage. Day time and overnight ferries are an excellent way to travel between coastal cities. The ferries are modern, clean and well equipped vessels. A voyage is a trouble-free way to travel through the various regional archipelagos.







Travel by air in the northern region is safe and reliable. It is often the quickest way. Distances are long, and some locations challenging to reach by land. International airports near capital cities are well planned, allowing shorter connecting times. Smaller regional airlines often offer flight bundles.

Rail travel is a budget-friendly and convenient way to travel between major and minor cities. Trains are modern, clean, safe and reliable. Most trains have a restaurant car and many also offer free Wi-Fi on board. Ask us about rail passes and let us search the best connections, trains and travel classes.







Cities, towns and capitals in the Nordic region are generally small and compact, with world class public transport options like trams, ferries, buses and city rail. The best way to explore is often on foot or by bike. Copenhagen is a great example with safe bike lanes that have their own traffic lights for bicycle riders!



Photo: Valtteri Hirvonen

## Travel style

#### **Independent Tours**

Our independent journeys have been created for those who like to move at their own pace. We combine the transport of your choice, be it car hire, private transfers or similar to allow you the freedom of the road. We visit these regions regularly and have a selection of hotels that we think compliment having a stressfree holiday.

Let us take care of the mundane tasks, booking accommodation, car hire etc, so that you can concentrate on making your hardest decision of the day; what you would like to see and experience. If you do not see that perfect trip for you in the options already available, then do not hesitate to contact us and we will custom make one just for you.

#### **Small Group Tours**

Often the best way to experience a destination is to be escorted by a local guide. Certainly when it comes to off-road driving across lceland, visiting the best spots in Norway or getting close to fishing bears in Kamchatka, it is not straight forward to do this as an independent traveller. All our escorted group departures include unique activities that can only be experienced with a local guide. We also offer a range of small group ACTIVE holidays.

#### Voyages

The Nordic region and Russia lends itself well for a coastal or river voyage. We offer a selection of new and classic routes on board new ships, and traditional older boats lovingly converted to satisfy modern travellers.

#### 50 Degrees North Escorted Tours

Our range of 50 Degrees North escorted voyages and tours comes from the heart. With pride, we offer these hosted tours with a great range of local superior hotels and seasonal inclusions. As local Scandinavians, we include local festivals & cultural highlights; visit undiscovered regions, offering you more than just a holiday.



#### Historic stays

Our selection of historic accommodation options include; stately homes, mountain lodges, country houses, manors, large and small timber-built fjord hotels in pseudo-Swiss style, and many more historic buildings transformed into beautiful, romantic hotels.

# Nordic accommodation

At 50 Degrees North we spend a lot of time ensuring you get a stay that is right for you. We personally visit our hotels and are extremely proud of the selection of handpicked options.



#### **Aurora stays**

Glass igloos, cabins with massive north facing windows, domes and ice rooms - many options are now available that will have you sleeping under the Aurora Borealis. Just set your aurora app and when it chimes, you just need to look up.

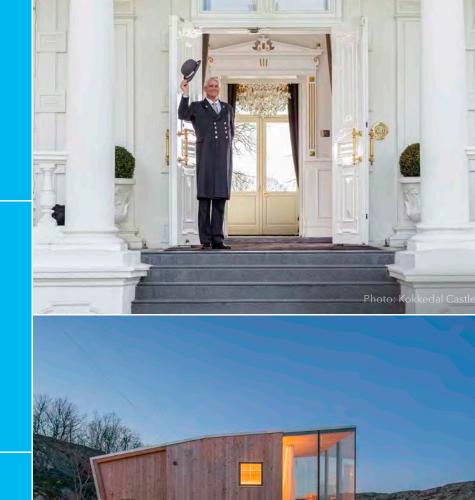


Photo: Manshausen



#### **Countryside stays**

Our farms and cabins are situated in key locations, allowing the opportunity to explore attractions and scenic highlights in the regions on day tours. Then come back in the afternoon and enjoy a good traditional home-cooked meal, or self-cater.



#### **City stays**

Our boutique city options combine great location, friendly and personal service, good food, unique design and something intangible something that makes you feel like you have arrived home.



# Nordic food

Typical Scandinavian food is based on fresh, local ingredients, often growing wild in nature and unique to the Northern Hemisphere. Have you tried cloudberries, crowberries, lingonberries or wild cranberries?

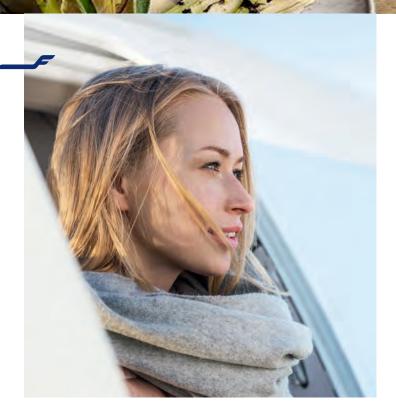
Breakfast is often considered the most important meal of the day in Scandinavia, and a healthy breakfast is always included with your stay. The typical Scandinavian breakfast is usually the smorgasbord, or buffet breakfast, which gives you the chance to enjoy some of the traditional delicacies of the region! The Nordic Cuisine is about fresh, pure and simple produce, and it is the last two decades of innovation and modernisation that has seen Nordic Cuisine transform from local home cooking to world class culinary experiences.

We are most happy to recommend restaurants for lunch or dinner where you can experience the New Nordic Cuisine. The Nordic region also boasts a number of Michelin star restaurants, and if you are after something extraordinary, do let us know and we can assist with your reservation.



### THERE'S SOMETHING NORDIC IN THE AIR

ENJOY UNIQUE NORDIC EXPERIENCES ON BOARD EVERY FINNAIR FLIGHT



Finnair and **one**world partners connect daily from Australia via Asia to over 60 destinations in Europe. Book our competitive business and economy fares to Europe. Upgrade for more comfort between Asia and Europe to Economy Comfort seat for only 75-90 EUR.







# Norway

#### Think Norway. Think Pure. Purity of light, of nature, of adrenalin.

A land of granite, gneiss and slate, its 25,000 km of crenelated coastline hosts almost 2,000 majestic, glacier-carved fjords. It is also the home of the Lofoten Islands, the world's most beautiful archipelago filled with sheltered bays, fishing villages and graceful green summits.

Coastal ferries sail the "World's Most Beautiful Sea Voyage": Starting from the port city of Bergen in the south, with its UNESCO listed Hanseatic wharf of Bryggen, to the north along Europe's most spectacular coastline to lonely Kirkenes, the northernmost point of the E6 highway. In summer, the Midnight Sun helps to light your way. From September to April, it is the Northern Lights that will bring the sky to life and show you the way.

Nature and active holiday lovers won't be disappointed: Hikers can head for the classic 645 km St. Olav's Way pilgrimage trail from Oslo to Trondheim, journeying through forests that are still home to brown bear, wolves, wolverine, elk and deer. Rock climbing enthusiasts will love the Troll Wall in the majestic Romsdalen valley, Europe's highest vertical overhanging rock face. You can even set out on a musk ox safari. The options are endless.

Photo: Yuriy Garnaev



In the south, the capital Oslo seduces with sophisticated elegance, from the minimalist angled forms of the Oslo Opera House to the inspired anxiety and angst of artist Edvard Munch's disturbing masterpiece, The Scream.

Viking treasures abound too, from the Gokstad Ship at Oslo's Viking Ship Museum to Viking swords at Hafrsfjord. South of the capital in the Skagerrak Strait there are cold-water coral reefs, while in the far north the city of Tromsø is your gateway to the High Arctic and the wilderness and wildlife of the majestic Svalbard archipelago, the white realm of the polar bear.

From temperate to arctic, valley to summit, from wilderness to heartshaped waffles and morning tea at the Grand Hotel Oslo, Norway will feed all the desires you never knew your inner Viking wanted. "We LOVED everything about Norway, especially the efficiency and ease of getting around Oslo by public transport and the hotels we stayed in (the breakfast buffet at Oslo's hotel was a daily highlight, as was breakfast on the balcony in the sun overlooking the water in Bergen). Our cruise from Trondheim to Bergen was sensational, again with crisp sunny weather and beautiful coastal scenery."

Viv, May 2017





### 🛱 Whale watching

From early December to the beginning of February, the ocean outside Senja in Northern Norway is filled with herring. A sea packed with small fry attracts the largest animals on earth to gigantic dinner parties. Join us up north and come close to humpbacks, orcas, fin whales and many other giants of the sea.



#### Midnight sun

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From mid May to mid July, Northern Norway, Northern Sweden, Greenland and Northern Finland bask in 24-hour sunlight. The further north you travel, the better chance you have to catch the midnight sun. Svalbard in the High Arctic enjoys the midnight sun for almost 4 months.



### \*

#### Winter activities

| Dog sledding                     |  |
|----------------------------------|--|
| Snowmobile rides                 |  |
| Visiting a reindeer farm         |  |
| Whale watching                   |  |
| Tobogganing in<br>Korketrekkeren |  |
| Sea safari at Lyngen             |  |
| Christmas markets in Oslo        |  |

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#### Summer activities

| Sea eagle safari Lofoten  | 8  |
|---------------------------|----|
| Kayaking Trondheim        | 9  |
| Trek Trolltunga           | 1  |
| Trek Pulpit Rock          | đ  |
| Watch puffins at Lovund   | Ľ  |
| Take the Flåm Railway     | Œ  |
| Drive the Sognefjell Road | 14 |
| Deep sea fishing at Senja | 1  |







| Highlights  |
|---|
| Experience the Arctic<br>Sanctuary by the sea       |
| Overnight in an<br>Igloo Hotel                      |
| Stay in a fisherman's<br>village at Håholmen        |
| Take a bath in The Well                             |
| Enjoy a boutique lodge<br>in the Lyngen Alps        |
| Stay in a historic<br>wooden fjord hotel            |
| Get snug in your<br>sleeping bag in a<br>snow hotel |
|   |

Take a Hurtigruten coastal ferry on the Norwegian coast.



Explore the western fjords by car, rail and ferry.





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#### Travel tip:

From 2018, we are offering a brand new way of touring Norway. Our 'Beautiful Norway' tours take you to spectacular areas previously inaccessible to travellers without a car - all in the comfort of a 50 Degrees North minibus!





### Sweden

### ABBA, IKEA, Volvos . . . wilderness?

It's an odd thing, but think of Sweden and thoughts can drift to its brands as much as to its wild. An odd thing indeed, considering Swedes have Europe's largest expanse of monumental, uninterrupted wilderness. In Sarek National Park in far north Swedish Lapland there are no cabins, roads, amenities or trails, just 200 summits in excess of 1,800 metres and maybe a hundred glaciers. And that's just one park!

Stockholm's Vasa Museum, a short walk from the labyrinth of the city's cobblestoned Gamla Stan (Old Town) was built to house the pride of the Swedish Imperial fleet – but which sank on its maiden voyage in 1628. Bad for the crew, good for us. The Vasa is 95% original, and seeing it will leave you breathless. As will the 19th century, 190 km-long Göta Kanal, the country's premier engineering feat linking Stockholm to Gothenburg via 58 locks. It is still plied by boats such as M/S Diana on a canal cruise that will provide you three of the most serene and contented days of your life.

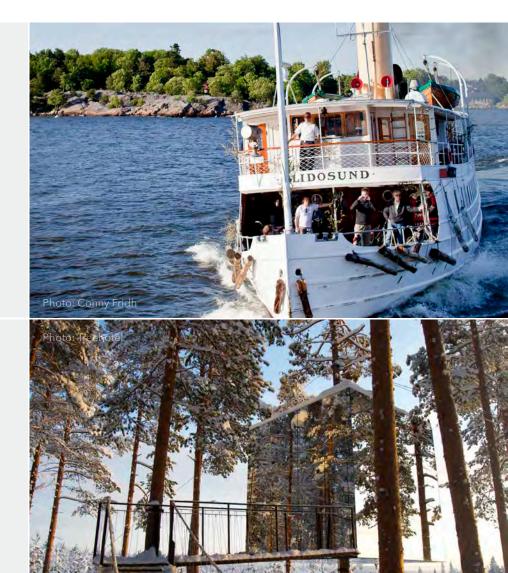
hoto: Raphael Andre



DIANA

#### Stockholm archipelago

The Stockholm Archipelago is easily accessible by local ferry from central Stockholm. It will take an hour out to Vaxholm, and from there hundreds of beautiful islands lie before you. Go cycling on Svartsö, enjoy lunch at Sandhamns Värdshus or explore the Vaxholm Fortress - Kastellet.



### 🔆 🛛 A unique room

It doesn't get more quirky than staying in a tree house in the middle of deep Scandinavian forests, or at an African style safari camp plonked on a wild river in Swedish Lapland. Take the road less travelled, and give your holiday an extra touch of eccentricity.

a Ben, ICEHOTEL

Don't miss:

in Stockholm.

Photo: Anna Burglund

The ABBA museum

The Bohuslän coast north of Gothenburg is as beautiful a shoreline as you'll ever see. Its smooth, sculpted granite outcrops envelope fishing communities that are filled with doll-house-like white timbered homes that'll have you enquiring about real estate and mortgage rates. Add to that the 30,000 islands of the Stockholm archipelago and historic jewels like Visby with its 13th century 3.5 km-long defensive wall and 44 towers, and it's guaranteed you'll never look at a Volvo the same way again. "The Göta Kanal trip was wonderful. It was both enjoyable and very interesting. We were fortunate to have fine weather with some sunshine. The pace of the trip was very leisurely, which might not suit some people, but was fine for us. The meals provided were varied and excellent quality."

**Marilyn & Helen** 

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#### Winter activities

Embark on an overnight dog sled expedition

Try yourself as an ice rally driver

Go on a moose safari

Become an ice sculptor

Visit a Sami reindeer farm

Take a night visit to the Aurora Sky Station

#### **Summer activities**

Explore the Stockholm archipelago by boat and bicycle Kayak through Stockholm's canals

Sail along the Göta Kanal

Enjoy a seafood buffet in the coastal village of Fjällbacka

Join a rooftop walk in Stockholm





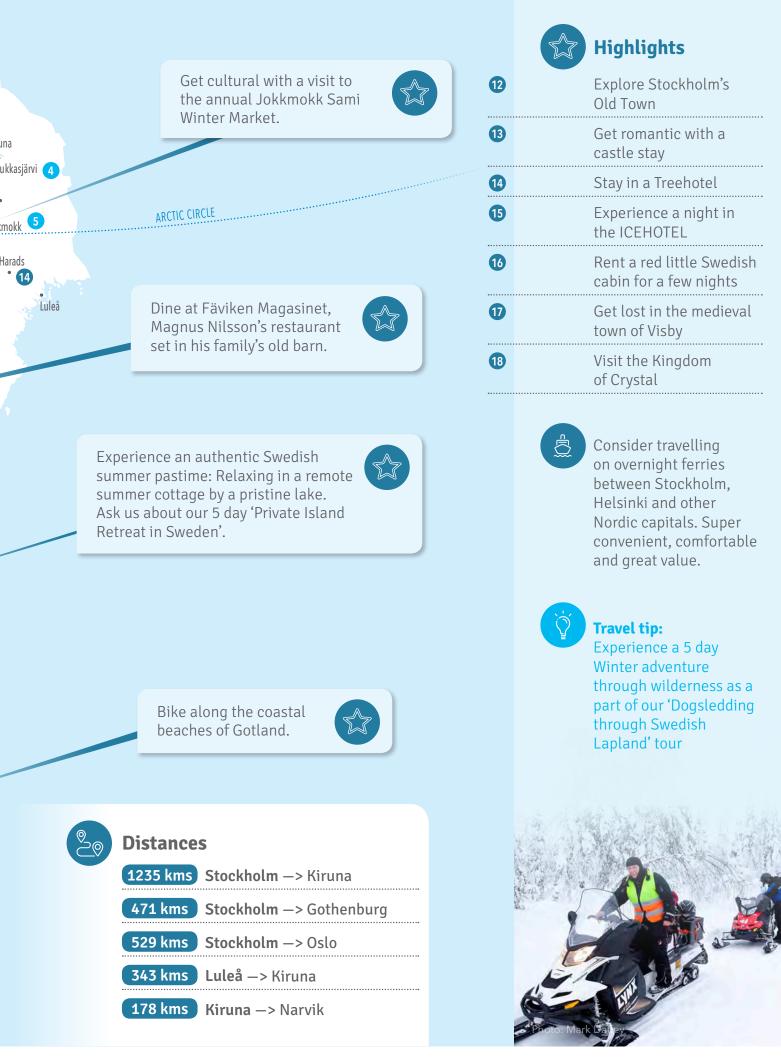






Photo: Kim Wyon, Visit Denmark

smuseet

### Denmark

#### Feel the Hygge!

Year after year, Denmark has been one of the top countries in the United Nations World Happiness Report. And why wouldn't it be? Its cool capital Copenhagen has NOMA, the world's finest restaurant and pioneer of New Nordic Cuisine, and there's the enduring magic of Tivoli Gardens. The nation's favourite author/poet Hans Christian Andersen's legacy continues to provide a fairytale world of endless possibilities for generations of Danish children – and their parents.

On weekends Danes can walk the windswept beaches and sand dunes of North and West Jutland, go fossil hunting in South Zealand along the UNESCO World Heritage cliffs of Stevn, and see the medieval fortresses and thatched villages of Bornholm, Denmark's sun-drenched "Baltic island". But wait, isn't happiness more than merely the sum of a country's parts? Perhaps Denmark's real secret... is hygge?

The dour chill of long winter is inspired and is made tolerable by hygge, the Danish approach to enjoying life's simple pleasures that is now a year-round pursuit. Roughly translated as "cosiness", hygge can mean the warm glow of candle lights, watching TV from under a duvet, or drinking coffee in bicycle rental shops and bookstores that double as cafes in a country where social equality and community spirit isn't just enjoyed by those who live there. It's felt by those fortunate enough to travel there, too.





#### Winter activities

Visit the Christmas market at Tivoli Aarhus Art Galleries

Ice Skating in the city centres

Snuggle up for a 'HYGGE' moment by a fireplace

Visit Hans Christian Andersen Museum

Windsurfing at "Cold Hawaii" in Klitmøller

**Summer activities** 

Pedal through Copenhagen on a bicycle Take the commuter train to the Louisiana Museum of Modern Art

Make a day trip across the Øresund Bridge

Stroll along the beaches of Skagen

Visit Legoland – the home of Lego



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Where the Baltic meets the North Sea, wander the galleries and beaches of Northern Jutland during an extended version of our independent itinerary 'Self drive the Marguerite Route'.



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|   | - ST | Highlights  |
|---|------|---|
| 2 |      | Visit the Roskilde<br>Viking Ship Museum  |
| 3 |      | Enjoy a royal weekend<br>in a castle  |
| 4 |      | Book ahead to dine at<br>the new noma restaurant  |
| 5 |      | Cycle the fairytale<br>island of Funen  |
| 6 |      | Self drive the Marguerite<br>Route and uncover the<br>natural beauty of the<br>Danish countryside |
| D |      | Join a Nordic Noir<br>crime guided tour   |
|   |      |   |



#### **Travel tip:**

Want to combine the Scandinavian capitals? We recommend our very popular itinerary 'Scandinavian Capitals by rail & ferry'!

This independent tour takes you to Copenhagen, Oslo, Stockholm, Helsinki and Tallinn over 14 days.



# Finland

#### The land of abundance.

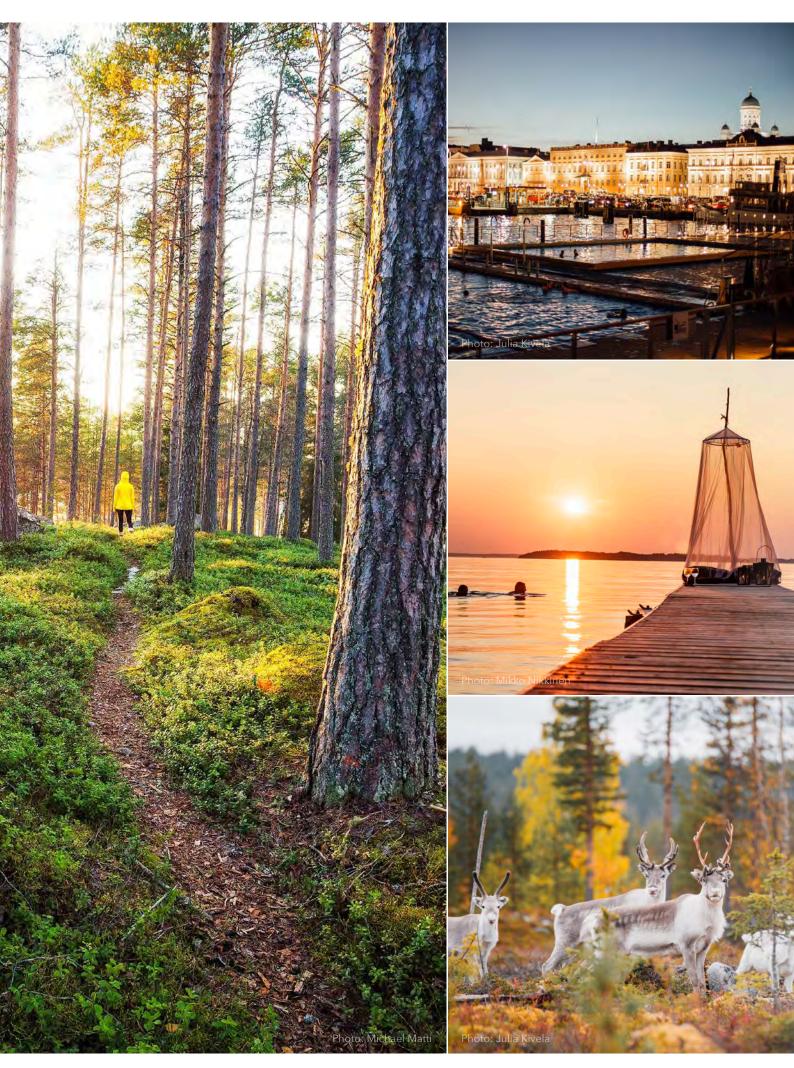
Talking about Finland can result in the casual throwing around of some very big numbers. There are 500,000 cottages and 189,000 lakes. There are over 3.2 million saunas (although the worlds biggest is in Norway) - not bad for a population of 5.5 million - and more than 179,000 islands. In fact there are 17,000 islands and smaller islets in the archipelago between Turku and the Åland Islands alone, through which you can navigate using bridges and ferries on the 250 km-long Archipelago Trail, with a must-do detour to the lighthouse keeper's cottage at Bengtskär, Scandinavia's tallest maritime light. Oh, and be sure to go for a walk in the woods, too, because 65 percent of Finland's land area is forest, making it Europe's most heavily forested country.

Numbers, of course, don't tell the whole story. The capital Helsinki is a beguiling mix of classic Art Nouveau architecture and modernity as seen in its Design District, an entrepreneurial neighbourhood that has been promoting Finnish design for well over a century.

Helsinki is chic, but nature calls softly here. You can spend a summer's night in a cottage on a lake island the size of a small boat, and kayak or canoe to your heart's content on placid waters. North in Lapland experience the daily life of the Sami, Scandinavia's only indigenous people, then go snowmobiling, snowshoeing or ice-fishing.

Relax in an glass igloo beneath an all-but guaranteed light show courtesy of the Aurora Borealis, which can appear in Finland's northern skies up to 200 times a year, and don't forget to take advantage of "Everyman's Rights" - the Nordic law that allows walking and berry, mushroom and wildflower picking in natural areas without the permission of landowners, a concept that gives a refreshing and peculiarly Nordic twist to the word travellers most like to hear: "Welcome".





# Northern lights

#### Will I see them?

If your holiday is well planned, the answer is often yes. However, most people will appreciate that the Aurora is a natural phenomena, and part of their attraction lies in the fact that they cannot be controlled or even properly predicted. What we can do is to get you to the best locations at the right time. This may mean allowing for common weather patterns, and/or travelling either inland or out to the coast. It nearly always means getting you out of populated areas with light pollution, and into the exotic wilderness with plenty of great daytime activities to guarantee a memorable experience!

#### When to go?

The period between November and March is generally the best time to see the Northern Lights. However, they can also be seen in late September, October and early April. Other times of year there is not enough darkness. October and November tend to see a lot of windy and wet weather, which of course means cloud cover and less chance to see the lights. Our favourite months are mid January, February & March, which means plenty of darkness in the peak viewing period between 6pm and midnight, and plenty of daylight to enjoy other winter activities.

#### What are the Northern Lights?

The ultimate energy source of the Aurora is the solar wind flowing past Earth and touching its magnetic field. Aurora starts when explosions in the sun send off particles into space. These particles are charged and form the solar wind. When solar wind hits Earth's magnetic field in the Polar areas where the magnetic shield is less powerful, it collides with particles in our atmosphere creating electricity and light. It is this light that we see as the Northern Light or Aurora Borealis.

The Aurora awed the ancient people. Aurora was the Roman goddess of the dawn. Boreas is a Greek word for the north wind – thus. the northern lights. The Finnish word for the lights, 'revontulet', comes from a Sami legend where the tail of a fox running on along the snow covered fells strikes the snow drifts and sends a trail of sparks high up to the sky. Revontulet literally means foxfires. The Vikings believed that the Aurora was a beautiful maiden called Valkyrias who escorted those killed in battle to the gods. The Sami people of Lapland also believed they had power over the lights, and whistling under them would cause them to come closer. Many ancient people would not stare at or speak of them, due to a fear of insulting their divinity.



Regardless of the time of the year, Santa visits can be arranged during your stay in Northern Finland. These vary from a visit to a Santa park, a private visit to your log cabin or a private visit to Santa's cabin in the forest. Everyone will be enchanted by a cuddle and present from Santa in his homeland.



Finland lends itself well to travelling with a larger group. Traditional log cabins with facilities such as large communal areas, outdoor saunas and hot tubs can be found in most of our popular Northern Lights hot spots!

Husky safaris

#### 嶨 **Escorted tours**

50 Degrees North offers hosted Christmas departures. Our Scandinavian staff will ensure your trip of a lifetime is enjoyed without a hitch.

#### Winter activities

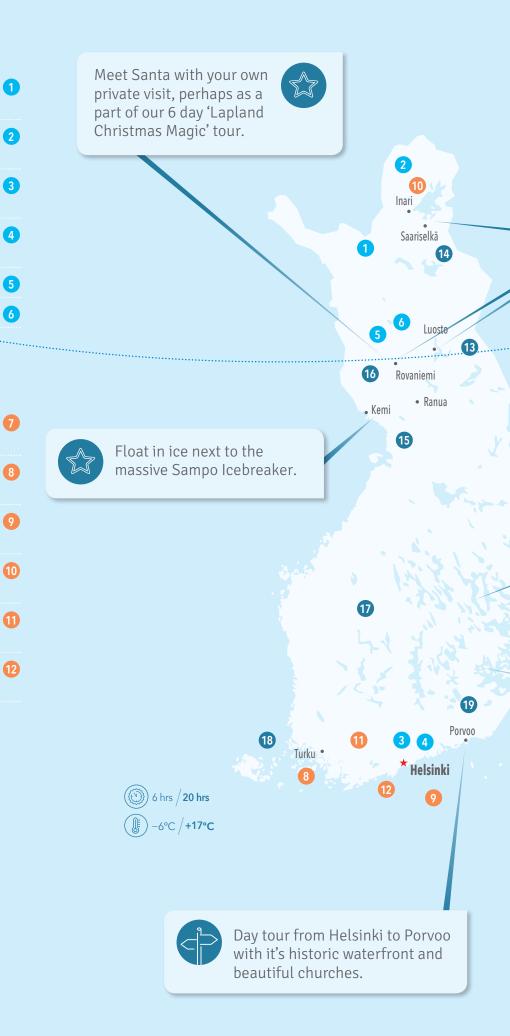
| Experience a snow mobile<br>ride though Lapland |
|---|
| Go ice-fishing on a<br>frozen lake              |
| Attend a local ice<br>hockey game               |
| Visit the Christmas market on Senate Square     |
| Ride a reindeer sled                            |
| Take a dip in a frozen lake                     |

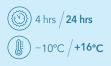


#### Summer activities

| Watch brown bears from<br>a secret hide         |
|---|
| Explore the Turku<br>archipelago by bike or car |
| Make a day trip to Tallinn<br>by express ferry  |
| Visit the Sami Siida<br>Museum in Inari         |
| Join a wife carrying competition                |
| Take the ferry to the<br>Suomenlinna Fortress   |
|   |







Above the Arctic Circle, stay in one of the Glass Igloo Resorts dotting the region.

ARCTIC CIRCLE

## Finland

Rent a cabin by a lake and go for a nude swim under the Midnight Sun.



Spend endless summer days by Lake Saimaa with our retreat package.



| Distances |                       |  |
|-----------|-----------------------|--|
| 85 kms    | Helsinki —> Tallinn   |  |
| 812 kms   | Helsinki —> Rovaniemi |  |
| 168 kms   | Helsinki —> Turku     |  |
| 119 kms   | Kemi —> Rovaniemi     |  |
| 525 kms   | Rovaniemi —> Kirkenes |  |

|    | Highlights   |
|----|--|
| 13 | Stay in a glass igloo<br>under the Northern Lights     |
| 14 | Enjoy a cosy log cabin<br>with the family              |
| 15 | Try a traditional smoke<br>sauna experience            |
| 16 | Meet Santa on one of<br>our Christmas tours            |
| 1  | Go berry picking in<br>Finnish forests                 |
| 18 | Enjoy sailing in<br>the world's largest<br>archipelago |
| 19 | <br>Visit a summer festival                            |
|    |  |



Flights from Helsinki to cities above the Arctic Circle take approximately an hour or two. These flights can get very busy during Christmas.



#### Travel tip:

Discover Finland's cultural heritage during our 10 day self drive tour 'From the Sea to the Lakes'.





Photo: Philipp Waldhauer

### Faroe Islands

#### The Faroe Islands are hot in the 'coolest' sense of the word.

If you think eighteen wet, windy, fog-shrouded volcanic islands amid the frothing ocean swells halfway between Iceland and Norway, with an average wind speed in excess of 6 metres per second, sounds like an uninviting place to be shipwrecked, think again. The Faroe Islands are hot in the very 'coolest' sense of the word: its world-class orange-pink lobsters, salmon, Bank Cod and skerpikjøt wind-dried mutton - are making it a centre of gastronomy. Its designer knitwear comes straight off the backs of its 70,000 sheep. In summertime, music festivals abound including the oh-so edgy 'Concerto Grotto' series - cave concerts that produce the sort of acoustics only the nooks and crannies of the Faroe's volcanic landscape can provide.

Settled by Norsemen in the 7th century, this is a 'tilted' archipelago, its eastern shores sloping into the frigid ocean and its western coastline rising up in dramatic cliffs, a mix of green arcing fells, craggy basalt protrusions home to puffins, guillemots and the world's largest colony of storm petrels. Rappel down 300m-high cliffs. See a waterfall empty straight into the Atlantic. Sail beneath 700 metre sea cliffs and be tossed around like a cork. But to see it at its most wild, you need to walk some of its 23 designated hiking trails. Do this, and getting marooned will never have felt so very proper.

Photo: Eric Welch



### Self-drives

The roads are spectacular in the Faroes, and there is no better way to explore than being your own holiday chauffeur. It gives you time to stop and enjoy the scenery, have lunch at a local bakery or take that unexpected turn down that little side road. You never know what hidden gem you will find.



### 🖗 Hiking

The Faroe Islands are the perfect hiking destination. So undiscovered, so pure and so far from the crowds. Feel the fresh air in your face, take a dip in a cool mountain lake and climb beautiful green hills affording endless vistas across the North Atlantic. We offer both organised or self guided walking holidays.





#### Winter activities

Storm watching

Walk to the waterfall Múlafossur

Visit Tinganes; one of the world's oldest parliaments

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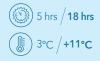
Buy handicrafts in Tórshavn

#### **Summer activities**

| Horse riding                                   | 5  |
|--|----|
| Cruise on the two masted<br>schooner Norðlysið | 6  |
| Garden visits with local food                  | 7  |
| Music festivals                                | 8  |
| Puffin watching                                | 9  |
| Wildflower displays                            | 10 |







Klaksvík

Get off the beaten track and visit Viking remains near Klaksvik.



|    | Highlights   |
|----|--|
| 0  | Tramp to the lighthouse in Mykines   |
| 12 | Boat tour to the<br>Vestmanna Bird Cliffs                                  |
| 13 | Helicopter tours over the<br>Atlantic and sea cliffs                       |
| 14 | Fishing trips from<br>Vestmanna  |
| 15 | Live music concerts<br>in a cave by tall ship                              |
| 10 | Self drive the islands<br>using their remarkable<br>series of road tunnels |

Listen to the traditional singing and music in atmospheric Tórshavn pubs.





Direct flights from either Copenhagen, Bergen or Edinburgh, to the airport of the Faroe Islands, Vagar, are 2.15 hrs. Direct flights from Reykjavik to Vagar are 1.25 hrs.

## Faroe Islands

| 20 | Distance | S                           |
|----|----------|-----------------------------|
|    | 40 kms   | Tórshavn —> Vestmanna       |
|    | 65 kms   | <b>Tórshavn</b> —> Gjogv    |
|    | 44 kms   | <b>Gjogv</b> —> Klaksvik    |
|    | 45 mins  | Ferry: Sørvágur —> Mykines  |
|    | 2 hrs    | Ferry: Tórshavn —> Tvøroyri |







# Iceland

#### Iceland has everything the 'geology tragic' could wish for...

Nowhere else in the world have the seismic forces that shape it been so randomly thrown together and so beguilingly packaged. Iceland has everything the 'geology tragic' could wish for: glacier-fed waterfalls surrounded by ancient lava fields, subterranean ice caves and bubbling mud pots, fumaroles and black sand beaches. It has Europe's largest glacial mass and the world's oldest geyser, the ice-laden interior of its Central Highlands, a whopping thirty active volcanic systems, and the geothermal spas of the Blue Lagoon, the country's most-visited attraction.

Iceland is temperate for a supposedly 'cold' country, thanks to the warm waters of the North Atlantic Current. It has a verdant southern coastline that belies its position just south of the Arctic Circle. Isolated communities are connected by the world's most inspiring ring road, Highway 1, which encircles the country, binds it together and provides access to a never-ending panorama of elegant, elongated fjords and secondary roads that can, in minutes, take you from coastal fishing villages to glacial snow-covered alpine landscapes.

Its 'northern capital' Akureyri contains a wealth of 1920's and 30's Bauhaus architecture, and the capital Reykjavik has gob smacking examples of portraiture and public art painted on the exteriors of its buildings that are nothing less than Fine Art in a country that brings out the creative best not just in its landscapes, but in the people who inhabit them.



#### Satu's suggestion:

Traveling to Iceland, for me, has always been a magical experience. The contrast of almost barren landscape with gushing waterfalls, glacier lagoons, dramatic fjords and blue (literally) geothermal lagoons, all on one small island, is a combination that is hard to find anywhere else in the world. The views and natural experiences combined with excellent food and adrenalin-racing outdoors activities keep me going back time and time again.

Satu is our Nordic Manager, and runs the Norway office.





### Farm stays

High end accommodation in the Icelandic countryside is a rarity. So why not do it the local way and stay a few nights at a country farm during your self drive tour around the island. It is a friendly and very Icelandic experience, which will not disappoint. Call ahead and tell them you are coming for dinner, and the most hearty and traditional of Icelandic meals will await you.





### 🔆 Fire and ice

No trip to Iceland is complete without having done a glacier walk on one of the many glacier tongues. Pick up your guide, crampons and an ice axe in Reykjavik, or at Skaftafell, and go exploring. Another unmissable adventure is climbing one of the many volcanoes dotted along the Icelandic south coast. You can even venture right down into the middle of one.

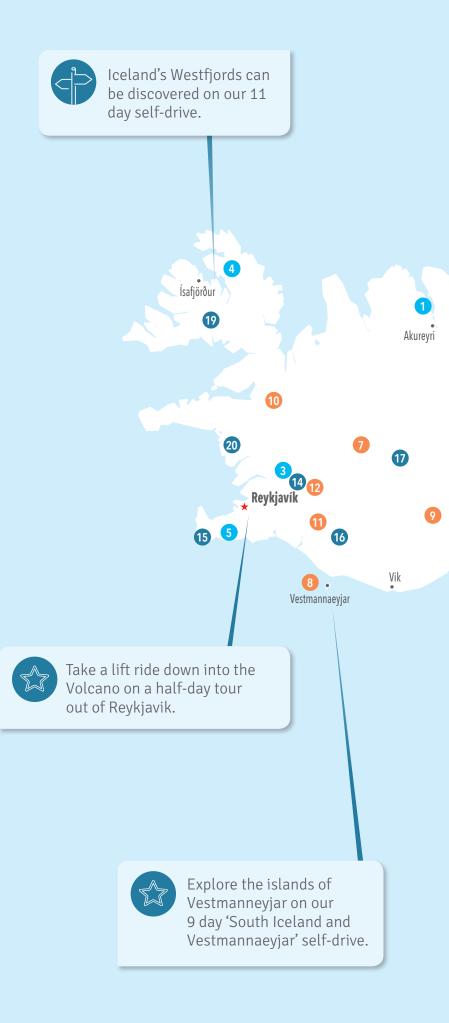


| Northern Lights hunt                     |  |
|--|--|
| Glacier walks and ice-carving            |  |
| Enjoy Iceland Airwaves<br>music festival |  |
| Calm water kayaking in<br>the Westfjords |  |
| Soaking in the Blue Lagoon               |  |
|  |  |

#### Summer activities

| Whale watching                                   | 6  |
|--|----|
| Exploring the highlands<br>and the hiking trails | 7  |
| Puffin watching at<br>Vestmannaeyjar             | 8  |
| Glacier walks                                    | 9  |
| Horseback riding                                 | 10 |
| Snorkelling at Silfra                            | 1  |
| Salmon or trout fishing<br>at Sog river          | 12 |





Whale Safaris are operated with silent electrical boats to maximize your encounter with these giants of the sea.







| Distances |  |  |
|-----------|--|--|
| 48 kms    | <b>Reykjavík</b> —> Blue Lagoon  |  |
| 49 kms    | <b>Reykjavík</b> —> Keflavik Airport   |  |
| 179 kms   | Reykjavík –> Vik   |  |
| 380 kms   | Reykjavík –> Akureyri  |  |
| 266 kms   | <b>Akureyri</b> —> Egilsstaðir   |  |
| 518 kms   | <b>Egilsstaðir</b> —> Vik  |  |
|           | <b>istance</b><br>48 kms<br>49 kms<br>179 kms<br>380 kms<br>266 kms<br>518 kms |  |

and glacier lagoons.

|    | <b>N</b> | Highlights  |
|----|----------|---|
| 13 |          | Natural wonders of<br>Lake Mývatn                                   |
| 14 |          | Amazing culinary<br>experiences                                     |
| 15 |          | Experience the autumn<br>Icelandic horse or<br>sheep round up       |
| 16 |          | Take a dip in natural<br>hot springs and pools<br>around Iceland    |
| 1  |          | Off-roading with a<br>Super Jeep across<br>glaciers and lava fields |
| 18 |          | Go on an iceberg safari<br>on the glacier lagoons                   |
| 19 |          | Explore the rugged<br>Westfjords                                    |
| 20 |          | Seafood banquets on sailing boats                                   |

**Travel tip:** Visiting Iceland for a short break is popular - our 5 day "Iceland Stopover" stays in Reykjavik and near the Blue Lagoon.

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## Greenland & The High Arctic

#### Unspoilt and unbelievable.

Descending into Kangerlussuaq Airport you see it for the first time, stretching to infinity. The 1.8 million sq kms of the Greenland Icecap. Fourteen times the size of England. It looks forbidding, but can now be crossed in unsupported groups with experienced guides if you're really determined to leave behind what little civilisation there is here. Greenlanders cling to their coastline, to the bounty in its waters; a coastline of glacier-fed, icebergfilled fjords and bays backed by stunning coastal mountain ranges. "Do it here, do it now", you tell yourself.

Go dog sledding with Inuit mushers on immersive journeys that take you beyond even Greenland's usual 'out there' places. Go overnighting in wilderness huts while conquering summit-to-sea backcountry ski trails. Go on safaris in search of the long-bearded musk ox, Greenland's 'giant sheep' and largest land mammal that can weigh as much as 400 kilos.

Be sure to cruise amongst icebergs that calve off the UNESCO World Heritagelisted Ilulissat Icefjord, watching up to 15 species of whales frolicking in the same waters. There is no time to rest.



### 🏹 The Inuit

The indigenous Greenlanders, the Inuit, are a proud and hardy people. They are also one of the friendliest peoples you will ever meet. So, when in Greenland slow your pace right down, and take the time to meet some of the locals down at the harbour, or during your sled dog experience across the ice.





#### Lebergs and whales

One of the best and most accessible places on earth to come close to massive 50m tall icebergs is the West Greenlandic town of Ilulissat. They will float right past your hotel window, and if in luck you may even spot fin and humpback whales breeching between the icebergs.

Have you always dreamed of observing or photographing the King of the Arctic, the polar bear in its natural habitat? The Svalbard archipelago, off the mainland of Norway, is an ideal place to see this majestic creature in the arctic summer.

hoto: Kelvin Blake



#### Alice's suggestion:

Greenland is truly unique. This is a once in a lifetime experience. Illulissat Icebergs; never have I seen anything like it. The distinctive cuisine has me tasting some of the most tender musk-oxen and muhtuk. My advice – Dare, live, explore and experience Greenland!

Alice is our Sales Manager, based at our Australian sales office.

AP WAR

Greenland coastal voyages enable you to travel with the locals down the Western coast of Greenland.

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Dog sledding in Svalbard and Greenland

Northern Lights over the Arctic tundra

Arctic Circle Race: 3-day survival race

Experience the Polar Night's complete darkness

Dine in award winning Greenlandic restaurants

#### Summer activities

Sleep near the water's edge overlooking the impressive iceberg-filled Disko Bay

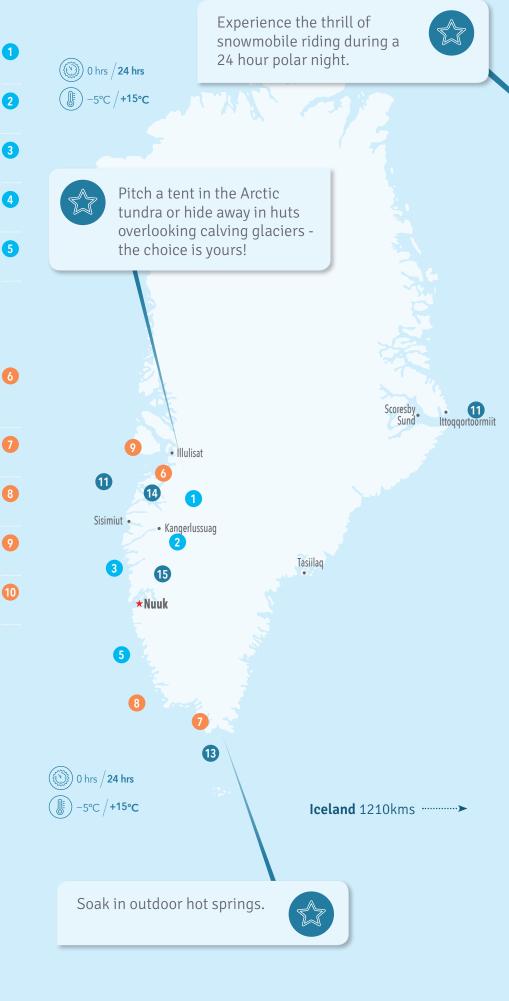
Hike in the beautiful valleys with grass and Arctic flowers

Join locals on a coastal voyage down the West Coast

Touch an iceberg and then add some to your sundowner

Stay in remote huts, in the land of the polar bear







| ST. | Highlights   |
|-----|--|
|     | Sail close to the ocean's<br>largest mammal, whales,<br>as well as colossal<br>glaciers and icebergs |
|     | Polar bear sightings as<br>you cruise the Svalbard<br>archipelago                                    |
|     | Slide through the water<br>past massive icebergs in<br>a sea kayak                                   |
|     | Meet the people of the<br>High Arctic - resilient<br>and inspiring                                   |
|     | Watch reindeer and<br>musk oxen meander<br>across the wild<br>Arctic tundra                          |
|     |  |

The Norwegian archipelago of Svalbard, situated between mainland Norway and the North Pole, is characterised by rugged, remote terrain of snowdrowned glaciers and frozen tundra. This is one of Europe's last great wildernesses - the home of polar bears, reindeer, and arctic foxes. The winters are filled with endless darkness and summers with perpetual sunlight. If you like a challenge, adventure and exotic places off the beaten track, Svalbard ticks all the boxes!

# Greenland & The High Arctic

Flying to Svalbard involves a three-hour flight from Oslo, stopping at Tromsø.

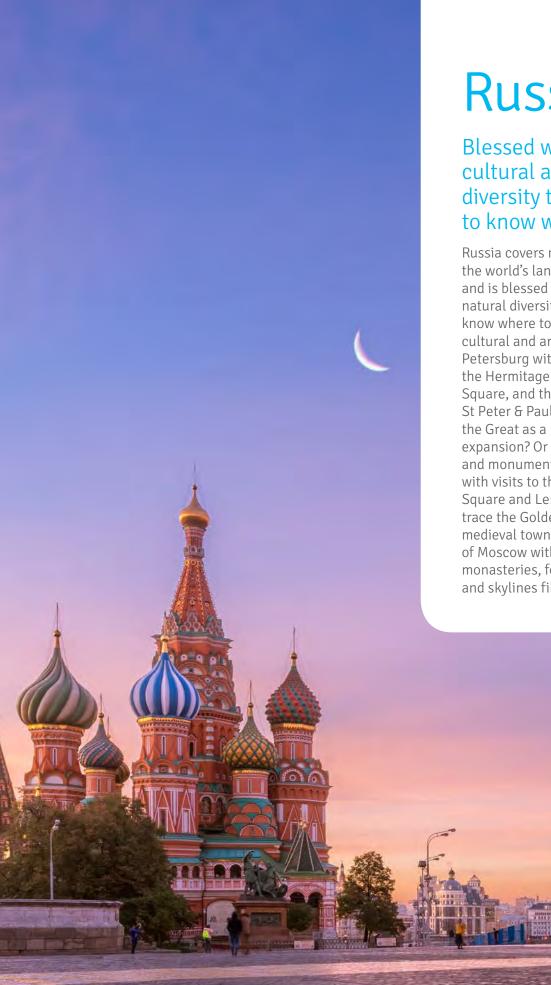
Commercial airlines are the only way for travellers to get to Greenland, served by airports in Denmark and Iceland – unless you arrive with a cruise ship.



#### Distances

| 561 kms  | Nuuk —> Ilulissat                | 1 hr flight    |
|----------|----------------------------------|----------------|
| 465 kms  | Nuuk —> Narsaruaq                | 1.15 hr flight |
| 1438 kms | Nuuk —> Reykjavik                | 4 hr flight    |
| 2004 kms | Longyearbyen —> Tromsø           | 1.2 hr flight  |
| 1337 kms | lttoqqortoormiit —> Longyearbyen | 4 day cruise   |

Note: there are no connecting roads in Greenland.



# Russia

Blessed with such cultural and natural diversity that it's difficult to know where to start.

Russia covers more than an eighth of the world's land area, has 9 time zones, and is blessed with such cultural and natural diversity that it's difficult to know where to start. Perhaps with the cultural and architectural glories of St Petersburg with St Isaac's Cathedral, the Hermitage Museum and Palace Square, and the golden spires of the St Peter & Paul Fortress, built by Peter the Great as a bulwark to Swedish expansion? Or maybe the wide avenues and monumental buildings of Moscow with visits to the Bolshoi Theatre, Red Square and Lenin's Tomb? Or perhaps trace the Golden Ring, a cluster of medieval towns to the northeast of Moscow with a rare ensemble of monasteries, fortresses, cathedrals, and skylines filled with onion domes.



### Private guides

Private guides will bring to life the storybook landscape of castles, palaces and cathedrals. During the day, visit the blockbuster museums and historic monuments and at night, box seats at the theatre and grand dining experiences will make you fall in love with enigmatic Russia.



#### Visit St.Petersburg from Helsinki

Modern ferries or express trains from Helsinki will transport you in comfort to St. Petersburg. Deluxe accommodation, private guides who meet you at the ferry, and museum tours are included in our tours. We recommend staying in St. Petersburg for more than 72 hours and can help you arrange for a Russian visa. These have become increasingly straightforward to obtain.



Wintery lakes within St. Catherine and Paul's Palaces Ballet and theatre shows Explore the grandeur of imperial Russia in the Kremlin's Armoury

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Celebrate Christmas on a luxury train to Vladimir

Rent two-person sleds and find a sloped spot in Victory Park, St. Petersburg

Watch a local ice hockey game

Celebrate Orthodox Christmas in early January

#### Summer activities

Morning kayak to St. Basil's Cathedral in St. Petersburg Enjoy the late evenings of the White nights period

Wander the open air museum, Malye Karely

Cross the Neva Bay in a Soviet-era hydrofoil to Peterhof





Visit the Northern Russian border near Kirkenes during a Hurtigruten voyage.

Explore Russian river ways and countryside on a "Volga Dream" voyage.





Our 5 day 'Glorious St. Petersburg' tour includes private touring and chauffeured Mercedes.

High-speed trains connect Moscow and St. Petersburg. (4 hours)

#### Distances

| 712 kms | Moscow -> St. Petersburg          |
|---------|-----------------------------------|
| 265 kms | Moscow -> Yaroslav                |
| 386 kms | <b>St. Petersburg</b> —> Helsinki |
| 368 kms | <b>St. Petersburg</b> —> Tallinn  |
| 221 kms | Moscow —> Suzdal                  |



# The Baltics

## Diversity, beauty and medieval charm.

It might be convenient to speak of the Baltic States of Lithuania, Latvia and Estonia, wedged together between Russia and the Baltic Sea, in a single breath because of their geographic proximity and common history. But the reality is these three independent-minded nations are as distinct from each other as any other European countries, and all possessing their own characteristics: Lithuanians are pontaneous and exuberant, Estonians reserved and rational, Latvians talkative and traditional. And the distinctions don't end there.

There is the baroque and neo-classical beauty of the Lithuanian capital Vilnius, the Art Nouveau and 19th century wooden architecture of the Latvian capital Riga, and the splendour of the Estonian capital Tallinn, Northern Europe's best-preserved medieval city.



### Tallinn Christmas market

Tallinn hosts an intimate and traditional Christmas market each year. A tree is erected in the medieval town hall square and becomes the focal point of this enchanting market. Outdoor iceskating, food stalls with hot spiced wine and a full schedule of concerts enhance the magic of the season.



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Estonia boasts thousands of manor houses dating back as far as the 13th century, several which have been converted into luxurious spa hotels. Typically set on large formal grounds, these converted manors can offer horse & cart rides, golf, boating, gourmet dining and a stroll through the countryside.

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| Explore old world<br>Christmas Markets |
|--|
| lce swimming and spa retreats          |
| Black Nights Film Festivals            |
| Ice Skating                            |
| Husky riding in Kehtna                 |
| Cross Country Skiing<br>in Otepää      |

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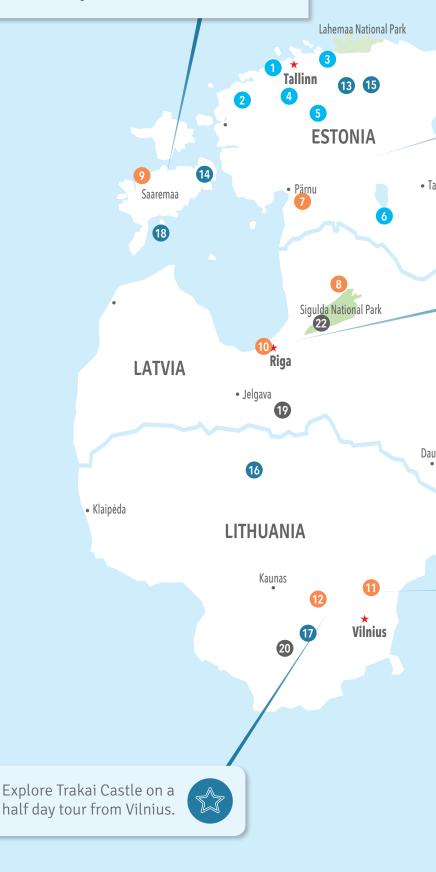
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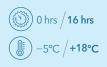
#### Summer activities

| Sandy beaches of Pärnu                | 1  |
|---------------------------------------|----|
| Hiking in Sigulda<br>National Park    | 8  |
| Saaremaa Food Festival                | 9  |
| Medieval Adventures                   | 10 |
| Old Town Festivals                    | 1  |
| Hot air ballooning over<br>the cities | 12 |



Visit Saaremaa Island's annual food festival whilst staying in a boutique manor house during 'Baltic Beauty' 8 day self-drive tour.





Pull up an umbrella on the beaches of Parnu.



Our independent 'Treasures of the Baltic States' tour includes a stay in all capitals as well as various castle visits and National Parks.

Rēzekne

gavpils

Narva •

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# The Baltic States



Scheduled coach services connect the three capital cities of the Baltics.

| 20 | Distances |                                   |  |
|----|-----------|-----------------------------------|--|
|    | 295 kms   | <b>Vilnius</b> —> Riga            |  |
|    | 309 kms   | <b>Riga</b> —> Tallinn            |  |
|    | 85 kms    | <b>Ferry: Tallinn</b> —> Helsinki |  |
|    | 363 kms   | Tallinn —> St.Petersburg          |  |
|    | 205 kms   | <b>Tallinn</b> —> Saaremaa        |  |

|    | Highlights   |
|----|--|
| 13 | Tallinn Song Festival,<br>held every 5 years                           |
| 14 | Premium Manor<br>House stays   |
| 15 | Fairy-tale turrets and<br>medieval streetscapes<br>of Old town Tallinn |
| 16 | Visiting the Hill<br>of Crosses  |
| 17 | Trakai Castle private<br>excursions                                    |
| 18 | Medieval Episcopal<br>Castle in Kuressaare                             |
|    |  |

| Castles        |  |  |
|----------------|--|--|
| Rundale Castle |  |  |
| Trakai Castle  |  |  |
| Turaida Castle |  |  |
|                |  |  |



#### Travel tip:

It is possible to travel to St. Petersburg by scheduled coach, taking 5 hours with a border crossing.

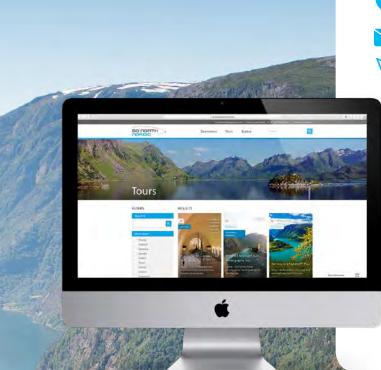


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## Temperatures and daylight hours

|        |       | TROMSØ         | REYKJAVIK         | STOCKHOLM         | ROVANIEMI       | TALLINN           |
|--------|-------|----------------|-------------------|-------------------|-----------------|-------------------|
| Winter | Nov   | 4 hrs / -2.5°C | 6 hrs / 1.3°C     | 7 hrs / 2.8°C     | 9 hrs / -6.1°C  | 8 hrs / 1°C       |
|        | Dec   | 0 hrs / -3.2°C | 4 hrs / -0.1°C    | 6 hrs / -0.4°C    | 5 hrs / -10.0°C | 6 hrs / -2°C      |
|        | Jan   | 2 hrs / -3.7°C | 5 hrs / -0.6°C    | 7 hrs / -1.7°C    | 3 hrs / -11.7°C | 7 hrs / -4°C      |
|        | Feb   | 8 hrs / -7.3°C | 9 hrs / 0.1°C     | 9 hrs / -1.9°C    | 8 hrs / -11.0°C | 9 hrs / -5°C      |
|        | Mar   | 9 hrs / -4.2°C | 11 hrs / 0.3°C    | 12 hrs / 0.8°C    | 11 hrs / -6.1°C | 12 hrs / -1°C     |
|        | Apr   | 16 hrs / 1.6°C | 15 hrs / 2.8°C    | 14 hrs / 4.9°C    | 15 hrs / -1.0°C | 14 hrs / 6°C      |
|        | 3.3.9 |                |                   |                   |                 |                   |
|        |       | TROMSØ         | REYKJAVIK         | STOCKHOLM         | ROVANIEMI       | TALLINN           |
| Summer | May   | 19 hrs / 5°C   | 18.5 hrs / 6.3°C  | 17 hrs / 10.7°C   | 20 hrs / 6°C    | 17 hrs / 9.7°C    |
|        | Jun   | 24 hrs / 9°C   | 21 hrs / 9°C      | 18.5 hrs / 15.6°C | 24 hrs / 13°C   | 18.5 hrs / 14.5°C |
|        | Jul   | 24 hrs / 12°C  | 20 hrs / 10.6°C   | 18 hrs / 17.2°C   | 21 hrs / 15°C   | 18 hrs / 16.3°C   |
|        | Aug   | 20 hrs / 11°C  | 16.5 hrs / 10.3°C | 15.5 hrs / 16.2°C | 17 hrs / 12°C   | 15.5 hrs / 15.3°C |
|        | Sep   | 15 hrs / 7°C   | 13 hrs / 7.4°C    | 13 hrs / 11.9°C   | 13 hrs / 7°C    | 13 hrs / 10.8°C   |

Please speak to us about what clothing and gear to bring on your Nordic experience.



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#### **50 Degrees North Nordic AS**

Granrudvegen 12 2636 Øyer, Norway nordic@fiftydegreesnorth.com Phone +47 21 04 01 00