

INSPIRING VACATIONS

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14 Day Follow The Lights

- ✓ Small, personal group experience – no more than 26 people
- ✓ Return international airfares with British Airways
- ✓ All airport and port transfers, plus internal flight
- ✓ 8 nights in quality 4-star accommodation
- ✓ 5 nights cruising the spectacular Norwegian coast
- ✓ Daily breakfast, 7 lunches, 8 dinners
- ✓ Fully escorted from Day 2 - Day 7 by expert, English-speaking guides
- ✓ Incredible sightseeing including the rugged Arctic wilderness of Lapland, crossing the Arctic Circle, a husky safari and a chance to spot the mesmerising northern lights
- ✓ 24/7 customer service and your own Dedicated Support Agent



You will be visiting

Bergen - Helsinki - Kirkenes - Tromso - Rovaniemi - Trondheim - Saariselkä -

Lofoten Islands - Arctic Circle - Kristiansund - Rocky Islands.

Day to Day Itinerary

Day 1

Destination: Home ✈ Helsinki

Hotel: Sokos Hotel Presidenti, or Similar

Welcome to Finland, the happiest country in the world!

You'll be met at the airport and taken to your hotel. Your tour leader will be on hand this afternoon to welcome you and answer any questions.

The rest of the day is free for you to get to know this gorgeous seaside city. Enjoy the old market, the green parks and the Russian influence in its buildings and churches.

Soak in some of the culture with a visit to one of Helsinki's many museums, like the National Museum of Finland, the Design Museum, the Seurasaari Open-Air Museum, the Mannerheim Museum and the Kiasma Museum of Contemporary Art. The City Museum is free. Take a ferry to Suomenlinna, a great UNESCO World Heritage fortress that once protected the sea entry to the city.

If it's open, a visit to the unique Temppeliaukio Church is worth it – also known as the 'Rock Church', as it's built directly into the granite rock.

Check in: Passengers will be arriving at various times throughout the day from as early as 6am through to late evening. If arriving prior to standard check-in time, which is generally 3pm local time, you are welcome to leave your luggage with hotel reception and explore your surroundings until check-in becomes available, as there are generally no scheduled activities on Day 1 of the itinerary. The hotel may grant early check-in, however this is strictly subject to availability and at the hotel's discretion.

Day 2

Destination: Helsinki

Meals: Breakfast, Dinner

Hotel: Sokos Hotel Presidenti, or Similar

After breakfast, we'll enjoy a morning tour of Helsinki, capital of Finland and also known as the 'Daughter of the Baltic Sea' or 'White City of the North'. Learn about its culture, history, traditions and more.

You'll see Senate Square with the famous Cathedral rising on the northern side, the Market Square, the orthodox Uspenski Cathedral, the Olympic Stadium, the Parliament, the Sibelius Monument and Finlandia Hall. Finlandia Hall was built in 1971 and has a distinctive, impressive white facade of Carrara marble.

If it's open, entrance is included to the unique Temppeliaukio Church – also known as the 'Rock Church', as it's built directly into the granite rock.

Tonight, join your guide and the rest of your group for a welcome dinner at the hotel.

Day 3

Destination: Helsinki ✈ Rovaniemi

Meals: Breakfast

Hotel: Original Sokos Hotel Vaakuna, or Similar

Today we'll head for Finnish Lapland, the country's northernmost region and a veritable winter wonderland. We will fly from Helsinki to Rovaniemi.

Once settled into your hotel, the rest of the evening is yours to relax and explore. The city centre is quite compact and easy to walk around. Fancy reindeer stew or salmon soup? You can find traditional Lappish food in a host of different establishments here, from fine dining to casual options.

With any luck, you'll have a chance to see the mesmerising northern lights, *aurora borealis*, an item on many bucket lists. Chances are pretty good in Finland, with the lights appearing for roughly 200 nights out of the year. Lapland is one of the best places to witness the lights on the Arctic Circle. The remoteness of this area, and therefore the lack of light pollution, combined with the long dark winters make the lights seem to glow even more brightly.

Part of the allure of this natural phenomenon is down to its elusiveness. Many factors need to align – weather, timing, light pollution, moon activity – in order to catch this beautiful light show. One thing is for certain, to view

the aurora borealis is a once in a lifetime, unforgettable experience. This spectacle is every bit as thrilling as you'd hope, taking over the whole sky with brilliant, unusual colours.

Day 4

Destination: Rovaniemi

Meals: Breakfast

Hotel: Original Sokos Hotel Vaakuna, or Similar

It's only fitting that in his official hometown, we pay a visit to Santa Claus' Village for some Christmas magic. Enjoy the village's charm and fun activities, like perusing the souvenirs and sending a postcard home from the post office – it will have a special Arctic Circle postmark. And of course, you can meet Santa.

We'll then visit a local reindeer farm. Reindeer play a special part in the stories and traditions of the Arctic and here you'll be able to learn about these enchanting creatures and even feed them. You'll cross the Arctic Circle and receive a certificate to commemorate this.

Day 5

Destination: Rovaniemi 🚗 Saariselkä

Meals: Breakfast, Dinner

Hotel: Northern Lights Village, or Similar

We'll head for Saariselkä today, Europe's northernmost outdoor resort town, with a short stop enroute at Sodankylä.

We'll visit a husky farm for our **Inspiring Sight**, the thrill of an exhilarating Lapland husky safari. Savour the fresh Arctic air and these powerful, graceful huskies will pull your sled as you take a fast-paced trip over the untouched snow of the white, shimmering fells. This one-hour adventure is weather dependent.

Fancy the possibility of witnessing the spectacle of the northern lights from the warmth of your own bed? Your **Inspiring Stay** is the ultimate immersive Arctic experience – an Aurora Cabin, with a glass roof over the bed so you can sleep under the stars.

Day 6

Destination: Saariselkä 🚗 Inari 🚗 Kirkenes

Meals: Breakfast, Dinner

Hotel: Thon Hotel Kirkenes, or Similar

We'll say goodbye to Saariselkä this morning and head for Kirkenes, a famed aurora viewing spot in Norway near the Russian border.

The history of the Sámi people, who inhabit northernmost Europe, is rich with many cultural traditions and customs. On the way to Kirkenes, we'll stop for a couple of hours in the village of Inari, to visit the Sámi Museum Siida. It's the national museum of the Sámi and explores their spiritual and material culture in its collections, exhibitions and publications. It's an intriguing look at the past and present of this fascinating culture. There will be free time for lunch.

In countries like Norway and Finland, this ancient spectacle has formed part of their indigenous culture and folk heritage. The Vikings believed the northern lights were an earthly manifestation of their gods.

Day 7

Destination: Kirkenes

Meals: Breakfast, Lunch

Hotel: Thon Hotel Kirkenes, or Similar

The fjords of Kirkenes make for excellent king crab fishing. The red king crab, one of the largest crabs in the world, is highly sought after and enjoyed. We'll head out by snowmobile to help the fishermen saw the hole in the ice (weather dependent) and pull up the crab pods. We'll then learn how to prepare this local delight and feast on the giant crab, served Norwegian-style for our **Inspiring Taste**.

You will have the evening free.

Day 8

Destination: Kirkenes - Embark cruise 🚢 Vardø 🚢 Båtsfjord 🚢

Berlevåg 🚢 Mehamn

Meals: Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner

Hotel: Hurtigruten cruise, or Similar

We'll head to port to embark on our voyage along the thrilling Norwegian coastline. This voyage south traverses classic Norwegian landscapes – fjords, mountains, waterfalls, glaciers – while searching for the northern lights. You'll stop at quaint towns and interesting cities along the way.

As the ship departs, you can enjoy lunch and take in the views of the surrounding rugged Arctic wilderness on deck, or from the panorama lounge.

In the afternoon, we'll dock at Vardø, Norway's easternmost port. Weather permitting, you may experience ice bathing in the Arctic Ocean.

We'll continue along the Varanger peninsula to Båtsfjord, before reaching Berlevåg in the evening. This fishing village is home to one of Norway's most famous local choirs, consisting mainly of local fishermen.

We'll dock at Mehamn late at night. There's the option of a snowmobile trip here through the vast wilderness.

Day 9

Destination: 🏰 Hammerfest 🏰 Tromsø 🏰

Meals: Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner

Hotel: Hurtigruten cruise, or Similar

The town of Hammerfest was founded in 1789 and over time became Norway's polar capital, serving as a base for hunting expeditions into the High Arctic. You can see the UNESCO World Heritage Site of Meridian Column, erected in 1854 to commemorate the first precise geographic measurement of the globe.

We'll then continue south to Øksfjord. After crossing open water, we make a brief stop at the old trading post of Skjervøy. We'll then dock at Tromsø, often described as the 'Paris of the north'. In winter, you can enjoy an enchanting northern lights concert at the Arctic Cathedral.

Day 10

Destination: 🏰 Harstad 🏰 Stokmarknes 🏰 Svolvær 🏰 Stamsund 🏰

Meals: Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner

Hotel: Hurtigruten cruise, or Similar

Another day of cruising Norway's spectacular mountains and fjords. This morning we'll arrive at Harstad. History, beautiful scenery and a selection of breathtaking sites await, including Trondenes Church, one of Norway's premier cultural heritage sites from the late Middle Ages.

Admire the views as we sail towards the Risøyrenna, a shallow, seven metre-deep channel made for the cruise company in the 1920s to provide

an 'inside route' between Harstad and Sortland. Sandbanks along the Risøyrenna are visible through the clear, green water. The island groups of Lofoten and Vesterålen will undoubtedly offer some of the most stunning scenery you'll see on your voyage.

Risøyhamn is a small village with only 200 inhabitants, and we make a short stop here to deliver passengers, groceries and mail. We then continue south via Sortland to Stokmarknes, where Hurtigruten was founded more than 125 years ago. There is a Hurtigruten Museum here.

Then we'll reach the spectacular Trollfjord; only two kilometres long, 100 metres wide, and surrounded by majestic mountains. If weather and time permit, the Captain will make a detour into the fjord. Steep cliffs hug the ship's sides, and the dramatic landscape conjures images of an imaginary land of trolls.

After stopping at Svolvær, we'll continue to Stamsund and see the majestic peaks of the huge Lofoten Wall. We leave Lofoten during the evening and set course for the mainland.

Day 11

Destination: 🏰 Nesna 🏰 Sandnessjøen 🏰 Brønnøysund 🏰

Meals: Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner

Hotel: Hurtigruten cruise, or Similar

Crossing the Arctic Circle at 66°33' N is an important rite of passage. We'll celebrate the event on deck with a taste of Arctic tradition, a spoonful of cod liver oil. Sailing along the Helgeland coast, we'll pass hundreds of islets, fertile farmland, and steep granite walls rich in local lore. From the deck you can see the eerie mountain Torghatten (rising 258m above sea level), famous for the distinctive hole right through the middle – the hole is 160m long, 35m high and 20m wide, and was created during the Ice Age.

Another cruise highlight is sailing past the Seven Sisters mountain range. All seven imposing peaks are between 900 and 1100 metres high – a prominent landmark of the Helgeland coastline.

We'll make short stops at Nesna, an idyllic old trading post, and Sandnessjøen, before moving onto Brønnøysund.

Day 12

Destination: 🏰 Trondheim 🏰 Kristiansund 🏰 Ålesund 🏰

Meals: Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner

Hotel: Hurtigruten cruise, or Similar

The ship will head slowly into the majestic Trondheimsfjord, and along the coast and into Trondheim, Norway's capital of technology. Although not a big city on a European scale, Trondheim is the third largest in Norway, thanks in part to its large student population.

The compact city centre with a wide array of shops makes Trondheim popular for shopping. You'll find many independent shops, selling clothes and accessories that you won't find everywhere. In historic Baklandet, you'll find several shops that make the garments they sell from scratch or by adapting old garments.

We'll continue to Kristiansund, Norway's dried cod capital – fishing is the lifeblood of these communities. There's the option of an excursion along the spectacular Atlantic Road, a stretch of road that takes you right out to the ocean's edge. This mesmerising experience is widely reputed to be one of the world's most beautiful drives, packed with coastal scenery, culture and history. It promises dazzling views, whether the ocean is calm or a storm is brewing.

The ship stops at Molde, Ålesund, Torvik and Måløy during the night.

Day 13

Destination: 🏰 Florø 🏰 Bergen - Disembark cruise

Meals: Breakfast, Lunch

Hotel: Clarion Hotel Admiral, or Similar

In the morning we'll dock at Florø, Norway's westernmost community. A few nautical miles south, we'll cross the mighty Sognefjord, with magnificent views of the coastline.

We'll disembark in Bergen at 2pm, the capital city of fjords in southern Norway. Surrounded by mountains on one side and water on the other, it's a quaint, nature-filled destination.

Your local guide will meet you for a three hour sightseeing tour. We'll see St. Mary's church, the oldest building in Bergen, and the lively fish markets. Enjoy the old Hanseatic wharf and traditional wooden buildings of the Bryggen area, a UNESCO World Heritage Site.

A funicular trip to the top of Mount Fløyen, just a six minute journey from the city centre, will deliver amazing vistas of the town and Bergen fjord.

Day 14

Destination: Bergen ✈ Home

Meals: Breakfast

Enjoy one last delicious breakfast this morning, before your adventure comes to an end. After checking out of your hotel, you'll be transferred to the airport for your flight back home.

We hope you've enjoyed this extraordinary journey.

Check out: Passengers will be departing at various times throughout the day. Standard hotel check-out times will apply no matter what time your flight is scheduled to depart. Check-out time is generally anywhere from 10am-12pm. You are welcome to leave your luggage at hotel reception and spend your final moments of free time exploring the area or, alternatively, please speak with hotel staff if you would like to extend your check-out time. Please note this service is subject to availability and will likely come at an additional cost. Your tour guide (or hotel staff) will confirm the time of your airport transfer with you directly.

What's Included

- Small-group tour – up to 26 people
- Return international airfares with British Airways
- All airport and port transfers, plus internal flight from Helsinki to Rovaniemi
- 8 nights in quality 4-star accommodation
- 5 nights cruising the spectacular Norwegian coast
- Daily breakfast, 7 lunches and 8 dinners, as per itinerary
- Fully escorted from Day 2 - Day 7 by expert, English-speaking guides
- Unforgettable sightseeing as per the itinerary
- Incredible sightseeing as per the itinerary, including the rugged Arctic wilderness of Lapland, crossing the Arctic Circle, a husky safari and a chance to spot the mesmerising northern lights
- All transportation, tickets and entry fees as per the itinerary
- 24/7 customer service and your own Dedicated Support Agent

Sightseeing Highlights

- Helsinki – See the sights of Finland's capital, including Senate Square, Temppeliaukio Church and Finlandia Hall
- Rovaniemi – Experience the winter wonderland of Lapland, in this remote Arctic wilderness
- Rovaniemi – Feed reindeer and cross the Arctic Circle at a local reindeer farm in the official hometown of Santa Claus
- Saariselkä – Take a thrilling husky safari as these powerful, graceful huskies pull your sled through the fresh, shimmering fells
- Inari – Learn about the rich culture and history of the Sámi people at the fascinating Sámi Museum Siida
- Kirkenes – Embark on a king crab fishing safari, pulling up crab pods and feasting on this renowned local delicacy
- Norwegian Coast – Traverse this rugged coastline to experience this country's classic landscapes – fjords, mountains, waterfalls and glaciers
- Vardø – Take the plunge and try ice bathing in the Arctic Ocean
- Berlevåg – Discover this quaint fishing village, home to one of Norway's most famous local choirs
- Hammerfest – See the UNESCO World Heritage Site of Meridian Column
- Tromsø – Take in an enchanting northern lights concert at the Arctic Cathedral
- Harstad – Visit Trondenes Church, a treasured Norwegian cultural site from the late Middle Ages
- Risøyrenna – Sail through the clear, green water of this shallow channel between Harstad and Sortland
- Trollfjord – Experience this thrilling, dramatic fjord surrounded by steep cliffs and majestic mountains
- Stamsund – See the majestic peaks of the huge Lofoten Wall
- Helgeland Coast – Cross the Arctic Circle, an important rite of passage in these parts
- Helgeland Coast – Sail past the imposing peaks of the Seven Sisters mountain range and Torghatten, the eerie mountain with a hole in the middle
- Trondheim – Explore this interesting city, Norway's capital of technology
- Bergen – Ascend Mount Fløyen by funicular for amazing views of the town and Bergen fjord
- Bergen – Enjoy a guided tour to take in the sights of this pretty,

nature-filled city

Inspiring Features

Inspiring Taste

- King Crab Safari. Head out onto the ice and experience the thrill of pulling up the king crab pods, before preparing and feasting on this renowned local delicacy.

Inspiring Sights

- Husky safari. A must-do with any visit to Lapland, this safari takes you on a fast-paced trip over the untouched snow of the fells and forests in this Arctic wilderness.

Inspiring Stay

- Spend the night sleeping under the stars in an Aurora Cabin with a glass roof over the bed – if luck and weather conditions intersect, you might witness the northern lights from your bed!

Cruise Details

Depending on your chosen date, you will sail on any of the following Hurtigruten ships:

- MS Finnmarken
- MS Kong Harald
- MS Midnatsol
- MS Polarlys
- MS Nordnorge

Included cabin - Inside

Cabin upgrades - available upon request only

If you would like to upgrade your cruise cabin, please make a special request at time of booking. All requests are subject to availability and the additional cost incurred will be added to your invoice. Should your request

not be available, you can revert to an Inside Cabin or we can provide you with a refund of your deposit.

For more information on your Hurtigruten cruise from Kirkenes to Bergen, click [HERE](#).

Train details

Class of travel - Second Class

Cabin upgrades - not available

For more information on your rail journey from Helsinki to Rovaniemi, click [HERE](#).