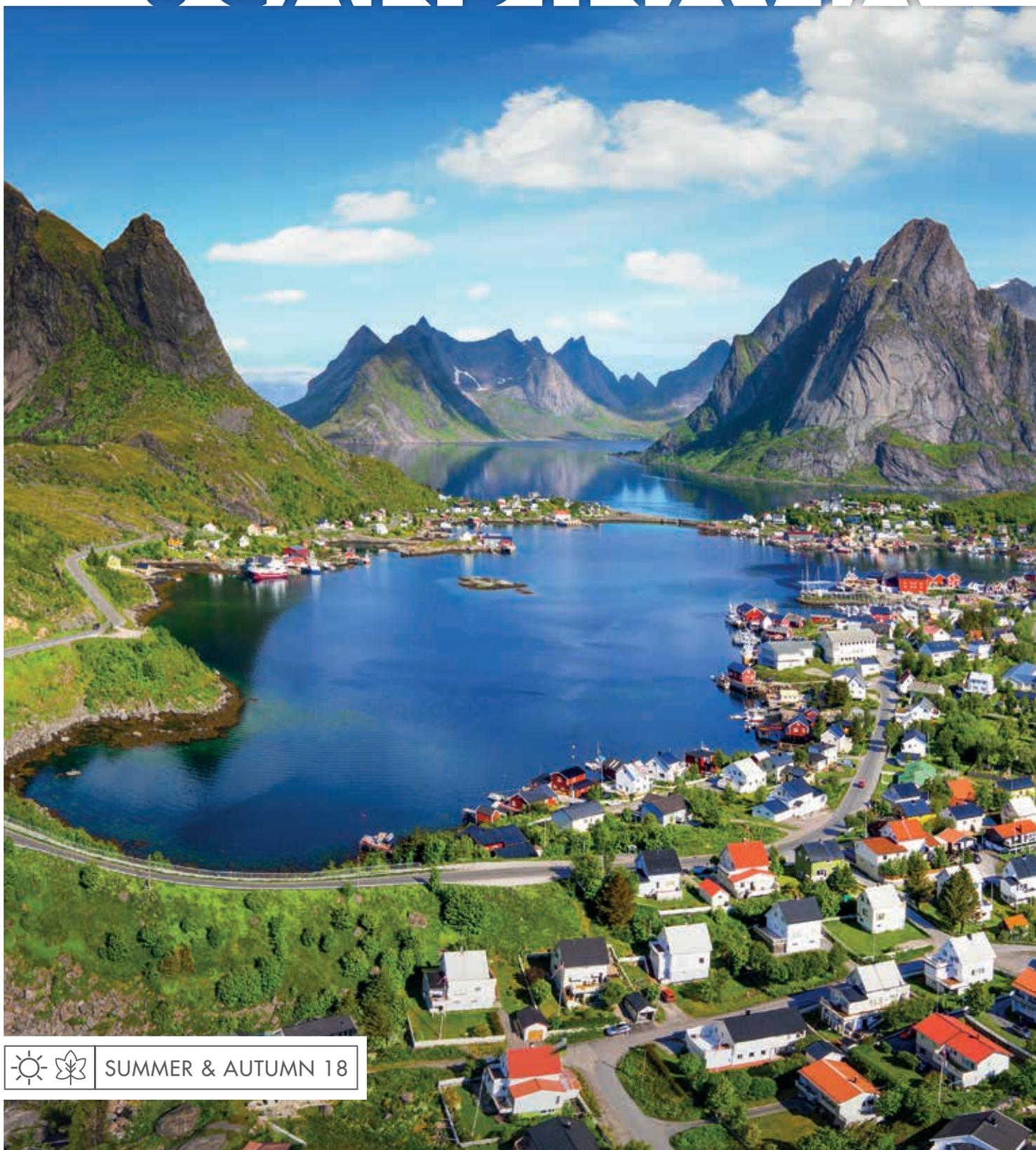


BEST SERVED SCANDINAVIA



SUMMER & AUTUMN 18





WELCOME

Welcome to Best Served Scandinavia's 2018 summer and autumn collection, a roundup of all that this extraordinary region has to offer during those long, happy months saturated with almost unlimited sunlight.

Our latest showcase is filled with adventures throughout Scandinavia and the Nordic and Baltic regions, all experienced and enjoyed by our team of specialists. We've personally stayed in the hotels we recommend, paddled kayaks and cruised across the mirrored fjords, watched whales off Greenland's iceberg-studded coast and dipped our toes in Iceland's geothermal pools. It's this expertise that ensures you'll have a sensational time during your stay in any one of our featured destinations.

As the spring sun melts the snow, sparkling rivers flow towards mighty waterfalls, and wilderness areas are blanketed in wildflowers and berries. This natural beauty provides a spectacular backdrop for activities that include hiking, white-water rafting and mountain biking, and gentler pursuits such as birdwatching, fishing and foraging. Food also plays a leading

role in many of our itineraries, with fresh seafood and a bounty of seasonal ingredients making for a delicious holiday. Elsewhere, the countryside gives way to cultured, cosmopolitan cities, and it's as easy to plan a sunny weekend break in Stockholm or Copenhagen as it is an extended active holiday.

As always, there are plenty of innovations to bring you too, with ICEHOTEL 365 providing the ultimate seasonal crossover. We've also created a whole new section devoted to that most colourful of seasons, autumn, when the leaves are ablaze with reds and golds and, from September onwards, the Northern Lights dance across starry skies.

KATHERINE GERSHON
MANAGING DIRECTOR







CONTENTS

08 >> NORWAY
ITINERARIES: 01 - 09

36 >> SWEDEN
ITINERARIES: 10 - 14

48 >> ICELAND
ITINERARIES: 15 - 21

62 >> DENMARK
ITINERARIES: 22 - 24

68 >> THE FAROE ISLANDS
ITINERARY: 25

70 >> GREENLAND
ITINERARY: 26

76 >> FINLAND
ITINERARIES: 27 - 29

82 >> RUSSIA & THE BALTICS
ITINERARIES: 30 - 31

86 >> AUTUMN AURORAS
ITINERARIES: 32 - 35

ABOUT THIS BROCHURE



WEATHER & CLIMATE

Scandinavian summers are generally mild and pleasant, but the weather can be changeable so pack layers and waterproofs. Svalbard and Greenland are still quite cold, especially at night. The summer months are the perfect time for exploring Fjord Norway, Western Sweden and Finnish Lakeland, where the days are long, warm and bright. Iceland's south coast is warmer, wetter and windier than the north. In Arctic Norway, Swedish Lapland and Greenland, the Midnight Sun facilitates round-the-clock activities such as hiking, kayaking and midnight boat trips among the icebergs at Ilulissat.

BEST FOR

Throughout this brochure you'll spot the symbols below next to our tours and hotels. These should give you a helpful hint as to what each one is best for, helping you choose a holiday that suits you.



WILDLIFE



HONEYMOON



FAMILY



FOOD & WINE



PHOTOGRAPHY



WILDERNESS



SELF-DRIVE



ACTIVITIES



CITY



MIDNIGHT SUN

EXCURSIONS

We've included our favourite recommended excursions throughout this brochure, but don't hesitate to ask our travel specialists for advice on alternative options. Excursions are usually paid as an extra unless otherwise stated.

ACCOMMODATION IN THIS BROCHURE

As there is no universal system for grading hotels, we have applied our own ratings to those featured. They are based on the opinion of our destination specialists, usually upon first-hand experience of staying there themselves.

Standard

Clean and comfortable accommodation with reasonable facilities (typically 3 stars).

Superior

A high standard of accommodation with a good range of quality facilities, often in a good location (typically 4 stars).

Deluxe

Outstanding accommodation with excellent facilities and service, usually in a fantastic location (typically 5 stars).

MEAL INCLUSIONS

Any meals included in the price of our suggested itineraries, whether they're part of a tour, an excursion, or a hotel stay, are indicated at the end of each day's description using the following symbols:

B Breakfast

L Lunch

D Dinner



SCANDINAVIAN SUMMER

Iceland, Finland and the three kingdoms of the Scandinavian Peninsula (Norway, Sweden and Denmark) may conjure images of winter snow and ice in the popular imagination, but out of those frozen landscapes and near-perpetual darkness spring an awesome, vibrant summer scene, offering just as many exciting activities and adventurous opportunities as the ice-white playgrounds of the chillier months.

This is the season of movement. Free of pack ice, the seas host migrating whales from those orcas and humpbacks that

surface alongside Iceland's volcanic shores to the playful pilot whales that frequent Swedish Lapland's pretty coast, and bears, bees and birds are all cut loose. Puffins, sea eagles and guillemots return to the cliffs of Norway's Lofoten Islands and gangs of giant polar bears stalk Svalbard's Arctic tundra. The regions' epic landscapes are transformed as carpets of beautiful wildflowers and delicious berries stretch through forests and over high mountaintops, and the rapid snowmelt creates a multitude of waterfalls from Norway's fjordside Vinnufossen – Europe's tallest – to southern Iceland's mighty

Gullfoss. This vibrant world is perfect for whitewater rafting, mountain biking and other high-energy sports, while hikers, birders and anglers are diverted by gentler but equally compelling distractions.

What's more, the Northern Lights can still be spotted, with the colourful months of autumn showcasing dazzling displays, accompanied by a mild climate. Not to be outdone, a holiday under the Midnight Sun is an equally magical experience as it casts its ever-present glow across the region's northernmost territories throughout June and July.



NORWAY

Norway is a sparsely populated, scenically stunning country where outdoor experiences are a year-round delight. The breathtaking fjords of the west coast are the focal point of summer visits, and are accessible from a tantalising choice of amazing cities.

The pretty port of Bergen and the cultured capital Oslo are two of the most popular starting points. Both cities are fabulous short-break destinations, with Viking museums, art galleries and spectacular natural backdrops close at hand. The scenic Oslo to Bergen railway is a memorable way to cross the fjordlands, where highlights include cascading waterfalls, towering mountain peaks and precipitous viewpoints such as Troll's Tongue at Hardangerfjord and, to the south, Pulpit Rock at Lysefjord, a short hop from lively Stavanger. Norway's fjords are also tailor-made for summer activities including hiking, kayaking and cruising, while a network of scenic roads, which crisscross the region, enable you to explore. Ålesund, Norway's adventure

capital, is a great place to include on an extended stay, and you can also pause at pretty fjordside villages such as Flåm, Balestrand and Fjærland. The regions north of the Arctic Circle are blessed by endless summer daylight when the Midnight Sun casts its glow over such remote outposts as the Lofoten Islands, Alta, Kirkenes and the Svalbard archipelago. These places are known for their immense beauty, isolation and thrilling adventures – which in Svalbard include the chance to watch polar bears at close quarters. Another wonderful way to explore the far north is to join a Hurtigruten cruise, a former freight, post and passenger service, which has been plying the waters of Norway's Arctic coast for over 120 years.



01

HIGHLIGHTS OF NORWAY



5-DAY TAILOR-MADE TOUR

2 days Oslo » 1 day Norway in a Nutshell tour » 2 days Bergen



» **PRICES FROM:** £695 pp (Standard) £940 (Superior) incl. flights, 2 nights Oslo BB, Norway in a Nutshell day tour, 2 nights Bergen BB. Operates 1 May to 30 Sep.

Combine a visit to Norway's major cities with a cross-country rail and road trip taking in mountains, fjords and waterfalls. If you have more time, stop at your choice of picturesque fjordside villages and explore the landscape on foot or by bike.

Days 1–2 » Oslo Fly to Oslo. Norway's easily navigable capital is home to a host of museums, shops and attractions. Stand face to face with Edvard Munch's *The Scream* at the National Gallery, hang out

among the statues at Vigeland Sculpture Park, dip into the past at the Viking Ship Museum, or give your tastebuds a treat at Aker Brygge's renowned restaurants. Stay at the Thon Bristol (Superior) or Thon Munch (Standard). **B**

Day 3 » Norway in a Nutshell tour – Oslo to Bergen Enjoy a breathtaking day trip along the Bergen and Flåm Railways, passing ravines, waterfalls, dizzying mountain peaks, the picturesque Naeroyfjord and Aurlandsfjord, and Stalheimskleiva, an incredible 1.5 km stretch of hairpin bends running up a ridge between two cascading waterfalls (see page 12). On arrival in Bergen, check in at the harbourfront Clarion Collection Havnekontoret (Superior) or the central Thon Bristol Bergen (Standard). **B**

Days 4–5 » Bergen Explore the UNESCO-listed quayside and the historic fortress of Bergenhus, stop for seafood at the fish market or take the funicular or climb the steps up to Mount Fløyen for glorious

views of the town and surrounding countryside. After breakfast on day five, head for the airport to connect with your return flight. **B**



EXTEND YOUR STAY

Add more nights by breaking up your Norway in a Nutshell tour with stays in the villages of Flåm or Balestrand en route from Oslo to Bergen (opposite). You can also modify the tour element by choosing boat, road and rail excursions around Hardangerfjord or Sognefjord (pages 12 & 13).



FLÅMSBRYGGA, FLÅM

SUPERIOR



Cosily furnished in log cabin-chalet style, Flåmsbrygga is a great jumping-off point for hiking trails around the Flåmsdalen and Aurlandsdalen valleys. It's also perfectly placed for journeys on the spectacular Flåm railway. Most of the hotel's 41 spacious rooms come with a private balcony, some with magnificent fjord views. Meanwhile, it's well worth spending a lazy afternoon at the next-door brewery, which pairs its very own range of beers with delicious, Viking-inspired food.

KVIKNES HOTEL, BALESTRAND

SUPERIOR



This charming, family-run Balestrand institution is located right on the fjord; cycling and hiking in this spectacular landscape is a magical experience. The rooms and suites of the Swiss-style historic building are a delight, with antique furnishings and balconies in most rooms showcasing spectacular views across the fjord. The hotel restaurant offers imaginative buffet meals and four-course fine dining paired with excellent wines from a 300-strong cellar.



FJÆRLAND FJORDSTUE

SUPERIOR



This boutique hotel, run by Bård and Linda Huseby, sits at the northern end of Fjærlandsfjorden, a picturesque branch of Sognefjord. At weekends the hotel bar comes alive with locals enjoying beer brewed by Bård. Breakfast eggs come from chickens raised in the hotel grounds, and dinner ingredients are sourced from local farmers and fishermen. There are excellent biking and hiking trails right outside the hotel and don't miss the chance to take a kayak on the fjord.



... IN A NUTSHELL TOURS

A popular addition to any itinerary through Norway's fjordlands, these bespoke road, rail and boat tours feature a rich variety of scenic adventures. One-way or round-trip excursions can be completed in a day, but we strongly recommend an overnight stop along the route to enjoy the beautiful scenery or partake in an exciting activity such as kayaking, hiking or a fjord safari.



NORWAY IN A NUTSHELL

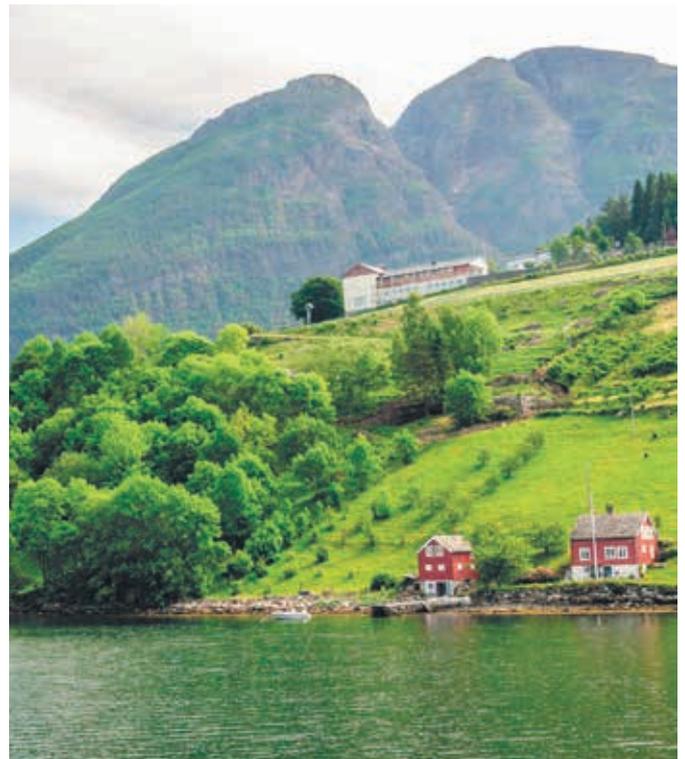
The original Norway in a Nutshell tour takes you through some of the country's most beautiful fjordland including the scenic Bergen Railway via Myrdal, the breathtaking Flåm Railway, a boat trip along the dramatic Aurlandsfjord and Nærøyfjord and, in the summer months, a stunning drive on the steep hairpin bends of Stalheimskleiva. In the charming village of Flåm, surrounded by steep mountainsides, cascading waterfalls and narrow valleys, you can stroll around the village or visit the Flåm Railway Museum and learn about one of the steepest normal-gauge railways in the world. The 20 km train ride between Myrdal and Flåm offers panoramic views of some of the most magnificent mountain scenery Norway has to offer, including the famous cascades of the Kjosfossen waterfall.

» **VARIOUS PRICES AND DURATIONS.** Operates daily, year-round from Oslo, Bergen, Voss or Flåm (Stalheimskleiva 1 May to 30 Sep only).

HARDANGERFJORD IN A NUTSHELL

Journey through a landscape of majestic mountains, roaring waterfalls and bounteous orchards. The 179 km Hardangerfjord provides spellbinding natural landscapes throughout its course. Your 3.5 hour cruise is broken by a sightseeing trip to the spectacular Eidfjord-Vøringsfossen waterfall, and bookended by scenic train and bus rides including a thrilling hour-long journey through wild mountain terrain on the Bergen Railway, the highest railway in Northern Europe. From Voss, the trip continues to the beautiful village of Ulvik. Ulvik and Hardanger are known as the orchard of Norway; in May you'll enjoy sweeping vistas of fruit blossoms, while in late summer you can gorge on the harvest of cherries, plums, pears and apples. Eidfjord is the gateway to the high mountain plateau Hardangervidda, Norway's largest national park. Here you'll find Northern Europe's largest stock of reindeer and some amazing hiking trails.

» **VARIOUS PRICES AND DURATIONS.** Operates daily 1 May to 30 Sep from Bergen or Oslo.



SOGNEFJORD IN A NUTSHELL

Sognefjord, Norway's longest and deepest, extends more than 200 km inland to the foot of the Jotunheimen mountains and is recognised as one of the world's most spectacular natural backdrops. The Sognefjord in a Nutshell round trip combines a leisurely cruise on the fjord with a spectacular train journey on the Flåm Railway. Breaking the tour with an overnight stay leaves you time for kayaking at Flåm, a fjord safari on the UNESCO-listed Nærøyfjord or to embark on any number of hikes and bike rides. A one-way tour can be taken in either direction with as many stopovers as you please. From Bergen you can start by boat from Strandkai terminalen or take a train to meet the boat at Flåm via Myrdal.

» **VARIOUS PRICES AND DURATIONS.** Operates daily 1 May to 30 Sep from Bergen or Oslo.



LOEN SKYLIFT

Opened by Norwegian royalty in the summer of 2017, this impressive cable car ascends from the shores of Nordfjord to the dizzying summit of Mt. Hoven, 1,011 metres above sea level. And, once you've reached the top, expect stunning panoramic views of Mt. Skåla and Lake Lovatnet in the east, Jostedalbreen Glacier and Olden in the south, and Nordfjords glassy waters that wind their way towards Stryn in the west. It's all taken in from the floor-to-ceiling glass of the Hoven Restaurant whose menus showcase the very best in regional produce with such delicacies as mountain trout and gratinated langoustines grabbing the headlines. Then, head out to discover the region's unique beauty on a network of hiking trails with a choice of gentle strolls and demanding hikes making the best of the views. Entry to the Loen Skylift is included on our newest Fjord Norway tour (see page 20).

THON HOTEL ROSENKRANTZ

STANDARD



As far as locations go it's hard to beat this recently updated city-centre offering, just steps from the Fløyen funicular, Torgalmenningen and the Bryggen wharf. Inside, elegant rooms come with a surprising array of amenities, with Nespresso machines and Bose sound systems – in superior rooms and above – belying the hotel's three-star price tag. And, as is the trend in this part of the world, a light evening meal is included in the rate. Breakfast is another highlight, with everything from healthy fruits and cereals to diet-busting pastries and a full complement of cooked options. And, on Sundays, it's served right through until Middy, perfect for that weekend lie in.



AUGUSTIN HOTEL

SUPERIOR



Bergen's oldest family-run hotel, the Augustin was built in the art nouveau style in 1909, later expanding to incorporate neighbouring harbourside houses and additional wings. In recent years, it has undergone extensive modernisation with a designer touch. Paintings, sculptures and graphic prints add further character to the rooms and public spaces. The Brasserie No. 22 restaurant has a modern rustic interior and a sophisticated menu. The five-roomed Altona cellar also houses a lively wine bar with wooden-beamed and stone-vaulted ceilings.

CLARION COLLECTION HOTEL HAVNEKONTORET

SUPERIOR



This stylish and contemporary hotel in the UNESCO World Heritage Site of Bryggen Quay in central Bergen is decorated in a neo-Baroque style and located in a fascinating stone building dating from the 1920s. Nearby attractions include Fisketorget Fish Market, the Fløibanen funicular, which takes visitors to the top of Mount Fløyen, and Bergen's famous aquarium. As with other Clarion Collection hotels, complimentary afternoon tea and waffles and a light buffet dinner are all included in the room rate. Book a Superior room for a fine harbour overlooks. Or, head to the top of the historic clock tower for some of the best views in town



THON ORION

STANDARD



With its bold colour schemes and sleek, contemporary design, this recently renovated hotel has a superb location on Bergen's harbourfront, with easy access to the historic Bryggen quay and a delightful next-door park. Once inside, stylish lounges provide space to relax while superior rooms and suites make the most of the hotel's privileged position with sweeping views of the city's harbour and mountain-framed setting. The food is excellent, too, with a delicious buffet breakfast and complimentary evening meal both included in the price.

02

BEST OF THE WEST



6-DAY TAILOR-MADE TOUR

1 day Ålesund » 3 days Geirangerfjord
» 2 days Ålesund



» **PRICES FROM:** £985 pp incl. flights, 4 days car hire, 2 nights Hotel Brosundet BB, 3 nights Hotel Union HB. Operates 1 May to 30 Sep.

This easy but adventure-packed self-drive tour through the fjords of western Norway combines the art nouveau delights of Ålesund with exciting driving, hiking and cruising opportunities across some of Norway's most spectacular landscapes and waters.

Day 1 » Ålesund Fly to the picturesque coastal town of Ålesund and check in at the Hotel Brosundet. In the afternoon, head out for a look around the town, which was rebuilt in characteristic art nouveau style after much of the centre was destroyed by fire in 1904; you can learn

more about the disaster and the rebuilding efforts at the Art Nouveau Centre. Scale the 418 steps (or take a bus) to the summit of Mount Aksla to take in views of the town, the surrounding archipelago and the dramatic Sunnmøre Alps. On the way down, pause at the statues of Kaiser Wilhelm II and the Viking warrior Rollo and unravel their historical roles in bringing fame and wealth to the town.

Days 2–4 » Geirangerfjord Collect your hire car and drive 100 kilometres from Ålesund to the heart of Geirangerfjord, recognised by UNESCO as one of the world's most beautiful fjord regions, with near-vertical cliff walls and powerful waterfalls. The scenic driving route via the high mountain road of Trollstigen is simply stunning. Check in at the Hotel Union and plot your next two days of sightseeing. Take a drive along the famous Eagle's Road, enjoy a cruise on the fjord and visit Dalsnibba, the highest peak in the area, which offers stunning views over the fjord and surrounding landscape. There are also plenty of well-marked hiking trails to explore, beginning with the short hike

to Vesterås Farm and many incredible viewpoints beyond. [E D](#)

Days 5–6 » Ålesund Drive back to Ålesund for a final night at the Hotel Brosundet and head into town for a well-deserved hearty meal. After breakfast on day six, drop your hire car at the airport and catch your flight home. [E](#)



BEST OF THE WEST: COACH & CRUISE

It's also possible to travel this same route using a combination of coach travel and a Hurtigruten cruise. Call our specialists on **020 7590 0679** for more information.



HOTEL BROSUNDET, ÅLESUND

SUPERIOR



This delightful hotel is housed in a listed wharf building on Brosundet canal, the main artery of Ålesund. The interior has wooden beams and is full of character and period detail. The 47 rooms (including the unique Molja Lighthouse, 5 minutes' walk from the main building) are individually styled by internationally renowned architects Snøhetta. The elegant Restaurant Maki offers à la carte dining, set dinners, and a superb eight-course tasting menu based on the catch of the day.

HOTEL UNION GEIRANGER

SUPERIOR



The Hotel Union, a stylish establishment of long tradition surrounded by unspoiled nature, is a must-stay inclusion on any Fjord Norway itinerary. The hotel is perched halfway up a mountain overlooking Geirangerfjord – a view that can also be admired from the outdoor pool. Fjord View rooms are highly recommended, as is the excellent evening buffet dinner. Vognfabrikken is a unique basement bar showcasing the owners' extensive collection of vintage cars.



STORFJORD HOTEL

DELUXE



A luxury cabin-style lodge with stunning views over Storfjord, 30 minutes by car from Ålesund or 90 minutes from Geiranger, this is a fabulous place to unwind. The tempting four-course gourmet dinner at the Storfjord's restaurant is savoured with an amazing vista over the fjord and mountains. We recommend a Superior Deluxe Double room, which comes with a spacious lounge area, private balcony or terrace, and a fjord or forest view.

03

HARDANGERFJORD



6-DAY TAILOR MADE TOUR

1 day Bergen » 1 day Ulvik
 2 days Lofthus » 1 day Norheimsund
 » 1 day Bergen



» **PRICES FROM:** £995 pp incl. flights, transfers, 2 nights Clarion Hotel Admiral, Ulvik BB, 1 night Brakanes Hotel BB, 2 nights Hotel Ullensvang HB, train, bus and ferry travel as per itinerary. Operates 1 May to 31 Oct.

The scenery around Hardangerfjord is among Norway's most awe-inspiring, and its best explored on the superb network of buses, trains and ferries that connect the region's key destinations. There's also the flexibility to extend your travels in the fjords or to continue on to Oslo or beyond.

Day 1 » Bergen Fly to Bergen and check in at the Thon Hotel Rosenkrantz. The Fish

Market and UNESCO-listed Bryggen are within easy walking distance and well worth exploring.

Day 2 » Ulvik Catch the early morning train to Voss and continue your journey to Ulvik by bus. The village lies on an arm of Hardangerfjord and is surrounded by high mountains with several hiking trails, all within easy reach of Brakanes Hotel where you'll spend the night. **E**

Days 3-4 » Eidfjord & Lofthus A scenic 30-minute boat ride drops you at Eidfjord, where you'll have a few hours to explore the Måbødalen valley and the Vøringsfossen waterfall before continuing to Hotel Ullensvang in Lofthus. Lying on the eastern shore of Sørfjorden, another arm of the immense Hardangerfjord, Lofthus is especially beautiful in late spring and early summer, when pink and white fruit blossom adds an extra flourish to an already stunning landscape of green hills and snow-tipped mountains. It's all reflected in the fjord's tranquil waters. **E** **D**

Days 5-6 » Norheimsund & Bergen

You'll have more free time in Lofthus before taking the afternoon boat to the pretty village of Norheimsund. Take a detour to nearby Steinsdalsfossen, and follow the footpath up to – and behind – the waterfall, before returning to Bergen by bus. Overnight back at the Thon Hotel Rosenkrantz, then head to the airport for your return flight. **E**



HARDANGERFJORD SELF-DRIVE

Call one of our specialists on **020 7590 0679** to plan your self-drive tour of the region, taking in the same sights and more.

HOTEL ULLENSVANG, LOFTHUS

SUPERIOR



From humble beginnings as a stagecoach inn with a single straw bed above a shipping office, the Ullensvang is now firmly established as the best place from which to explore the natural wonders of Hardanger, including dozens of amazing hiking trails and the famous jutting rock, Trolltunga (Troll's tongue), high over Lake Ringedalsvatnet with its endless vista of mountains and glaciers beyond. Most of the 200 rooms have views of interest, but the Fjord View rooms are particularly appealing. The Hardanger Buffet Restaurant serves a first-rate pick-your-own dinner, while Zazoni has delectable fine-dining offerings from around the world. The packed lunches to take on your hikes are also highly recommended.



BRAKANES HOTEL, ULVIK

SUPERIOR



Situated right on the water's edge in the pretty village of Ulvik, this hotel has a well-deserved reputation for both comfort and adventure. The 143 rooms are light, airy and tastefully decorated, and the best have private balconies with magnificent views over Hardangerfjord. All-day snacks and sumptuous evening meals can be enjoyed in the restaurant, and village attractions range from a bathing beach to a network of hiking trails. The surrounding wetlands are home to some 80 bird species, and kayaking and waterskiing on the fjord are popular pursuits. Other facilities at the hotel include a swimming pool, sauna and steam bath.

04

SOGNEFJORD, NORDFJORD & GEIRANGERFJORD



6-DAY TAILOR-MADE JOURNEY

1 day Bergen » 1 day Sogndal
 1 day Loen » 1 day Geiranger
 2 days Ålesund



» PRICES FROM: £1,155 pp incl. flights, transfers, 1 night Clarion Collection Havnekontoret BB, 1 night Quality Hotel Sogndal BB, 1 night Hotel Alexandra, Loen BB, 1 night Hotel Union Geiranger BB, 1 night Brosundet, Ålesund BB, fjord cruise from Bergen to Sogndal & entry to the Loen Skylift. Operates 10 Jun to 11 Aug.

On this comprehensive tailor-made itinerary, you'll drive through UNESCO-listed valleys, summit snow-capped mountains on mile-high cable cars and enjoy a pair of ultra-scenic fjord cruises. Along the way, you'll stay in charming accommodation and enjoy nights in two of Norway's city greats – art nouveau Ålesund and historic Bergen.

Day 1 » Bergen Flying out to Bergen, you'll make your way to your hotel where complimentary extras range from sauna soaks to afternoon sweets and a light evening meal. Positioned right on the city's Hanseatic wharf, you'll also be perfectly poised to explore 14th-century Bryggen's meandering alleyways and colourful timber



buildings, views of which can be enjoyed from the hotel's clock tower

Day 2 » Sogndal After some further time to explore Norway's second city, you'll



set off on your scenic cruise to Sogndal. Taking a leisurely few hours, you'll first weave through the islands that dot Norway's Atlantic coast before turning inland along the mighty Sognefjord. Then at your fjordside hotel, you'll enjoy an afternoon of optional hiking and kayaking, or simply soaking up the scenery. **B**

Day 3 » Loen After breakfast today, a bus tour will take you through the region's UNESCO-listed scenery, sweeping past everything from giant mountains and cascading waterfalls to rolling farmland and idyllic townships. Then, after your arrival in Loen, a ride on the Loen Skylift will see you to the summit of Mt. Hoven, offering dramatic views over glaciers and



forested fjords. Come the evening, return to the spa comforts and valley views of your hotel. **B**

Day 4 » Geiranger Boarding the bus once more, you'll continue north between glacier tongues, plunging valleys and mountains steeped in Norse mythology. Arrive into Geiranger, home to what is often considered the jewel in the crown of Norway's fjords. The waters are deep blue, the vegetation lush green and the clifftops etched with waterfalls. Perhaps head out on a hike or bike ride before a relaxing soak or massage back at your hotel's sauna and spa. **B**

Days 5–6 » Ålesund Today, you'll head through Geirangerfjord, journeying back to the coast with Hurtigruten – Norway's famous fleet of postal ships. Then, after dipping in and out of island crags, you'll arrive into charming Ålesund. Entirely rebuilt following a turn-of-the-century fire, it's home to one of Europe's finest collections of art nouveau architecture. And don't miss out on trying the seafood before your flight home on day six; your hotel's restaurant is among the best in town. **LD**



HOTEL ALEXANDRA

Idyllically located deep in beautiful Nordfjord, the family-run Hotel Alexandra combines a full spread of modern comforts with centuries of fjord-side tradition. Look to the Medium Rooms and above for views across the fjord and Lodalen Valley alongside classic furnishings and, in some cases, private balconies.

There's an excellent choice of restaurants, with venues serving tempting buffets and a la carte creations alike, all inspired by the surrounding nature. The real highlight, however, has to be the Bath & Spa, with its heated indoor-outdoor pool, massage rooms and even a waterslide for the kids.

THE LOFOTEN ISLANDS & SENJA

The Lofoten Islands form a magical arc stretching for 200 km into the blue-green Norwegian Sea. This is a dramatic Arctic landscape of soaring mountains, deep blue fjords and sweeping beaches, a geology shared by their less-famous but equally beautiful neighbour Senja, Norway's second-largest island. Across the region, colourful fishing villages pepper rugged coastlines, drawing photographers and artists alike as the long bright days of summer cast a hazy glow across towering cliffs and secluded bays.

Although these islands lie well above the Arctic Circle, the climate is fairly mild year-round due to the warming Gulf Stream; daytime summer temperatures often reach 23°C. But be prepared for a dip in the mercury when the sun is behind clouds or low in the sky. During the warmer months, outdoor activities include hiking, cycling, horse riding, fishing, rafting, kayaking, snorkelling and diving. Summer is also the

best time to join a sea safari in search of local wildlife including seals, sea eagles and majestic orcas. Life in the islands revolves around the fishing industry, and you can get a taste of a life dependent on the sea by staying in a cosy *rorbu* fisherman's cabin at the water's edge. It's a long way north, so it's a good idea to break your journey in Oslo, Trondheim or Bodø as part of a wider tour.



05

BODØ & THE
LOFOTEN ISLANDS

7-DAY TAILOR-MADE TOUR

1 day Bodø » 2 days Nusfjord
» 1 day Henningsvær » 3 days Svolvær



» PRICES FROM: £1,735 pp incl. flights, 5 days car hire, 1 night Clarion Collection Grand Bodø BB, 2 nights Nusfjord Rorbuer HB, 1 night Henningsvær Bryggehotelet HB and 2 nights Svinoya Rorbuer BB. Operates 15 May to 15 Sep.

Beginning in Bodø, gateway to the Lofoten Islands, you'll spend two nights in a traditional *rorbu* on the peaceful shores of Nusfjord and embark on a flexible self-drive tour taking in the superb Lofotr Viking Museum near Borg and the regional capital, Svolvær.

Day 1 » Bodø Fly via Oslo to Bodø and check in at the Clarion Collection Grand. Head out of town to witness the world's strongest tidal current at the narrow strait of Saltstraumen, where on a lucky visit you can see whirlpools of up to 10 metres wide – the kind that inspired Edgar Allan Poe's 'A Descent into the Maelström'. Other attractions include the National Norwegian Aviation Museum and the fascinating Stone Age Museum.

Days 2–3 » Nusfjord Fly to Leknes in the Lofoten Islands, collect your hire car and take a 30-minute drive to Nusfjord. Your base for two nights is Nusfjord Rorbuer, a collection of red-painted *rorbu* at the edge of the fjord. A rowing boat is included in the price of the room so you can take

to the water under your own power, or charter a private fishing boat and crew. Alternatively, there are excellent hiking, climbing and biking routes in the surrounding mountains. **B D**

Day 4 » Henningsvær Drive 90 km to Henningsvær, stopping en route at the Lofotr Viking Museum. Built on the site of an Iron Age village, the museum includes a reconstruction of the largest Viking building ever known, thought to date from around 500 AD. Check in for a night at the Henningsvær Bryggehotelet, perched on a pier with views across the fjord. Request room 223 if you can; it has unobstructed views across the fjord towards the point where the sun dips lowest on the horizon.

B D

Days 5–7 » Svolvær After a short drive to the islands' tiny capital your time is free to explore the surrounding mountains and beaches. Don't miss the opportunity to take a boat trip from the harbour in search of sea eagles. Drop your hire car and fly home after breakfast on day seven. **B**

SVINØYA RORBUER, SVOLVÆR

SUPERIOR



For traditional Lofoten living, Svinøya Rorbuer offers the perfect location, set right on the water just a short walk from central Svolvær. Choose from an authentic *rorbu* fisherman's cabin on stilts over the sea, or suites, apartments or houses scattered around the picturesque village. The 30 original rorbuer and the larger Rorbuisuites are kitted out with a well-equipped kitchen and modern bathroom. Børsen Spiseri is a sensitively converted quayside warehouse serving up fresh local delicacies.



HENNINGSVÆR BRYGGEHOTELL, VESTFJORD

SUPERIOR



This boutique hotel is located right on the pier in the pretty fishing village of Henningsvær. The 30 rooms are spacious, with an understated elegance. You have full access to the hotel sauna and relaxation room, and Den Blå Fisk ('The Blue Fish') restaurant cooks up a storm with the catch of the day and locally produced meats. You won't tire of walking around the village, but must-try local tours include rafting on the open sea and fishing for cod and halibut onboard a traditional Lofoten smack.

ELIASSEN RORBUER, HAMNØY

SUPERIOR



These traditional cabins were once used by fisherman from across Norway as accommodation during the world's biggest cod fishing event. Now they welcome visitors looking for an authentic Lofoten experience. A collection of standard and superior rooms and, for the best sea view, Waterfront Cottages, each come with outdoor seating areas and kitchenettes. If you don't feel like cooking, however, the Krambrua Restaurant serves everything from freshly caught fish to succulent Lofoten lamb.



LOFOTEN ISLANDS EXCURSIONS

In Norway's Arctic archipelagos, mountain meets sea with little in between. The result is a dramatically contrasting landscape of imposing cliffs, claustrophobic straits and abrupt pinnacles, with picturesque fishing villages dotting the shore. Fishing is big here as the seas are healthily stocked, and the whales know this too. Some of Europe's best whale watching is out on the open water, while the fjords can be explored closer by kayak.



WHALE WATCHING IN ANDENES

Take a three-hour cruise around the stunning coastline of the Vesterålen archipelago in search of the many species of whale that frolic in Norway's rich coastal waters. The crew use state-of-the-art equipment to seek out the cetaceans, with sperm whales the most common, but killer whales and others are also frequently spotted. On the journey out to the whale grounds, you'll also pass Bleiksøya, an island home to a large puffin colony.

>> **PRICES FROM:** £125 pp incl. entry to Whale Centre and guided tour, tea, coffee and snacks. Duration 3 hrs. Operates daily May to Sep.

SEA KAYAKING IN LOFOTEN

Invented by the Inuit, the kayak has been used as a versatile craft in the Arctic for centuries. During your time on the water, you'll be able to paddle at your own pace, under the watch of an experienced guide who will point out local flora and fauna and assist with improving your paddling technique. Best of all is the backdrop to the activity: the sheer peaks and corridor sounds of the Lofoten archipelago.

>> **PRICES FROM:** £135 pp incl. transfers, equipment and guide. Duration: 4 hrs. Operates May to Sep.



06 MANSHAUSEN SEACABIN BREAK



4-DAY TAILOR-MADE TOUR

1 day Bodø » 2 days Manshausen Island
» 1 day Bodø



» **PRICES FROM:** £955 pp incl. flights, return fast boat transfers from Bodø to Nordskot, return transfers from Nordskot to Manshausen, 1 nigh Bodø BB, 2 nights Manshausen BB in a Seacabin. Operates 1 May to 30 Sep.

With its idyllic mountainscape and crystalline waters, the seldom-visited island of Manshausen offers endless summertime adventure coupled with designer accommodation in the form of its striking new Seacabins.

Day 1 » Bodø Following your flight to Bodø via Oslo, you'll check into the Scandic Havet hotel for the night. The rest of the day is free to explore. With its backdrop of rugged peaks, Nordland's

largest town is far more than just a gateway to the Lofoten Islands. Founded as a trade centre in the early 19th century, it grew to become a bustling fishing port before being almost completely flattened by bombing raids during WWII. Following its regeneration, the architecture here is now largely uninspiring, but, with such natural beauty in its surroundings, together with the world's densest population of sea eagles, you'll find plenty to fill your time before heading to Manshausen.

Days 2-3 » Manshausen Spend the morning in Bodø before catching the ferry to Nordskot and an onward transfer to Manshausen. On arrival, check into your Seacabin for a two-night stay. All Scandinavian timber and floor-to-ceiling glass, three of these architect-designed huts are spread out along an old stone jetty overhanging the water, with a fourth perched on a natural ledge with views to the sea and mountains. Once you've settled in, the days are free to explore with optional guided and self-led

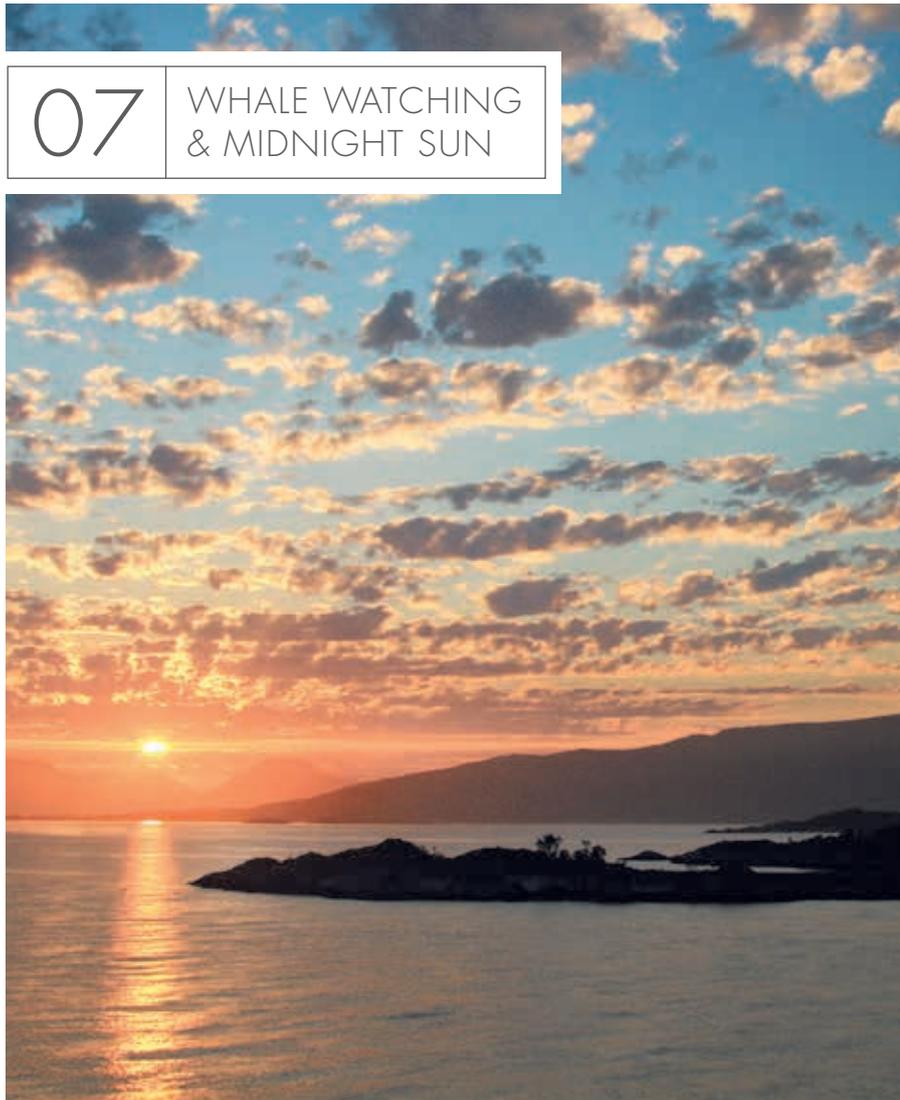
excursions that range from sea kayaking and sailing to hiking, fishing and caving. End your days with a soak in the cabin's communal hot tub and a delicious meal at Manshausen's restaurant, not included. **B**

Day 4 » Bodø Return to Bodø and board a flight back to the UK, again via Oslo. **B**



LOFOTEN ISLANDS ADD-ON

With the Lofoten Islands so close by, combining a visit there with a stay on Manshausen couldn't be simpler. To find out more, call our specialists on 020 7590 0679.



07

WHALE WATCHING
& MIDNIGHT SUN**HAMN I SENJA**

This remote, fully renovated former fishing village occupies a spit of land reaching out into the Arctic sea on Senja island. A choice of 65 purpose-built rooms, suites and apartments are dotted around the wharf, all with magnificent views across the water. The convivial Storbrygga Restaurant comes into its own in the summer, with dining right on the waterfront. A host of summer activities include some amazing local hikes, bike trips around the fjords and beaches, deep-sea fishing trips, fjord cruises and kayak adventures. A hike to the summit of Husfjellet is rewarded with views in all directions over Bergsfjorden, Steinfjorden and Ersfjorden.

8-DAY TAILOR-MADE TOUR

2 days Andenes » 2 days Senja

» 4 days Tromsø



» **PRICES FROM:** £1,695 pp incl. flights, 2 nights Hotell Marena BB, 2 nights Hamn i Senja BB, 3 nights Clarion Collection Hotel With BB, whale safari and 3 days car hire. Operates 25 May to 15 Sep.

In summer, Norway's Arctic is a photographer's paradise, a land of infinite light that stretches and smoulders and never disappears; a land where mountains rise sharply from the sea and reflect crisply in the waters of the fjords they shelter. This tour takes you through the highlights from Vesterålen to Tromsø.

Day 1 » Andenes Connecting through Oslo and Bodø, fly to Andenes at the tip of the island of Andøya and check in to Hotell Marena, the newest in town.

Day 2 » Andenes After breakfast, join up with a whale-watching safari for near guaranteed viewing of the world's largest mammals. Just off the coast of Andøya the continental shelf drops dramatically, meaning you don't have to travel far on the whale route to catch a sighting. Learn more about the wild creatures on a guided tour of the Whale Centre and a visit to the Hisnakul Nature Centre. 

Day 3 » Senja Pick up your hire car in Andenes and drive to catch the ferry to Gryllefjord, a port on Norway's second-largest island, Senja. From here make for Hamn, and continue to the Hamn i Senja hotel on the little island of

Langbaren, a quayside property ringed by mountains. 

Day 4 » Senja The tranquil waters and fells around Hamn are perfect for all sorts of activities, so spend the day hiking, biking, fishing and kayaking in the surrounds. 

Day 5–8 » Tromsø Embark on a gorgeous 3-hour drive wiggling around the fjords to Tromsø, one of the Arctic's largest towns. Check into the imposing Clarion Collection Hotel With and, over the next few days, enjoy Tromsø's vibrant summer nightlife. Drink locally-brewed Mack Beer at the Ølhallen, catch a concert at the Arctic Cathedral, and climb the surrounding peaks for a bird's-eye view of the town. After breakfast on day eight, head to the airport for your return flight. 

08

THE POLAR EXPRESS, GOLDEN ROAD & LOFOTEN ISLANDS

NEW



This superb itinerary combines a train journey through dramatic Arctic countryside, a drive on the spectacular Golden Road and a stay on one of Europe’s most beautiful archipelagos. Round things off with a Hurtigruten cruise for the ultimate summertime trip.

the Vefsna River to lively Mosjøen, a town that impresses with 19th-century buildings, art galleries and artisan coffee shops. **B D**

Day 5 » Bodø Hop across the Arctic Circle to Bodø. The northern terminus for Norway’s rail network, it’s also the jumping-off point for a whole host of summertime activities, with scenic hikes and cruises out to remote island communities. **B**

Day 6 » Lofoten Islands Catch your Hurtigruten ship to the Lofoten Islands for the chance to enjoy coastal walks, fishing trips and whale-watching cruises complemented by just-caught seafood served up in fishing-village restaurants. **B**

Days 7–8 » Norwegian Sea After a full day in Lofoten, set sail past the jagged mountain and pretty islets of the Norwegian coast as you steam south towards Trondheim. **B D**

Day 9 » Trondheim Arrive into Trondheim in time for your flight home. **B**

Day 1 » Trondheim Fly direct to Trondheim and spend the rest of the day exploring the Gothic splendour of this thousand-year-old city.

Day 2 » Inderøy Board the train north to Steinkjer, hugging the picturesque shores of Trondheimsfjorden. Then, on arrival, collect your hire car for the short drive to Inderøy and your farmhouse hotel. **B**

Day 3 » The Golden Road After an authentic farmers’ breakfast, you’ll head out to explore the Golden Road, linking everything from award-winning dairy farms to craft breweries. **B**

Day 4 » Mosjøen Returning your hire car, you’ll continue by train, tracing the route of

9-DAY TAILOR-MADE ITINERARY

- 1 day Trondheim » 1 day Inderøy
- » 1 day Golden Road » 1 day Mosjøen
- » 1 day Bodø » 1 day Lofoten Islands
- » 2 days Hurtigruten cruise » 1 day Trondheim



» **PRICES FROM:** £1,435 incl. flights, transfers, 5 nights accommodation BB, 1 night HB, 2 nights Hurtigruten cruise HB, Polar Express train from Trondheim to Bodø & 2 days car hire. Operates year round.



TRØNDELAG: LIFE IN THE GREAT OUTDOORS

For many, Trøndelag, as Norway's central region, is the country's heartland. Here, you'll find its oldest capital, a truly welcoming local culture and all of Norway's natural icons, spread out over no fewer than nine national parks.

With direct flights from the UK, most first impressions are made in Trondheim. Founded as a Viking trading post back in the 10th century, it quickly became one of Norway's most important cities, something remembered today by its colourful old town, timber mansions and Gothic cathedral – a pilgrimage site for nearly a thousand years. However, the region's rich heritage isn't confined to its capital. Monastery ruins crouch in rolling hills, 500-year-old castles stand on stern islands and life goes on in fishing villages seemingly as it has done for the past hundred years. There are even Viking burial sites and Sami reindeer herders. However, much of Trøndelag's charm is natural. There's everything from



mighty fjords and sky-scraping mountains to dramatic coastlines and old-growth forests. It's all animated by musk ox, lynx, eagles and bears. Indeed, the region is a true outdoorsman's paradise. Whether it's coastal bike rides and island-hopping boat trips or river kayaking and pilgrim hikes, there's an outdoors adventure for everyone.

With so much natural bounty on offer, it's also no surprise that Trøndelag hosts a thriving foodie scene. In fact, it features more small-scale producers than any other region in Norway, with local favourites ranging from just-caught seafood to smoked meats and homemade cheeses. It's perhaps best showcased on the Golden Road – a scenic

drive among the rural idyll of Inderøy. This remote peninsula delights with a curated collection of artisanal markets, dairies and farm shops. But, drivers don't get all the fun. Map Norway's spectacular coastal jags with a Hurtigruten cruise or take the Polar Express rail journey up into the Arctic Circle, winding alongside narrow fjords, wild mountains and rushing rivers.

Can't choose? Our curated itinerary – see opposite – features it all.

For more ideas and information, call one of our Best Served Scandinavia specialists on 020 7590 0679.





SVAlBARD

A remote outpost flung far out into the Arctic Ocean, the Svalbard archipelago represents the ultimate polar destination, its sparse townships the only permanent human habitations amid the chilling sea. First tentatively settled by early whalers, miners and fishermen, the islands have never been fully tamed and, particularly during the summer months, mankind is easily outnumbered by polar bears, making Svalbard the best place to view these evocative and endangered animals as they prowl across sweeping glaciers and scrubby fells under epic pastel skies.

The Svalbard archipelago is synonymous with its largest island, Spitsbergen, which has captured the imagination since the Dutch first spotted pointed, craggy peaks piercing the sheet ice and the clouds. Here, the town of Longyearbyen serves as a comfortable base. A handful of cosy hotels sit among the colourfully painted cabins spread along the sheltered shores of Adventfjorden, and the surrounding mountains provide protection from the worst of the wind. Under the unceasing glow of the summer sun, a little heat reaches even this Arctic land, and the frozen fjords and tundra of winter give way to a stunning grey-green environment where the desolation is enlivened by a carpet of tiny flowers and lichen. Somewhat surprisingly in an otherwise sleepy atmosphere, the town's pubs and cafés add real vibrancy, with many open long into the still-light night.





RADISSON BLU POLAR

SUPERIOR



This is one of the finest hotels in Longyearbyen, offering a combination of recently refurbished hotel rooms and contemporary serviced apartments, so you can be completely flexible with your living arrangements. Luxury modern amenities line up alongside more timeless comforts such as an open fire in the lobby, a traditional sauna room and outdoor hot tubs. Restaurant Nansen serves up a range of delicious treats sourced in the Arctic alongside international fare for the less adventurous, and your meal will always unfold with a spectacular panoramic view. Nestled close to the coast, this is an excellent base for sea adventures from tranquil cruises to kayaking around the bay.

SPITSBERGEN HOTEL

SUPERIOR



As a former accommodation for coal miners – although it has been comprehensively refurbished since those days – the Spitsbergen Hotel offers one of the more historic experiences in Longyearbyen. Situated on a hill overlooking the town and the Lars Glacier, the hotel enjoys fabulous views from its cosy rooms. The Funktionærmessen restaurant serves up classic dining inspired by French cuisine alongside Arctic specialities. There's a spa room with a traditional sauna, and the Funken Bar is a lively pub with a good range of drinks, food and snacks that offers a glimpse into the rowdy, convivial atmosphere of the old mining days.



BASECAMP HOTEL

SUPERIOR



The perfect retreat for switching off, relaxing and reconnecting with nature, Basecamp Hotel is located in the heart of Longyearbyen, close to an array of restaurants, shops and bars. Inside is an atmospheric homage to the Arctic days of yore, with the walls showcasing trophies from centuries of trapping and whaling activity around the archipelago. Rooms burst with character and provide a cosy and intimate base, all with extraordinary views across the Longyeardalen Valley. Two of the 16 rooms are suites with generous living space and separate bedrooms. In keeping with the rustic cabin feel there are no TVs in the rooms, but the Cognac Loft has a large screen for communal viewing.

09

ADVENTURE WEEK AT
NORDENSKIÖLD LODGE**8-DAY TAILOR-MADE TOUR**

1 day Oslo » 1 day Longyearbyen
 » 5 days Nordenskiöld Lodge
 » 1 day Longyearbyen



» **PRICES FROM:** £2,735 pp incl. flights, 1 night Saga Hotel BB, Oslo, 2 nights Basecamp Trapper's Hotel BB, Longyearbyen, 4 nights Nordenskiöld Lodge FB & all activities at Nordenskiöld Lodge. Operates 30 Jun to 30 Sep.

Perched on the moraine shore of a faraway ice fjord, Nordenskiöld Lodge is as remote as it gets. In fact, it's the farthest north you can travel to on the island of Spitsbergen by motorised vehicle. Following stays in Norway's capital and Svalbard's largest town, Longyearbyen, you'll begin four action-packed days of arctic adventure at Nordenskiöld, each one packed with exhilarating guided tours and excursions.

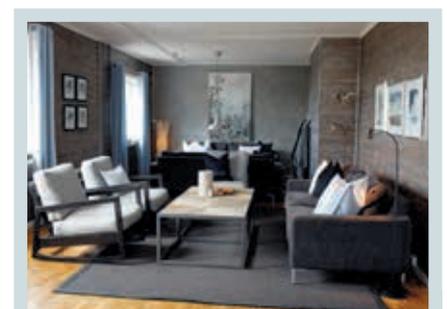
Day 1 » Oslo Fly to Oslo and make your way to the Saga Hotel before spending a day exploring Norway's capital. There's much to see in a city whose museums and galleries are a match for anywhere in Europe.

Day 2 » Longyearbyen Return to the airport for your flight north to Longyearbyen. As you settle in to the characterful Basecamp Hotel you can look forward to the thrilling days of Arctic exploration ahead.

Days 3–6 » Nordenskiöld Lodge Following an early morning briefing, you'll begin your journey north to Billefjorden and Adolfbukta, keeping an eye out for wildlife that might include walrus, belugas and polar bears. Checking into Nordenskiöld Lodge, you'll begin four action-packed days of glacier hiking, kayaking, sea safaris and guided nature tours that explore the unique flora, fauna and landscapes of the lodge's stunning setting. Each evening, return to the lodge for relaxing hot tub

soaks and delicious dinners, including a shore-side barbecue on day three

Days 7–8 » Longyearbyen After a final hike and sea safari, return to Longyearbyen for a final night, flying home via Oslo on day eight.

**ISFJORD RADIO**

If you've more time, perhaps add on a stay at this far flung former radio transmissions centre, now converted into stylish boutique hotel. Its restaurant specialises in locally sourced meat and fish with a nod to Italian, French and Asian cuisine.

SVALBARD EXCURSIONS

In winter when the land is covered in snow and ice, a team of huskies is the favoured mode of transport, and one of the most enduring images of Arctic life. Luckily with a little adaptation you can still enjoy this experience in the summertime, where the landscape strips off to flaunt its colours. Sometimes we want to conquer a landscape, not just admire it, and in the peak summer hiking season on Svalbard you can do just that.



DOGS ON WHEELS

This excursion begins with a visit to a local husky kennel, where nearly a hundred excited dogs greet you with a succession of yelps and howls. Your chosen team is harnessed up to a wheeled wagon, and, after a lesson in dogsledding basics, you'll set out into the beautiful Svalbard countryside, admiring its contoured mountains, alpine meadows and varying wildlife.

>> **PRICES FROM:** £110 pp incl. hot drinks & lunch. Duration 4.5 hrs. Operates daily Jun to Sep.

WALRUS SAFARI

This full-day tour brings you to the wilds of Prince Karl's Forland, a remote island north of the Isfjord and home to one of Svalbard's largest walrus colonies. Set to a backdrop of mountain peaks and creaking glaciers, you'll watch these remarkable animals as you travel by speedboat to Poolepynten where you'll disembark for a close-up look. Then, after lunch on board, you'll return to Longyearbyen, passing remote bays and jagged cliffs that have been used by trappers for centuries.

>> **PRICES FROM:** £245 pp, incl. transfers, guided boat tour, lunch & drinks. Duration: 7 hrs. Operates daily Jun to Sep.



SVALBARD EXCURSIONS

Strangely enough for somewhere so remote, there is plenty of cultural fun to be found on Svalbard, and these two excursions juxtapose two old favourites: champagne and socialism. Founded as a coal-mining settlement, Barentsburg is the second largest town on Svalbard and, unlike the mainly Norwegian character of the rest of the archipelago, is very Russian, redolent with Soviet-era busts of Lenin and murals depicting heroic workers.

CHAMPAGNE TASTING

The world's northernmost wine collection, found in the historic Nordpolet liquor store, is particularly proud of its champagne selection and clients are invited to step in, sit back and pour a glass of fizz – after all, from the midnight sun to the wildlife and dazzling scenery, there's plenty to celebrate.

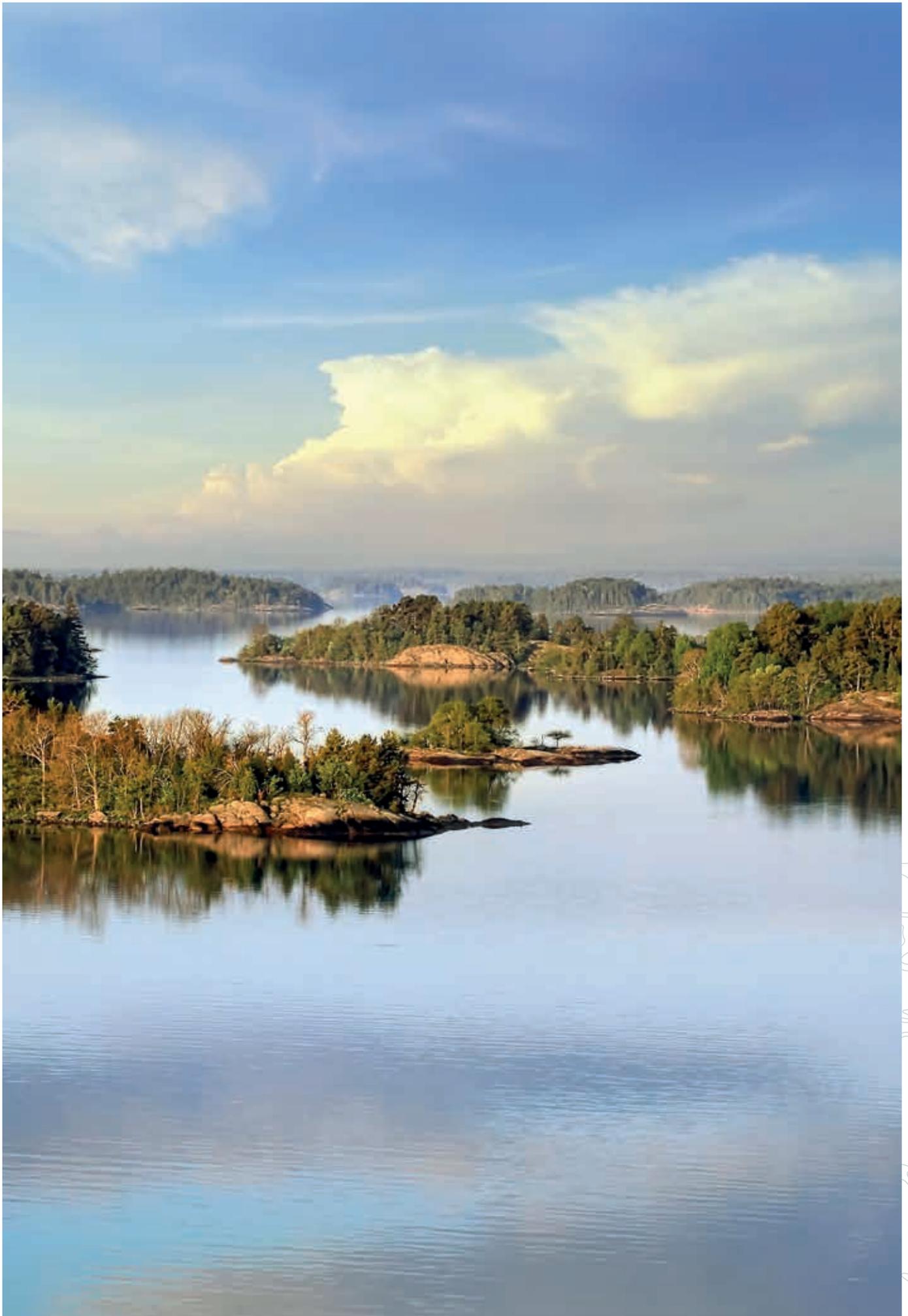
>> **PRICES FROM:** £55 pp incl. three glasses of champagne & canapés.
Duration: 1 hr. Operates year round.



BOAT TRIP TO BARENTSBURG

Though ostensibly a trip to the nostalgic Soviet mining town, this day cruise also allows you to explore the bays and inlets of Isfjorden, passing towering cliffs teeming with birdlife and looming mountains. Once at Barentsburg, you're taken on a tour of the town, learning about its Soviet past and the fascinating relics that remain. This is followed by a sumptuous barbecue on deck which you can enjoy surrounded by stark Arctic scenery.

>> **PRICES FROM:** £215 pp, incl. lunch, hot drinks, transfers and guide. Duration: 9–10 hours. Operates 1 May to 24 Oct.



SWEDEN

A six-hour working weekday and a tremendous variety of natural surrounds make Sweden one of the world's happiest nations – and an unforgettable holiday destination. As big as California, but with just a quarter of the population, there's plenty of space to go around, and a lifestyle emphasising the outdoors and an annual retreat to thousands of beautiful islands would tempt even the most committed urban dweller. From the end of May to mid-July, there's rarely a moment of darkness up in Swedish Lapland, as the Midnight Sun bounces off the horizon and takes another turn.

This means there's no end of opportunity to explore incredible landscapes from the rugged west coast to the uninhabited islands of the Luleå archipelago and the verdant pine forests of the Arctic north. And now, with the addition of ICEHOTEL 365, visitors can enjoy one of Scandinavia's most iconic hotels throughout the summer, complete with seasonal activities that range from white-water rafting to wilderness tours. But it's not all about the great outdoors. Scenic, laidback Stockholm is a year-round draw, modelled around a group of islands where the freshwater Lake Malaren meets the salt water of the Baltic Sea. And when it comes to design, Sweden has some

of Scandinavia's most stylish hotels, from the iconic Treehotel to seductive boutique properties in downtown Stockholm and medieval Visby. Elsewhere there are converted countryside manor houses and distinctive seaside lodges and cabins dotted around the islands. You'll also find wonderful arts-and-crafts stores and a host of cultural sights, from the achingly hip cafés of Gothenburg to the capital's impressive Royal Swedish Opera and the Nobelmuseet, hosting exhibitions honouring over 100 years of Nobel Prize laureates and their endeavours. A magnificent destination at any time of year, a Swedish summer is replete with boundless temptations.



10

ICEHOTEL 365
BREAK

NEW



4-DAY TAILOR-MADE BREAK

1 day ICEHOTEL 365 (Art Suite)

» 3 days ICEHOTEL 365 (warm chalet)



» **PRICES FROM:** £795 pp incl. flights, transfers, 1 night Art Suite BB, 2 nights warm chalet BB, tour of hotel, thermal clothing and morning sauna. Operates May to Sep.

With a stay at the world's first year-round ice hotel, this is your chance to combine frozen nights with summertime delights. After sleeping in a suite of ice watched over by artist-carved wonders, you'll warm back up with sauna visits, gourmet meals by a Michelin-trained chef and a full complement of optional summertime activities.

Day 1 » ICEHOTEL 365 (Art Suite)

Flying out to Kiruna, you'll be met at the airport and brought the short distance to ICEHOTEL 365. For a warm welcome into the cold, we've organised a tour of the hotel, with your convivial hosts pointing out the intricate details in the building's vaulted architecture and mesmerising sculptures. You'll also be introduced to the ICEBAR BY ICEHOTEL where everything from the seats to the drinks glasses are frozen. Then, it's time to settle into one of just nine Art Suites, bedding down on a slab of ice as ethereal lights beautify your spectacularly carved room. To keep you cosy, you'll be provided with reindeer skins and thermal sleeping bags.

Days 2-3 » ICEHOTEL 365 (Warm Chalet) Today you'll wake to a steaming lingonberry juice before warming up with that favourite Swedish tradition – the

sauna. You'll then be treated to the first of your included breakfasts, enjoying a hearty selection of local delicacies and international favourites designed by a Michelin-trained chef. It's the ideal fuel for two days spent exploring your spectacular surrounds. Here, dense forests spill down to placid lakes and rushing rivers alike. Make the most of it with everything from bike rides, hiking trails and rafting to wilderness-skills sessions, fishing adventures and even ice sculpting. It's all made that bit prettier by the postcard-perfect glow of the Midnight Sun. And, each night you'll return to the comforts of a warm chalet, all Scandinavian chic and blonde-wood accents. **B**

Day 4 » Departure Your adventure concludes with a final breakfast and a transfer back to Kiruna for your flight home. **B**

ICEHOTEL 365

The birth of ICEHOTEL 365 has opened up a whole host of new possibilities for exploring this remote corner of Swedish Lapland. Below are our three favourite summertime pursuits, but there are many more to choose from, with Midnight Sun tours, wilderness dinners and even foraging putting guests in touch with the magnificent Arctic surrounds. Speak to our specialists who'll be happy to guide you through the available options.

JUKKASJÄRVI SAUNA RITUAL

In Swedish Lapland, the sauna is the heart of the home, a place for peacefulness, relaxation and meditation. Kallebastun, Jukkasjärvi Culture Sauna, is the cradle of the Swedish Sauna Academy, and was made an institution by enthusiast Kalle Grundberg. Now, Sauna Master Andreas Hermansson has created a ten-step sauna ritual where you gain the skills to sauna like a Scandinavian – including an invigorating river plunge and a thorough cleansing of mind and body.

» PRICES FROM: £90 pp incl. transfers, guide & sauna entry.
Duration: 2.5 hrs. Operates year round



TORNE RIVER RAFTING

This river journey takes you through a silent forest with a mix of both calm waters and thrilling rapids. You'll feel the pulse and rhythm of the Torne River as experienced rafting guides ensure you enjoy an unforgettable adventure.

» PRICES FROM: £155 pp incl. transfers, guide & all equipment.
Duration: 2.5 hrs. Operates 1 May to 31 Oct.



EIGHT SEASONS PHOTO TOUR

Practise your photography skills in the beautiful surrounds of Swedish Lapland. Depending on the season – there are eight of them according to Sami tradition – you might capture anything from stunning landscapes to close-ups of moose and reindeer.

» PRICES FROM: £190 pp incl. transfers, guide & use of equipment. Duration: 4 hrs. Operates year round.

1 1

UNDER THE MIDNIGHT SUN



5-DAY TAILOR-MADE JOURNEY

2 days Brändön Lodge >> 1 day Treehotel
>> 2 days ICEHOTEL 365



>> **PRICES FROM:** £1,605 pp incl. flights, transfers, 2 nights Brändön Lodge BB, 1 night Treehotel HB, 1 night ICEHOTEL 365 BB, 1 lunch, kayak excursion and meals as indicated.

At the height of summer, the Midnight Sun hovers above Swedish Lapland, adding extra magic to this captivating destination. Among the enchanted forests and pretty archipelagos lie three of Sweden's finest hotels – Brändön Lodge, Treehotel & ICEHOTEL 365 – and, on this tour, you'll get to stay at all of them.

Days 1–2 >> Brändön Lodge Fly to Luleå via Stockholm and transfer to Brändön Lodge where you'll check into a sea view room. With a wonderful position overlooking the Bay of Bothnia and the Luleå archipelago, this cabin-style hotel has just 15 lodgings, each with two bedrooms and a front-facing porch, allowing guests to make the most of the spectacular coastal scenery (see page 43). The next day, you'll set out onto the calm waters of the bay on a kayak tour, an experienced guide pointing out some of the islands' interesting features and leading you on a short hike through the forest and shrubland. **BL**

Day 3 >> Treehotel Check out this morning and transfer north to the forested slopes of Harads and the Treehotel. Every room of this award-winning hotel is distinct, each one designed by one of Scandinavia's

leading architects; there's everything from UFOs to mirrored cubes suspended in the canopy (see overleaf). And, your included dinner here is just as special, typically Swedish and totally fresh and tantalising.

BD

Days 4–5 >> ICEHOTEL 365 After breakfast under the branches, continue north to the equally stunning ICEHOTEL 365. Here, you'll swap treetop living for the delights of your very own Art Suite – a unique room entirely carved from ice. It's all made possible by the power of the Midnight Sun, with the entire hotel ironically powered, and in turn refrigerated, thanks to solar panels. You'll also have the chance to have a drink in the entirely frozen ICEBAR – the perfect end to a day spent exploring with everything from scenic bike rides to white-water rafting adventures. **E**

SWEDISH LAPLAND EXCURSIONS

Swedish Lapland, so synonymous with ice and snow, is just as magical during the summer months when the Midnight Sun illuminates free-flowing waterways and throws streams of sunlight through lush, green forests. The following excursions will show you the best bits of this wonderful summertime playground and introduce you to the people who have relied on it for over 5,000 years.



KAYAKING ON THE LULEÅ ARCHIPELAGO

Explore this spectacular subarctic archipelago by sea kayak. Paddle out into the waters of Hagaviken Harbour and drift between the isles, rocks and skerries, learning about the area's rich flora and fauna as you go. At Sandskäret Island you'll have lunch and then explore the interior on a short hike into the forest.

» PRICES FROM: £195 pp (minimum 2 people), incl. guide, kayak & equipment hire, lunch and drinks. Duration 6–8 hours. Operates daily 15 May to 15 Sep.

VISIT A SAMI FAMILY AT GORGIM

Lars Eriksson is your expert guide as you visit a Sami family at Flakaberg along the Råne River valley. Lars will introduce you to the community's reindeer herd and tell you about Sami life through the millennia and up to the present day. You'll enjoy a traditional campfire lunch served in a tipi at Gorgim Lake and hike around the surrounding countryside.

» PRICES FROM: £295 pp incl. transfers, lunch & hot drink. Duration 3 hrs. Operates year-round.





TREEHOTEL

SUPERIOR



The world-famous Treehotel set a new standard for design hotels everywhere, quite an achievement for a property located in a wild pine forest in Sweden's remote north.

Situated 40 miles south of the Arctic Circle, outside the small village of Harads, the Treehotel features six entirely individual rooms designed by different architects. Mixing modernist, minimalist design and back-to-nature values, the rooms are dotted among the pines and hung around the canopy, allowing guests to play out their childhood treehouse fantasies in true style. Each quirkily-themed room is equipped with underfloor heating, a sink and toilet with showers and meals taken at the hotel's main house. The Tree Sauna is a wonderful addition and makes for a welcome retreat after a day's exploring. During the summer months,

hotel activities include full-day hikes in the Korgen Nature Reserve, mountain biking and whitewater rafting and visits to local Sami communities. Back at base, Britta's Restaurant offers a delicious array of Swedish home cooking based on fresh, wild local produce including Arctic char, Caviar of Kalix (also known as 'red gold'), salmon, moose and reindeer.

Your toughest choice is which room to pick. The Cabin sits on a platform high on the hillside overlooking the Lule River valley with commanding views. The Mirrorcube is a 4x4x4-metre hideout with walls of reflective glass. Then there's the Bird's

Nest, the ultimate hideaway, camouflaged by a complex network of branches. The Blue Cone sits close to the ground, supported by sturdy foundations while the UFO is a classic flying saucer cast in durable composite material with a silver sheen. The Dragonfly is a room built for four with an exterior of sheet metal rusting to brown to blend further into the forest. Finally, the new and aptly named 7th Room is camouflaged from below by a life-size photo of the pine trees that it's replaced, while its north-facing windows make the most of spectacular valley views.



BRÄNDÖN LODGE

SUPERIOR



Overlooking Bothnian Bay, this secluded lodge is a perfect base for exploring the islands of the Luleå archipelago. Recently renovated cabins – just 15 in all – offer uninterrupted coastal views, two comfortable bedrooms, a lounge and front-facing porch. A large central log cabin provides cosy communal spaces, including a restaurant and fireside lounge. Heading out to explore the beautiful surrounding countryside, free from winter's chill, is easily navigated.

SÖRBYN LODGE AND CABINS

SUPERIOR



Located on the shores of Lake Vitträsket in the Råne River valley, Sörbyn is the ultimate rustic retreat. Step out from spacious timber cabins or plush hotel rooms to enjoy summertime activities including guided hikes, kayak and mountain bike tours and whitewater rafting. Return at the end of each day to a soothing sauna by the lake and a wonderful menu featuring the best local ingredients, from freshly caught fish and home-baked bread to herbs and fruits foraged from the surrounding forest.



JOPIKGÅRDEN

SUPERIOR



Expect a warm summer welcome and no shortage of fine food and drink at this traditional wooden farm building hidden in the forests surrounding the Gulf of Bothnia. A distinctly Swedish getaway, guests can expect everything from music evenings to traditional midsummer celebrations during the warm months. It's also a time when activities such as guided boat tours, sea kayaking, salmon fishing and even seal watching showcase the beauty of the surrounding archipelago.

12

STOCKHOLM & VISBY FLY-DRIVE



6-DAY TAILOR-MADE SELF-DRIVE

3 days Visby >> 3 days Stockholm



>> PRICES FROM: £1,125 pp incl. flights, 3 days car hire, 3 nights Hotell Slottsbacken BB and 2 nights Hotel Diplomat BB. Operates year round.

Explore the two main columns of Swedish life – secluded island hideaways and a cultural and cosmopolitan capital – on this six-day self-drive. Enjoy coastal walks, watersports, comfortable accommodation and culinary classics as you visit Stockholm and Gotland Island in the Baltic Sea.

Days 1–3 >> Visby Fly via Stockholm to Visby. Pick up your hire car at the airport and head to Hotell Slottsbacken, located in the characterful old quarter – a treasure trove of medieval architecture. Spend the next few days driving around exploring the stunning scenery and pristine landscapes

of one of Sweden’s most picturesque destinations. You’ll also want to pop over to the neighbouring island of Fårö, where you’ll find the origins of one of Sweden’s oldest dialects and a collection of towering sea stacks known as rauks that from certain angles resemble human faces and eerie animal shapes. **B**

Days 4–6 >> Stockholm Depart Gotland and head north by car ferry to the Swedish capital, one of the true metropolitan jewels of the Baltic Sea. Drop off your hire car and check in at the Hotel Diplomat, a stylish and modern hotel renowned for its culinary knowledge, comfortable rooms and art exhibitions, and an excellent base from which to explore the city’s trendy boutiques, beautiful parks, abundant museums and excellent waterfront walks. During the summer months, residents and visitors alike take the chance to go sailing, swimming and kayaking around the Stockholm Archipelago – a series of 30,000 islands, skerries and rocks, which stretches over 50 miles. After a leisurely breakfast on

day six, transfer to the airport for your return flights. **B**



HOTELL SLOTSBACKEN

Located in the centre of Visby, a stone’s throw from the harbour, the botanical gardens and the town’s best restaurants and shops, this contemporary four-star hotel was opened in 2012 and quickly established itself as one of Gotland’s finest. Stylish rooms offer comfortable furnishings, and the hotel’s sun terrace is a deservedly popular 6 o’clock spot. There’s no onsite restaurant, but ask the staff and you’ll find they’re happy to point you towards the best local dining options.



KING'S GARDEN HOTEL

SUPERIOR



High ceilinged and chandeliered, the rooms at this superb Stockholm offering are all different from each other but all quite special. Gustavian architecture, with carefully preserved 18th-century detailing, lends a luxurious touch, the rooms all muted colours and cossetting beds. A flourish of sweeping staircases connect the chic bedrooms – each a haven of fine linen and muted tones – to the magnificent champagne bar, private wine cellar, gym, sauna and gourmet restaurant.

CLARION HOTEL SIGN

SUPERIOR



This Gert Wingårdh-designed hotel – all glass and granite, sharp lines and simple Scandi décor – is located in the centre of Stockholm, close to many of the capital's best bars and restaurants, museums and boutiques. Facilities include a rooftop swimming pool – complete with a popular poolside bar – spa treatment rooms, a gym and an American-style brasserie. The hotel is also pet friendly, so don't be surprised to meet the occasional pampered pooch in the Living Room meeting area.



ETT HEM

DELUXE



Freestanding marble baths and stylish four-poster beds are among the charms of this homely 12-room hotel in Stockholm's Lärkstaden neighbourhood. Built as a family residence in 1910, Ett Hem's laidback hospitality means guests can help themselves to a glass of wine from the communal kitchen or enjoy a meal with others in the courtyard's glasshouse. The garden, laid out by one of Sweden's most acclaimed landscape architects, is a superb spot for al fresco meals and drinks.



13

GÖTA CANAL
CRUISE



6-DAY TAILOR-MADE JOURNEY

1 day Gothenburg » 3 days Göta Canal
» 2 days Stockholm



» PRICES FROM: £1,785 pp incl. flights, 1 night Elite Plaza BB,
3 nights Göta Canal Steamer FB, 1 night Hotel Diplomat BB.

A spectacular four-day cruise along the 380-mile long Göta Canal by steamer links Sweden's two largest cities – the elegant port city of Gothenburg and cool capital Stockholm. See ancient towns, UNESCO World Heritage Sites and beautiful rolling countryside from the comfort of your cabin. Plus there's time to explore both cities.

Day 1 » Gothenburg Fly to Gothenburg and check in at the Elite Plaza Hotel, housed in a palatial 19th-century building right in the heart of the city. Spend the rest of the day strolling around the impressive waterfront and exploring the Old Town, or perhaps visit the Gothenburg Museum of Art, home to one of the world's finest

collections of 19th century Nordic painting, as well as important works by the likes of Monet and Picasso.

Days 2–4 » Göta Canal Board a Göta Canal Steamer and depart the Gothenburg docks for Stockholm, Sweden's fashionable capital. Over the next few days you'll cruise through two of Sweden's largest and prettiest lakes – Vänern and Vättern and glide past the obelisk of the Berg Canal along with innumerable magnificent castles and old settlements, enjoying plentiful onboard comforts and refreshments as you go. There'll also be an opportunity to see Birka and Hovgården, one of Sweden's first Viking settlements, now a fascinating



archaeological complex and UNESCO World Heritage Site. **BLD**

Days 5–6 » Stockholm Check in at the Hotel Diplomat on arrival in Stockholm and spend the evening exploring the cobbled streets, bars and restaurants of the city's 13th century old town, Gamla Stan. Alternatively, hop on board a harbour cruise and see the capital lit up at night. The next day, head to the airport for your return flight. **B**

14

GOTHENBURG
& THE WEST

8-DAY SUMMER SELF-DRIVE TOUR

2 days Gothenburg » 1 day Villa Sjötorp » 2 days Fjällbacka
» 2 days Bjertorp Slott » 1 day Gothenburg



» PRICES FROM: £1,195 pp incl. return flights, 2 nights Elite Plaza BB, 1 night Villa Sjötorp HB, 2 nights Stora Hotellet Bryggan BB, 2 nights Bjertorp Slott HB & 6 days car hire. Operates May to Sep.

Sweden's rugged west coast is scattered with pretty fishing villages, elegant estates and isolated hideaways. Starting from Gothenburg, a highlight in any Swedish summer holiday, you'll head north to visit country manors, picturesque waterfronts and some of the region's best seafood restaurants.

Days 1-2 » Gothenburg Arriving in Gothenburg, transfer to the Elite Plaza, a palatial hotel within walking distance of the city's opera house, best shops and restaurants. Enjoy a boat trip along the canals, explore the city's excellent museums and parks and browse the old town's many arts-and-crafts stores. 

Day 3 » Villa Sjötorp Pick up your hire car and drive north along the scenic west coast to Villa Sjötorp, a charming country hotel with just 10 rooms. In the evening, dine out on the terrace of the hotel's award-winning restaurant overlooking the bay.  

Days 4-5 » Fjällbacka Continue north to Fjällbacka, a small coastal settlement which was once a favourite haunt of Ingrid Bergman. Explore the village's narrow cobbled lanes, boutique shops and busy cafés and spend the night at the quaint and comfortable Stora Hotellet Bryggan, which sits prettily on the edge of the village pier. 



MUSSEL SAFARI FROM FJÄLLBACKA

Join restaurateur Janne Bark onboard the MS *Martha* on a voyage to the mile-wide mussel farms of Scaniafjords where you'll harvest live blue mussels. Keep your eyes peeled for harbour seals, deer, egrets and eagles. On the return trip you'll prepare your catch for a delicious meal back on shore at Janne's Clock Tower restaurant.

» PRICES FROM: £80 pp incl. guide, equipment hire, lunch, hot drinks and snacks. Duration: 3-4 hrs. Operates Saturdays Apr to Oct.



Days 6-7 » Bjertorp Slott Today you'll continue on to Bjertorp Slott, an elegant art nouveau manor which specialises in gourmet dining and hosts one of the region's best golf courses. Nearby attractions include the Saab Museum in Trollhättan and the Gota Älv River Valley.  

Day 8 » Gothenburg After breakfast at the manor, take a leisurely cross-country drive 100 km south to Gothenburg's international airport to connect with your return flight. 





ICELAND

Much of Iceland is a spectacular wilderness peppered with volcanic eruptions, vast glaciers feeding impressive waterfalls and mighty rivers, where geothermal geysers shoot 30 metres into the air. Along the coast, humpback whales congregate with dolphins and orcas in sheltered bays lined by black-sand beaches, while in the colourful, cultured main cities you can sample fine cuisine and dive headfirst into a lively bar scene.

The interior is a limitless playground for outdoor enthusiasts, amateur geologists and photographers while the varied coast attracts wildlife spotters and cold-water surfers. During summer, the locals go en masse to build campfires around the country's lakes, Icelandic horses run wild in lush summer meadows and music festivals add an extra atmospheric edge to proceedings. Most visitors however just come to soak up the ambience, and try to take in the extreme vastness of Iceland's volatile landscape, which rolls through deep gorges and over snowcapped mountain peaks, tumbles down waterfalls and collapses into the heavy swells of the Atlantic Ocean. You can catch all the main sights on a tour of the Golden Circle, which embraces the gushing pools of Geysir, the giant double waterfall of Gullfoss and the rugged rift valley at Thingvellir National Park.



15

REYKJAVIK
ADVENTURE

NEW



4-DAY TAILOR-MADE BREAK

4 days Reykjavik



» PRICES FROM: £1,090 pp incl. flights, transfers, 3 nights Reykjavik Centrum BB, Golden Circle jeep tour, whale-watching cruise & entry to Blue Lagoon.

So much more than just a city break, this stay in Reykjavik includes a trio of excursions. You'll cruise out to spot giant whales, enjoy a soak in the famous Blue Lagoon and even head out on Iceland's iconic Golden Circle route. Here, a jeep tour will see you between everything from national-park treasures to cascading waterfalls and explosive geysers.

Day 1 » Reykjavik Touching down in Keflavik, head into the vibrant Icelandic capital and make for the Hotel Reykjavik Centrum in the heart of the city. Tonight, perhaps enjoy dinner at the hotel's own gourmet restaurant; the cured Arctic char and Icelandic blue mussels both come highly recommended.

Day 2 » Golden Circle Today you'll head out on the famous Golden Circle route, beginning with Thingvellir National Park where dramatic valleys make for a spectacular backdrop to its thousand-year-old heritage. It's then on to Gullfoss – often described as Iceland's most beautiful waterfall – and Strokkur, a geyser whose clockwork-regular outbursts reach up to 20 metres high. You'll then test the jeep's capabilities as you head back to Reykjavik, driving over craggy highlands, glacial drifts and rushing waterways. **B**

Day 3 » Whale-watching cruise The waters around the Icelandic capital are not only a favourite among humpbacks and minke whales; it's also possible to spot everything from harbour porpoises to white-beaked dolphins on today's included cruise. If you're lucky, they'll even put on an acrobatic display. Then, returning to Reykjavik, you'll have some time to explore further. Perhaps take in its sculpture gardens, cathedral architecture and superb Museum of Photography before sampling the city's famous nightlife. **B**

Day 4 » Blue Lagoon After a final breakfast this morning, an included transfer will see you out to the Blue Lagoon. Shrouded in mists and ringed by volcanic rock, its bright-azure, geothermally heated waters are the perfect pre-flight tonic. After a soak, a private transfer will bring you to the airport for your flight home. **B**



HOTEL REYKJAVIK CENTRUM

SUPERIOR



Situated on one of Reykjavik's oldest streets in one of the city's liveliest districts, the charming Reykjavik Centrum is perfectly placed for fun. Choose from Deluxe Rooms, Suites or a sleek Studio Apartment, featuring a fully-equipped kitchenette and living room. Fjalakötturinn, an inventive restaurant right next door, is popular with local foodies and has an à la carte menu brimming with regionally inspired dishes; there's an emphasis on fresh seafood and traditional delicacies with a modern twist.

ALDA HOTEL

SUPERIOR



This smart four-star stop on Laugavegur, Reykjavik's main shopping street, offers comfortable and modern rooms in a relaxed and friendly environment. The hotel features a fitness centre with sauna and a full range of exercise equipment, a buzzing bar serving local draft beers and champagne cocktails, a chocolate shop, a 24-hour grab-n-go snack station and in-room massages. The rooftop terrace offers excellent sea and mountain views.



KVOSIN DOWNTOWN HOTEL

SUPERIOR



Recently opened, the Kvosin Downtown Hotel is right in the heart of Reykjavik, in a quiet square behind Reykjavik Cathedral and the Icelandic Parliament, minutes from an array of museums and galleries. The stylish, airy rooms here are apartment-style and equipped with their own kitchenette, and larger studios sleep up to six and are perfect for families. The hotel is also home to a buzzy bar which offers a tasteful selection of wines and cocktails alongside some local brews.



ICELAND EXCURSIONS

You don't have to venture far from Reykjavik to be stunned by Iceland's volatile landscape and mesmerising natural world. The famous Golden Circle represents the country's most easily accessible tourist route, covering lakes, geysers and powerful waterfalls, while everything from whale watching tours to guided glacier hikes bring you right to the heart of the outdoors and into the thick of the action.



GOLDEN CIRCLE BY SUPERJEEP

Explore the extraordinary landscapes of Iceland's Golden Circle by Superjeep on this full-day tour, taking in the sweeping beauty of Thingvellir National Park, the geyser Strokkur that erupts every few minutes, and the impressive falls of Gullfoss. After lunch by the falls, the jeeps come into their own as you tank cross-country, charging through rivers and bouncing over the mountainsides, pausing to admire the stunning vistas and geological features that you pass on the way, including the Langjökull glacier and the amazing Kerip crater lake, where the vivid aquamarine water is set off by red rock and deep moss.

>> **PRICES FROM:** £245 pp incl. transfers and guide. Duration 8–9 hrs. Operates Tues, Thurs & Sat, year-round.



GLACIER WALK DAY TOUR

Visit Mýrdalsjökull, driving by its famous neighbour, the Eyjafjallajökull glacier and volcano, and be provided with hiking gear before stepping out onto the glacier's offshoot, Sólheimajökull. As meltwater pours off the plateau it forms a procession of towering waterfalls such as Seljalandsfoss and Skógafoss, which you'll pause to visit on your way back.

>> **PRICES FROM:** £185 pp incl. transfers, equipment hire and guide. Duration 8–9 hrs (glacier walk 3 hrs, approx. 2 hrs on ice). Operates daily, year-round.



WHALE WATCHING FROM REYKJAVIK

Observe the North Atlantic's diverse whale populations as they circle Iceland's barren coastline on this fascinating short cruise. Sail out into the bay of Faxaflói to spot dolphins, orcas, minke and humpback whales from comfortable inside seating, or get a little closer to the action from your ship's outdoor viewing decks. Guides are on hand to offer information about Iceland's rich waters and diverse habitats.

>> **PRICES FROM:** £85 pp incl. warm overalls and guide. Duration 3–3.5 hrs. Operates daily, year-round.

THE BLUE LAGOON

Iceland is well known for its unique geology, millions of years of volcanic evolution pockmarking the landscape with a dizzying array of craters, glaciers, hot springs and geothermal pools. First among these is the Blue Lagoon, a natural spa formed on a lava field on southwest Iceland's Reykjanes Peninsula. Here, a combination of mineral-rich waters and silica mud have turned it into one of the country's true bucket-list attractions.

THE BLUE LAGOON

When photographer Jürgen Teller travelled to Iceland to photograph Björk, they visited the Blue Lagoon, where he took one of his best-loved portraits. Central to a laidback culture, no trip to Iceland is complete without a visit to this modern spa powered by the country's lively geothermals. What's more, with easy access from both Keflavik Airport and the capital, a trip here needn't eat into your exploration time. Simply combine your visit with your arrival or departure transfer.

» **PRICES FROM:** £95 pp incl. standard entry and transfers. Operates daily, year round.



HOTEL SILICA

SUPERIOR

For a truly special Blue Lagoon experience, consider spending a night at Hotel Silica. Set in the heart of the same moss-covered lava field, this typically stylish offering provides its guests with a secluded bathing area away from the crowds. Spacious rooms with private verandahs are a study in Scandi minimalism, and guests receive one Premium Blue Lagoon entry per stay, including a silica mud mask, an algae mask, use of a bathrobe and slippers, and a table reservation and sparkling wine at the LAVA Restaurant. From late-2018, look out for the new Retreat at Blue Lagoon, an ultra-sleek addition to this already impressive design hotel.



16 HOTEL RANGÁ & THE BLUE LAGOON

5-DAY TAILOR-MADE TOUR

1 day Blue Lagoon » 2 days Hotel Rangá
» 1 day Golden Circle » 1 day Reykjavik



» **PRICES FROM:** £1,595 pp incl. flights, 4 days car hire, 1 night Silica Hotel BB, 2 nights Hotel Ranga BB, 1 night Hotel Borg, Reykjavik BB, Entry to the Blue Lagoon, Superjeep tour & Horseback riding. Operates year round.

This curated itinerary perfectly contrasts considered relaxation with Iceland's wild landscapes. After enjoying private access to the Blue Lagoon with a design-hotel stay, you'll head out to remote Hotel Ranga to explore Southern Iceland by Superjeep and horseback before taking in the Golden Circle's unique geology on your very own self-drive.

Day 1 » The Blue Lagoon Flying into Keflavik Airport, you'll pick up your hire car and make the short drive across the peninsula to the famed Blue Lagoon. Here, you'll be treated to mud masks, algae treatments between indulgent soaks in the mist-shrouded waters. You'll even stay in a design hotel that features its very own private access. It's delightfully exclusive, featuring a superb spa and just 35 rooms, each with private-verandah views across the surrounding volcanic scenery. There's even a restaurant built into a lava cliff where you'll enjoy a complimentary glass of sparkling wine.

Days 2-3 » Hotel Rangá Start the day with an included 30-minute massage. Then, make the scenic drive along the coast to Hotel Rangá. This timber-lodge hotel is south Iceland's only luxury property and enjoys a fantastic sense of seclusion. Far from any light pollution, it's ideally poised for summertime stargazing – head to the outdoor hot tubs for the best experience. **B**

Day 4 » The Golden Circle You'll begin today with the short drive to a nearby farm where you'll meet the Icelandic horses – a unique breed that's both hardy and adorably little. Then, after a gentle ride through the rolling grasslands, you'll set out to drive the Golden Circle, taking in everything from the cascading Gullfoss waterfall to the explosive outbursts of the Strokkur geyser. There's also the fascinating heritage of Thingvellir. Among this national-park rift valley, you'll discover thousand-year-old stone ruins that evidence the world's first parliament. You'll then end the day in Reykjavik. **B**

Day 5 » Reykjavik After breakfast, you'll have time to explore Iceland's capital. Although its colourful houses and cathedral spire evidence a rich heritage, there's plenty of cutting edge to discover, best showcased in its art galleries, thriving restaurant scene and modernist architecture. After taking it all in, you'll then return your hire car to board your flight home. **B**



HOTEL RANGÁ

Rooms at this luxury lodge are appointed in a typically Scandinavian style, but with extra touches inspired by the seven continents making for an eclectic mix. Far from any light pollution, in summer it's a wonderful place for stargazing with the thermally heated outdoor hot tubs providing an indulgent overview, and the hotels own observatory on hand for those wanting a closer look. The surrounding nature is equally impressive, with everything from volcanic lava fields and black-sand beaches nearby to a next-door river teeming with salmon.

17

HIGHLIGHTS OF
ICELAND SELF-DRIVE

10-DAY TAILOR-MADE TOUR

3 days Reykjavik » 7 days self-drive
around Iceland



» PRICES FROM: £1,840 pp incl. return flights, transfers, 2 nights Hotel Alda BB, 7 nights regional hotels BB, 7 days car hire and route guide.

Iceland's rugged and remote interior is best travelled in a rough circle, following Highway 1 along the coast around the island. This itinerary covers the glaciers, gorges, waterfalls and wildlife on an unforgettable route.

Day 1 » Reykjavik Touch down in Iceland's capital, where you'll be met and transferred to Hotel Alda. Take advantage

of the central location to browse the city's excellent cafés and galleries.

Day 2 » Snæfellsnes Follow the coast of Faxaflói north for a few hours until you get to Snæfellsnes, a peninsula home to Jules Verne's legendary entrance to the centre of earth. 

Day 3 » Akureyri Drive on, passing the impressive coastal stack of Hvítserkur off Vatnsnes and the attractive turf houses that pepper the shoreline, and arriving in Akureyri, the largest town in the north. 

Day 4 » Mývatn Head inland to Mývatn, a volcanic lake that teems with birdlife, passing Goðafoss (the falls of the Gods). A detour to coastal Húsavík is a must if you fancy a whale-watching tour. 

Day 5 » Egilsstaðir Travel eastwards, exploring the mystical landscape including

the warped rocks at Hljóðaklettur. Spend the night at a pretty lakeside town. 

Day 6 » Höfn Take the stunning coastal road to Höfn, passing charming fishing villages on the way. 

Day 7 » Kirkjubæjarklaustur Hugging the coast, admire Vatnajökull glacier and cruise on the Jökulsárlón glacial lagoon. 

Day 8 » Geysir Continue past the many waterfalls and glaciers of the south coast before heading inland to begin the Golden Circle at Gullfoss and Geysir. 

Days 9–10 » Geysir/Reykjavik Complete the Golden Circle with a trip to Thingvellir National Park before returning to the Icelandic capital for the night. Depart after breakfast and transfer to the airport for your return flight. 

SIGLÓ HÓTEL, SIGLUFJÖRÐUR

SUPERIOR



Situated on the waterfront in Iceland's northernmost town, Sigló occupies one of the prettiest spots in the country. To the north the glassy waters of the fjord stretch away, reflecting the sheer mountains that barricade its shoreline. Fresh fish is a regular feature here, and diners in Restaurant Sunna can gaze through the window to see the latest catch brought in. Two further restaurants offer diversity, with Hannes Boy providing traditional Icelandic fare and Kaffi Rauðka catering to more international tastes. Rooms at the hotel exemplify an indulgent Scandinavian ethos, cosy in winter and light and airy during summer, with attractive wooden furnishings complemented by modern amenities and a window seat overlooking the fjord.



ION HOTEL

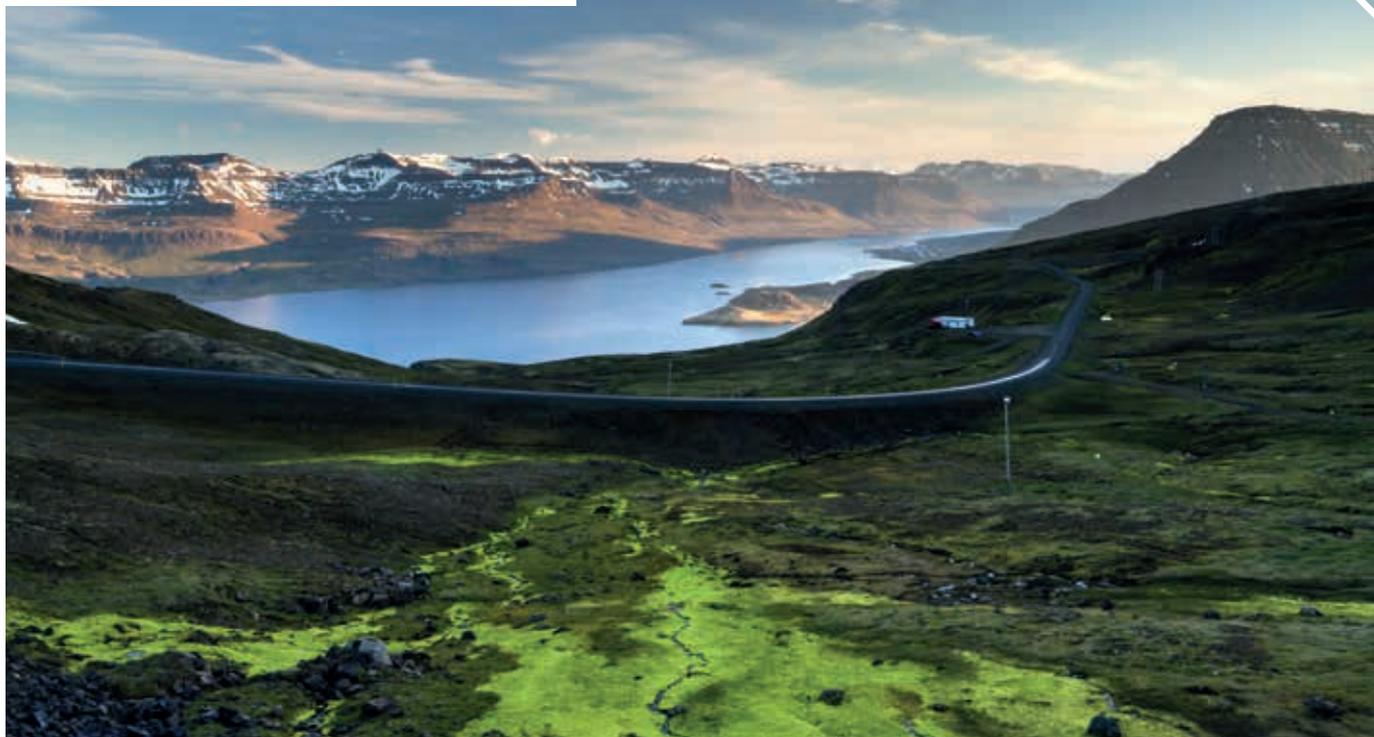
DELUXE



This designer hotel, less than an hour's drive from Reykjavik, effortlessly treads the fine line between luxury and adventure. With its Thingvellir National Park location there's activities aplenty from challenging glacier treks to days spent ice fishing in one of the well stocked rivers nearby. At the hotel's restaurant, guests are treated to a journey through Iceland's gastronomic landscape with fresh, seasonal ingredients heading up a menu that changes with the seasons. Elsewhere, the ION Spa promises the ultimate in relaxation with a full list of treatments and massages. There's also a sauna and a heated 10-metre pool for relaxing soaks and swims under the Midnight Sun.

NEW

18

ICELAND FULL-CIRCLE
ESCORTED TOUR

8-DAY ESCORTED TOUR

1 day Reykjavik >> 7 days escorted tour
>> 1 day Reykjavik



>> **PRICES FROM:** £2,080 pp incl. flights, transfers, 2 nights Centerhotel Plaza BB, 5 nights regional hotels BB, and 6-day escorted tour.

If you've a week to spare, this whistle-stop escorted tour encompasses most of

Iceland's natural wonders, allowing you to pack in as much as possible without spending too long on the road – though journeys in a landscape as stunning as this are never even remotely dull.

Day 1 >> Reykjavik Fly in to Iceland's capital. Making for the Centerhotel Plaza, explore the capital in all its summer glory, perhaps pausing at the natural cobalt spa of the Blue Lagoon.

Day 2 >> Akureyri You'll be met today by your guide for the scenic drive north to Skagafjörður – the valley of horses. Here, you'll enjoy entrance into Glaumbær, a folk museum housed in turf-roofed farm buildings before continuing through the Öxnadalshéidi highlands to Akureyri. **B D**

Day 3 >> Lake Mývatn Strike out east to Mývatn, a great lake set among dramatic volcanic surrounds. You'll also have the option of visiting Jarbödin, known as the 'Blue Lagoon of the North'. Then, returning to Akureyri, you'll have the option of a whale-watching cruise. **B D**

Day 4 >> The Eastfjords Continue east to Dettifoss, Europe's most powerful waterfall. Then, enjoy a scenic drive over the Mödrudalsöræfi highland plateau, skirting the dramatic Eastfjords to arrive in Breiðdalsvík – your home for the night. **B D**

Days 5–6 >> Southern Iceland Day five begins with a tour of Vatnajökull Glacier before you sweep south to the ice floes of Jökulsarlón Glacier Lagoon, best seen on an optional cruise. Then after a visit to Skaftafell National Park, you'll continue past black lava beaches to the waterfalls of Skógafoss and Seljalandsfoss, perhaps ending day six with an optional Icelandic horse ride. **B D**

Day 7 >> Golden Circle Today is given over to exploring the Golden Circle. You'll begin with Gullfoss, perhaps Iceland's most beautiful waterfall, before taking in erupting geysers and the thousand-year history of Thingvellir National Park. **B**

Day 8 >> Reykjavik After breakfast, head to the airport for your flight home. **B**

19

NORTH ICELAND
ODYSSEY



6-DAY TAILOR-MADE TOUR

1 day Reykjavik » 2 days Siglufjörður
1 day Akureyri » 2 days Reykjavik



» PRICES FROM: £895 pp incl. flights, transfers, 4 days car hire, 5 nights accommodation BB and Whales, Puffins & Sails excursion.

The north of Iceland is home to a treasure trove of treats. This itinerary takes you to a world of quiet fishing villages, secluded fjords, giant whales and cute puffins, with the urban pleasures of Reykjavik and Akureyri never too far away.

Day 1 » Reykjavik Arrive at Keflavik International Airport and, en route into the capital, immerse yourself in Iceland's geothermal environment with a trip to the Blue Lagoon. Cleansed and composed, head into Reykjavik and check into your centrally-located hotel.

Day 2 » Siglufjörður Picking up your hire car, set off on the road to Iceland's northernmost town, watching the volcanic landscape unfold on the journey. Check

in to Hótel Sigló, a beautiful fjordside property surrounded by towering mountains, and dine at one of its three excellent restaurants. ^E

Day 3 » Siglufjörður A short trip around the crenulated coast is Húsavík, known as the best place in Europe for whalewatching. Take a day cruise here, which offers a great chance of sighting humpback, minke and many other cetaceans as well as spotting the puffins nesting in the Bay of Skjálfandi. Return to Siglufjörður. ^E

Day 4 » Akureyri Your tour of the north continues with a visit to the regional capital, Iceland's second city. Rated as one of Europe's top destinations, the



city is resplendent in colourful summer blooms and boasts the world's northernmost botanical gardens. Enjoy the vibrant social scene as the day tries its hardest to become night. ^E

Days 5-6 » Reykjavik Return to Reykjavik, perhaps stopping at Thingvellir National Park on the way. Take your pick of the city's restaurants in the evening. After breakfast on day six, transfer to the airport for your return flight. ^E

NORTH ICELAND EXCURSIONS

Summertime is peak whale-watching season in northern Iceland, as crowds descend on Húsavík for a near-guaranteed chance to see the sea's most impressive creatures, while nearby, puffins and other squawking seabirds make the littoral their summer breeding ground. Elsewhere, the scorched lava fields surrounding Lake Mývatn showcase some of the country's most spectacular geothermal landscapes.

WHALES, PUFFINS & SAILS

Embark on one of two traditional oaken schooners, Hildur or Haukur, for an exhilarating day trip to view the wildlife of Iceland's north coast. As the sails fill, you'll be whisked out from Iceland's whalewatching capital to the island of Lundy ('puffin island') in the Bay of Skjálfandi to view the distinctive little birds with coloured beaks before cruising the seas in search of minke, humpback and the other species of whale that congregate off the shore. You'll also have a chance to help hoist the sails and assist the skipper.

» PRICES FROM: £90 pp incl. guide, sailing gear, hot drinks and snacks. Duration 4 hrs. Operates daily, 1 May to 20 Aug.



MÝVATN HIGHLIGHTS BY SUPERJEEP

A vehicle perfect for the pockmarked terrain surrounding Mývatn, the SuperJeep is the ultimate off-roader. Beginning at the roaring falls of Goðafoss, continue on to Lake Mývatn, where you'll explore the rootless craters known as skútustaðagígar, the lava pinnacles at Dimmuborgir, the thermal grotto of Grjótagjá, geothermal Mt Námafjall, and the lava fields surrounding Krafla volcano containing the deep aquamarine Viti crater lake. En route, take a dip in the thermal pools at Mývatn Nature Baths.

» PRICES FROM: £165 pp incl. guide, transport and entry to Mývatn Nature Baths. Duration 8–9 hrs. Daily, year-round.

NEW

20

SNÆFELLSNES & GOLDEN CIRCLE IN STYLE



4-DAY TAILOR-MADE SELF-DRIVE

1 day Reykjavik » 1 day Snæfellsnes
» 2 days Golden Circle



» PRICES FROM: £1,040 pp incl. flights, arrival transfer, 3 days car hire, 1 night ION City Hotel BB, 1 night Hotel Budir BB, 1 night ION Adventure Hotel BB. Operates year round.

Knit together Iceland's city energy and spectacular natural world with some of the country's finest hotels. You'll stay in a design boutique while sampling Reykjavik's rich heritage, pair the majestic glaciers of Snæfellsnes with one of Iceland's finest restaurants and spend a night in a stilted spa masterpiece after exploring the Golden Circle.

Day 1 » Reykjavik Flying out to the Icelandic capital, an included transfer will see you to your boutique design hotel. Here, the minibars are complimentary and the bay views are invited in by picture windows. And, given that it's all found right in the city centre, you'll want to head out and explore. Taste your way through Nordic restaurants, step into galleries of local award winners and take in the lively nightlife, all right on your doorstep,

Day 2 » Snæfellsnes Pick up your hire car to make the drive north, hopping fjord bridges and tracing Iceland's spectacularly cragged coast to arrive at Snæfellsnes. Here, you can hike on giant glaciers, embark on seasonal whale-watching cruises and enjoy dips in geothermal pools after coastal horserides. Then, in the evening, tuck into dinner at your luxury hotel's restaurant – one of Iceland's finest. B

Day 3 » Golden Circle As Iceland's most famous driving route, the Golden Circle links many of the country's iconic sights, bringing you between giant geysers, cascading waterfalls and volcanic crater lakes. Thingvellir National Park is a particular highlight. Home to the world's first democratic parliament, its Viking heritage plays out over thousand-year-old ruins, backdropped by a spectacular natural world. You'll then end the day with a stay at one of Iceland's finest hotels – a jewel of modernist design whose floor-to-ceiling windows and indulgent spa showcase its rugged, lava-field setting. B

Day 4 » Departure Wend your way bac through Southern Iceland's maze of geological riches, finally arriving at Keflavik Airport for your flight home. B

NEW

21

SNÆFELLSNES &
WESTFJORDS SELF-DRIVE

6-DAY TAILOR-MADE SELF-DRIVE

1 day Reykjavik » 1 day Snæfellsnes
» 1 day Westfjords » 1 day Laugar
Sælingsdalur » 1 day Reykjavik



» PRICES FROM: £1,395 incl. flights, 6 days car hire & 6 nights accommodation BB. Operates May to Sep.

Discover Iceland's spectacular west coast as you step off the beaten track to pair Reykjavik's city highlights with the stunning scenery and abundant birdlife of Snæfellsnes and the remote Westfjords. Exploring roads virtually free of traffic, you'll have the chance to hike through verdant valleys and look out over cliffs host to millions of nesting seabirds. Round it all off with the highlights of the Golden Circle.

Day 1 » Reykjavik Arriving into Keflavik, you'll collect your hire car for the short drive to the capital, perhaps stopping en route for a dip in the Blue Lagoon. The rest of the day is free to explore the city.

Day 2 » Snæfellsnes Driving north along Iceland's west coast to the Snæfellsnes Peninsula, you'll pass the moon-like form of the Eldborg crater. Then, after checking into your hotel in Stykkisholmur, head out to discover the rich birdlife at Arnarstapi sea cliffs or take a leisurely stroll along the pebble beach at Djupalonssandur. Throughout the day, you'll be treated to glimpses of Snæfellsjökull, a 700,000-year-old glacier-capped stratovolcano. 

Day 3 » Westfjords Sailing across island-studded Breioafjörður Bay, you'll reach the remote Westfjords to explore the Latrabjarg

cliffs, the westernmost point in Europe. A birders' paradise, these, 441-metre-high sea cliffs are home to puffins, gannets, guillemots and razorbills. 

Day 4 » Laugar Sælingsdalur Tracing the contours of Isafjardardjúp Fjord, you'll arrive into Holmavík village, gateway to the moorlands and geothermal pools of the remote Strandir coast. Then, end your day amid the fertile valleys of Laugar Sælingsdalur, a region rich in ancient Saga folklore. 

Days 5–6 » Reykjavik Returning south, you'll call into the Viking home of Erik the Red before a drive through Borgarfjörður brings you to the Hraunfoss and Barnafoss waterfalls. Then, breaking the journey at hot-spring farms and whale-dotted fjords, you'll arrive back into Reykjavik to spend the night before your flight home. 





DENMARK

This flat, windswept land to the south of Scandinavia's most impressive mountain ranges can be easy to overlook, but Denmark's gentle topography can be as epic as the fjordlands further north. Long, sandy stretches unravel under watercolour heavens, a stiff breeze buffets the dune grasses and magical beech forests populate the bucolic landscape. Add colourfully cosmopolitan Copenhagen into the mix and you have a diverse and exotic summer destination just an hour away.

A trip to Denmark usually begins with a visit to its capital Copenhagen, one of the world's most attractive cities and a cultural powerhouse teeming with vibrant cafés and a panoply of museums, galleries and shops. Like so many other great European cities, its wealth is founded on trade, the historical remnants of which can be seen in the myriad canals and quays that encircle and infiltrate the centre. Many a memorable vista has a soundtrack that squawks with gulls and clinks as halyard strikes mast while the city's historic townhouses and wharves look on, their facades reflected in the glassy water. Further afield the gentle hillocks and tufted dunes of the long Danish coast are peppered with Iron Age hill forts that recall the days of the Vikings and Beowulf. The countryside is also sprinkled with quaint medieval towns with cobbled streets, Gothic cathedrals and Hanseatic warehouses. This is northwestern Europe, and summer is a fleeting luxury of which the locals are compelled to take full advantage. Now you can join in the fun too.





HOTEL 71 NYHAVN

SUPERIOR



A stylish warehouse conversion in the heart of historic Copenhagen, 71 Nyhavn isn't just well located for the city's attractions – it is one of them. The newly opened SEA by Kiin Kiin offers a tempting array of Southeast Asian-inspired dishes, while an extensive art collection includes some striking oil paintings alongside avant-garde works that infuse the hotel with an unmistakably European elan. Book a Superior Room or higher and enjoy wonderful views of the harbour.

ABSALON HOTEL

SUPERIOR



The striking neo-classical façade of this central Copenhagen hotel hides a chic interior where bold colour splashes and vibrant floral prints are offset by elegant furnishings in more muted tones. Lower floor rooms look out to the street's capital city bustle or a peaceful interior courtyard while those on the upper floors gaze out across the Copenhagen skyline. It's ideally located for daytime exploration – Tivoli Gardens and City Hall Square are just minutes away – while at night, the hotel's lively bar draws guests and locals alike to its colourful signature cocktails, fine wines, craft beers and tempting light snacks.



NIMB HOTEL

DELUXE



Set within a Moorish-style palace with an impressive Venetian marble exterior in Tivoli Gardens, the Nimb brings a worldly exoticism to the Danish capital. Its stylish rooms and suites feature open fires and beautifully designed bathrooms, and the dining options are superb for a small hotel. Simple European classics are to be found at the Nimb Brasserie, while Nimb Terrasse, Tivoli's oldest restaurant, serves locally caught seafood and meat dishes paired with classic wines.

22

VIKING TRAIL
SELF-DRIVE

7-DAY TAILOR-MADE TOUR

1 day Copenhagen » 2 days Roskilde
 » 2 days Lejre, Ruds Vedby & Trelleborg
 » 2 days Copenhagen



» PRICES FROM: £895 pp incl. flights, transfers, 6 nights BB, 5 days car hire and selected activities.

How much do you really know about the Vikings? Perfect for curious adults and excitable kids alike, this itinerary takes you on a Danish swirl around Sjælland's best Viking museums, archaeological sites and more, opening a new door into the region's fascinating past.

Day 1 » Copenhagen Fly to the Danish capital and transfer to 71 Nyhavn, a historic hotel on the city's famously colourful quayside. Spend the rest of the day browsing Copenhagen's many museums and palaces, or sit at a Nyhavn café and watch the world go by.

Day 2 » Roskilde Collect your car and drive to Roskilde. Known primarily for its famous music festival, which takes place in June/July, the town is also home to a gorgeous Gothic cathedral in which Harald Bluetooth is buried. 

Day 3 » Roskilde Take a guided tour of the town to uncover its Viking past, taking in the remains of five longboats housed in the fascinating Viking Ship Museum. 

Day 4 » Lejre & Ruds Vedby Just west of Roskilde is Lejre, once an important Viking settlement that was the location of the king's mead hall in Beowulf. The Lejre Museum and nearby park help reconstruct Viking life with classes in weaving, pottery and more. Drive to Ruds Vedby to check into Kragerup Gods for two nights. 

Day 5 » Trelleborg & Lake Tissø Visit the earth ramparts at Trelleborg, a typical example of a circular Viking fort. Try a Viking mead, and then visit Tissø, a lake next to the remains of a Viking farm. 

Day 6 » Kragerup Gods & Copenhagen Enjoy a day of play before your drive back to Copenhagen. Your hotel is home to a canopy high wire, while at nearby Gerlev there is an action-packed historically-themed fun park.

Day 7 » Copenhagen Breakfast and transfer to the airport for your flight home. 

23

ROYAL DENMARK SELF-DRIVE



8-DAY TAILOR-MADE TOUR

2 days Copenhagen » 2 days Middelfart
 » 2 day Gråsten » 2 days Esbjerg



» PRICES FROM: £985 pp incl. flights, transfers, 7 nights BB and 6 days car hire. Operates year round.

Discover Denmark’s rich history as you drive through its rural heartland from Copenhagen to Billund, visiting picturesque villages and historic castles along the way, covering the country’s two main islands and its mainland peninsula, Jylland. Ending on the beautiful Vadehavet coastline at Esbjerg, this comprehensive itinerary includes stays at some of the country’s finest hotels.

Days 1–2 » Copenhagen Arrive in Copenhagen and check in for two nights at the Absalon Boutique Hotel. Use the central location to spend time exploring the capital’s bars, museums and shops. **B**

Days 3–4 » Middelfart Collect your hire car and head west towards Middelfart on the island of Fyn. We suggest you break the journey at Roskilde, whose attractions include the Viking Ship Museum and a Gothic cathedral that contains the remains of a 10th century king. At Middelfart, check in for two nights at Hindsgavl Slot, a beautifully renovated 13th century castle

set among landscaped gardens. Also in the area is the Hans Christian Andersen Museum at Odense and the 450-year-old Egeskov Castle. **B**

Days 5–6 » Gråsten Travel onto the European mainland and south through Jylland to the Benniksgaard Hotel at the highest point of the Flensborg Fjord, where many of the buildings date back to the 18th century and meat is grilled on an open fireplace each evening. Nearby is Gråsten Palace, where you can visit the gardens and church of the Danish royal family’s summer residence. **B**

Days 7–8 » Esbjerg The final stop is Esbjerg on Denmark’s west coast, where you’ll spend a night at Hjerting Badehotel. Facing west and set on the beach, you can gaze out as the sun sets over the North Sea. We recommend a walk along the Vadehavet shoreline, followed by a sundowner at the hotel’s Ship Inn. After breakfast on day 8, return your hire car at Billund and catch your flight home. **B**

NEW

24

THE TOP OF DENMARK:
AALBORG & SKAGEN

5-DAY TAILOR-MADE SELF-DRIVE

2 days Aalborg » 3 days Skagen



» **PRICES FROM:** £745 pp incl. flights, 5 days car hire, 2 nights Comwell Hvide Hus BB, 2 nights Color Hotel Skagen BB, parking at both hotels, a guided tour in Aalborg & entry to the Skagen Museum. Operates year round.

Head off the beaten track to take in the rural charm of northern Denmark, where shifting sands and pretty fishing villages have been inspiring artists for centuries. You'll start with Aalborg's Viking heritage and cutting-edge creative scene before you sweep up the coast to Skagen. This idyllic seaside town is a true step back in time, its historic galleries set in a red-roofed village that's cloaked in fields of green. It's all complemented by a private city tour, scenic country drives and stays in leading hotels.

Days 1 » Aalborg Flying to Aalborg, you'll pick up your hire car to drive the short distance to your hotel. Then, to get your bearings, we've included a private tour, exploring the city's traditional pastry shops, 12th-century cathedral and the vibrancy of its cutting-edge waterfront. You'll take in giant murals painted by international street artists along with a thriving creative scene that plays out across art galleries, gourmet restaurants and live music venues. 

Day 2 » Aalborg Today, you'll have some free time to explore Aalborg. Perhaps you'd like to visit Kunsten; an award-winning work of art in its own right, this contemporary exhibition was designed by world-famous Finnish architect Alvar Aalto. Otherwise, you might embark on the Aalborg Beerwalk to taste your way through the local brewing culture. Then, if you cast your net a little further, you can step back to the time of the Vikings at nearby Lindholm Høje. Just a 15 minutes' drive away, this burial site features

hundreds of cremation mounds marked by stones. Its intriguing history is brought to life by a superb museum. 

Day 3 » Skagen Head north towards Skagen, taking the scenic route past the great dunes of Rubjerg Knude that swirl around its turn-of-the-century lighthouse. Then, it's on to Lønstrup, a seaside retreat that's become a favourite among artists and craftsmen alike. 

Days 4-5 » Skagen Staying in Skagen's only four-star accommodation, you'll be treated to the likes of Finnish saunas, a wine-cellar and a pool terrace. However, you'll want to explore what is Denmark's northernmost town, whose sand-dune landscapes have inspired generations of painters, their work immortalised in the Skagen Museum (entry included) and a superb spread of galleries and boutiques. There's also the town's 18th-century sand-covered church to visit and an abundance of freshly caught seafood to indulge in, all before your flight home on day five. 

FAROE ISLANDS

Despite lying hundreds of miles from continental Europe, the Faroe Islands are governed by Denmark. But both the landscape and language are closer to Iceland's wild remotes than the flat familiarity of their sovereign state. Summer is definitely the best time to visit this unique destination, an archipelago of precipitous cliffs, Arcadian dales and quaint customs.

From above, the Faroes resemble many of the other littoral landscapes of the North Atlantic, with the same fjord- and mountain-riddled coastline as Scotland, Norway and Iceland. It's certainly something that appealed to the Vikings when they came to settle over a thousand years ago, and, as in Iceland, their culture has thrived in oceanic isolation. The gateway to this fascinating world is the capital Tórshavn, on the island of Streymoy. From here, you can access the other main islands through a network of tunnels and bridges, ferries and helicopters, meaning the plunging cliffs and

wave-battered headlands of the coast are easily reached. In addition to the staggering beauty of the topography, Streymoy is also home to the ruins of the Magnus Cathedral and one of the world's oldest parliaments. The outer islands are equally impressive, and here you'll find abundant birdlife among a landscape of steep-sided fjords and empty bays, interspersed with multi-coloured cottages and grass-roofed wooden churches. Stray a little further to rugged cliffs like those at Vestmanna and you'll find vast colonies of nesting puffins, kittiwakes, guillemots, skuas and fulmars.



25

CLASSIC CIRCLE
SELF-DRIVE

8-DAY TAILOR-MADE TOUR

1 day Vágur » 1 day Vestmanna
» 1 day Gjógv » 1 day Klaksvík » 1 day
Søldarfjörður » 1 day Sandoy » 2 days
Kirkjubæur & Tórshavn



» PRICES FROM: £1,450 pp incl. flights,
6 days car hire and 7 nights guesthouse
accommodation. Operates 1 May to
30 Sep.

Here is the perfect itinerary to enjoy
a week of midnight sun, discovering
lush green valleys, high cliffs, powerful
waterfalls, isolated villages and ancient
Viking history. On the way you'll spot
thousands of nesting seabirds, and cross
the only bridge over the Atlantic Ocean.

Day 1 » Vágur Fly via Copenhagen to the
island of Vágur and collect your hire car.
From here, make for the coastal village of
Bøur, with views across to the fin-shaped
islet Tindhólmur. Further on is Gásadalur, a
remote village perched on the clifftops and
surrounded by mountains.

Day 2 » Vestmanna & Tjörnúvík Drive in
the tunnel under Vágafjörður to Streymoy,
and take a cruise on the sound to see the
birds nesting at Vestmanna. Then, cross the
Atlantic's only bridge to the village of Eiði
on Eysturoy. 

Day 3 » Gjógv Spend a day exploring
Eysturoy's mountains and cliffs then
overnight at this quaint harbour village. 

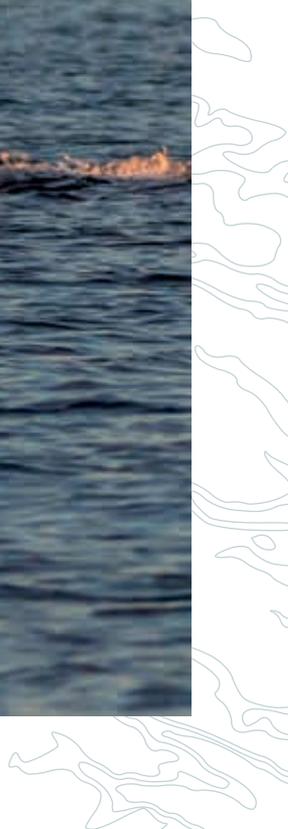
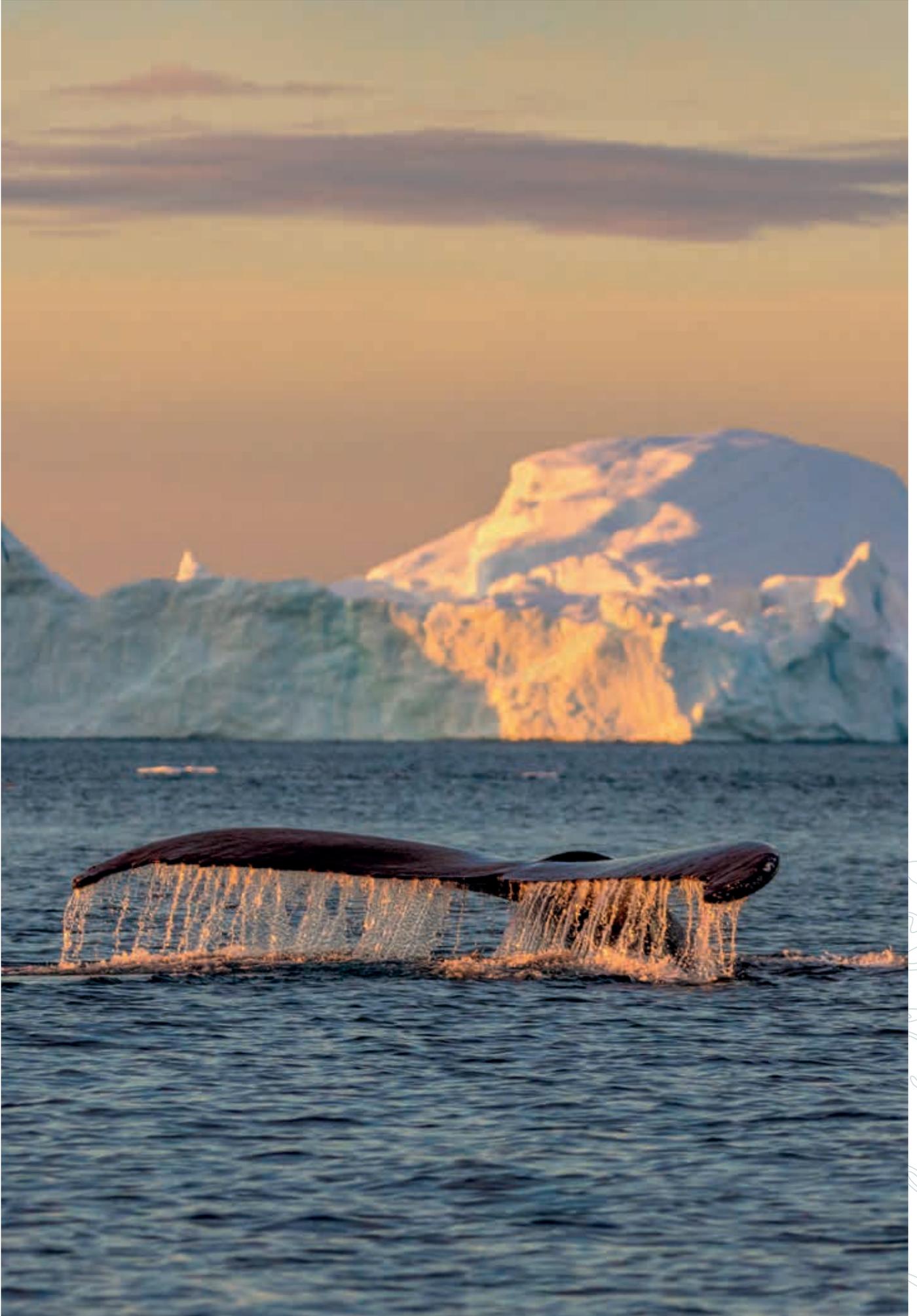
Day 4 » Klaksvík Drive through another
undersea tunnel, this time to Borðoy and
the Islands' second city, Klaksvík. From

here you can explore the other northern
islands, Viðoy and Kunoy, connected
by road, and gaze over the kyles to the
dramatic islands of Kalsoy, Svínoy and
Fugloy. 

Day 5 » Søldarfjörður Return to Eysturoy
and make for the village of Søldarfjörður,
where you're invited for afternoon coffee
and cake at a private house. 

Day 6 » Sandoy & Tórshavn Cross back
to Streymoy and take the ferry to Sandoy,
the only island that has sand dunes (hence
the name), returning to the capital in the
evening and dropping off your hire car. 

Days 7-8 » Kirkjubæur & Tórshavn Visit
the historic village of Kirkjubæur, home
to the Magnus Cathedral. Afterwards,
head back to Tórshavn to overnight before
connecting with your return flights. 



GREENLAND

The world's largest island is also the country with the lowest density of human population. Much of Greenland is a pristine environment with a vast ice sheet at its centre. It's a rugged, mountainous land packed with glaciers, fjords and creatures great and small. And yet humans have made a home in this inhospitable wilderness for some 5,000 years, as waves of incoming Inuits and Vikings have found ways to adapt to the harsh northern winters. Thankfully, summer is one of the rare times when parts of Greenland actually live up to its verdant name and the forbidding winter landscape opens up to spectacular coastal adventures on sea and land.

As the winter ice thaws, the fringes of Greenland are released from their hoary covering, exposing rock and heath surrounding colourful villages of matchbox houses dotted along the cliff tops, all resplendent in the constant glare of the northern summer. Dogsleds, snowmobiles, skis and snowshoes are no longer the only way to get around. Hiking trails beat a path through bold rock formations fringed by burgeoning wildflowers, and an intricate network of fjords and sounds becomes navigable again by boat, opening up all manner of exhilarating cruising possibilities, particularly in the

south between the 'Golden Triangle' towns of Qaqortoq, Narsaq and Narsarsuaq. It is in the summer, too, that the glaciers that eject ice from the country's interior are at their most active. Calving, the process that creates icebergs, is a major attraction for those beguiled by one of nature's most extraordinary events: there is nothing quite like the crisp, bluish colour of glacial ice, and no sculptor can replicate the elaborate spires and steeples that plunge down into the icefjords. You can see and hear this spectacular production line of waterfalls and icebergs for yourself with a visit to Ilulissat.



26

THE ICEBERG TOWN OF ILULISSAT



7-DAY TAILOR-MADE TOUR

1 day Copenhagen » 2 days Ilulissat
 » 1 day Egi Glacier » 1 day Ilulissat
 » 2 days Copenhagen



» **PRICES FROM:** £2,380 pp incl. flights, transfers, 2 nights Hilton Copenhagen Airport BB, 3 nights Hotel Arctic BB, 1 night Glacier Lodge BB and activities per itinerary. Operates 18 Jun to 7 Sep.

A colourful collection of bungalows dispersed over a promontory, Ilulissat resembles many other pretty Arctic towns. But just to the south, the Arctic's most productive glacier pushes billions of tonnes of ice into the Ilulissat Icefjord, creating a magical vista of bobbing icebergs that glint blue in the Midnight Sun of the summer.

Day 1 » Copenhagen Greenland is best reached via Denmark, so fly to Copenhagen and check into the Hilton airport hotel. Just fifteen minutes from the city centre, you'll be able to spend your first day enjoying the sights and sounds of the Danish capital.

Day 2 » Ilulissat Take an early morning flight across the North Atlantic to Greenland, touching down in Ilulissat. The remainder of the day is free for you to explore the town, with Restaurant Ulo highly recommended for its exquisite Arctic cuisine and the views over Disko Bay. **B**

Day 3 » Ilulissat Start your morning with a walk around the town's historic centre, discovering the town's history from its genesis as a Danish trading port in the 18th century. In a gully just to the south is Sermermiut, a settlement showcasing four millennia of Inuit history. **B**

Day 4 » Egi Glacier Today consists of a stunning journey up the western coast of



HOTEL ARCTIC

Located on a hill to the north of Ilulissat town centre, Hotel Arctic is a welcoming proposition that offers a range of comfortable rooms, suites and igloo pods, all with harbour views. And, the new summer-season 'outdoor rooms' come complete with a private terrace and stunning Fell views. Meanwhile, the hotel's restaurant – named by one reviewer as 'the world's wildest kitchen' – is among Greenland's best. A regular shuttle bus runs to the tourist office in the centre of town, from where many of the excursions start.

Greenland, its rocky peaks and headlands infiltrated by sparkling ice-saturated fjords. About fifty miles to the north, Egi Glacier is one of the most beautiful in all of Greenland, and the lodge here is perfectly positioned for watching the giant blocks of ice breaking free into the sea. **B**

Day 5 » Ilulissat Return to Ilulissat, where you'll take a night cruise on the Icefjord, illuminated by the Midnight Sun. **B**

Day 6-7 » Copenhagen Spend another day, night and morning in the Danish capital before continuing your homeward journey. **B**

Greenland/Iceland extension

With a convenient flight route between Keflavik and Ilulissat, you can book this tour as an add-on from Iceland. Call one of our specialists on 020 7590 0679 for more details.

GLACIER LODGE, EQI GLACIER

SUPERIOR



Facing the foremost edge of Eqi Glacier (known locally as Eqip Sermia), the huts at Eqi Lodge give you a front-row seat to witness the calving as ice breaks from the wall and avalanches into the fjord. Fortunately your raised veranda is well out of the way of the ensuing waves, and the comfortable huts' solar-powered heating means you can be cosy and eco-friendly all at once. Aside from the sea excursion, you'll have the opportunity to explore the lagoon, moraine and glacier on one of the lodge's thrilling escorted hikes. Further into the interior, a guided trek on the inland ice gives a thrilling sense of the power of the slowly shifting mass of frozen and melting water where it meets the bedrock, forming deep wells and spectacular lakes.



ILIMANAQ LODGE

STANDARD



Located just 15 kilometres from Ilulissat, Ilimanaq is one of Greenland's oldest settlements, a colourful cluster of houses set around a small harbour on the shores of iceberg-studded Disko Bay. It's here that you'll find Ilimanaq Lodge, a collection of 15 wood cabins staggered along the sea shore. With green credentials at its core, this comfortable hotel – part listed building, part new development – truly makes the most of its spectacular surroundings. Indeed, as the sweeping views of Greenland's west coast are lit in summer by the glow of the Midnight Sun, that very same energy is harnessed by rooftop solar panels that produce everything from electricity to central heating and hot running water. There's a restaurant on site, and guests can explore both land and sea on optional cross-country hikes, iceberg cruises and whale-watching tours.



GREENLAND EXCURSIONS

Many of the images we see of Greenland are apocalyptic visions of its vast ice shelf collapsing into the ocean. You can witness the dramatic sights and sounds yourself on a sailing trip through the armada of icebergs the island's glaciers sporadically shed as they reach the coast. Afterwards, perhaps explore one of the tiny remote coastal settlements that dot Greenland's shores and see how locals live harmoniously with their harsh environment.



SAILING TO THE ICEBERGS

Board a small boat at Ilulissat's tiny harbour and set out into stunning Disko Bay to get a closer look at the huge towers of millennia-old icebergs that have calved from Ilulissat Icefjord, one of the most famous in the world. Gazing around you'll see colourful villages and appreciate the wonder experienced by the early Arctic explorers. This excursion is highly recommended by our specialists.

» PRICES FROM: £85 pp incl. hot drinks. Duration 2.5 hrs. Operates year round.

OQAATSUT SETTLEMENT CRUISE

Oqaatsut is a tiny settlement of about fifty residents on a peninsula in Disko Bay. Established by Dutch whalers in the 1700s, Oqaatsut has its own school, church, grocery and restaurant but has barely grown in size since its foundation, reflecting the demanding lifestyle among Greenland's fjords. This cruise from Ilulissat shows off the beauty of Disko Bay and the bewitching simplicity of a life lived among the icebergs.

» PRICES FROM: £115 pp incl. hot drinks. Duration 5 hrs. Operates year round.



GREENLAND EXCURSIONS

Famed for its fabulous fjords and giant glaciers, Greenland also has a wealth of cultural history. Over the centuries the island has been reached by waves of settlers, mostly Inuits from North America, but also Vikings from Iceland and more recently Danish traders, making Greenland the site of the first contact between Europeans and indigenous Americans. Learn all about the history and legends surrounding this cultural crossroads.

THE OLD SETTLEMENT AT THE ICEFJORD

An Inuit settlement dating back over two millennia, Sermermiut lies just over a kilometre south of Ilulissat, and a short walking tour takes you right to the edge of the UNESCO-listed Ilulissat Icefjord. En route your guide will introduce you to the region's flora and fauna, and you'll pass Kællingekløften, a narrow chasm with a grisly past. Once at Sermermiut, you'll learn about Inuit history and culture with the Icefjord providing the backdrop.

» **PRICES FROM:** £40 pp incl. guide and hot drinks. Duration 2 hrs. Operates year round.



CULTURAL & HISTORICAL CITY WALK

Founded in 1741, Ilulissat has come a long way from the tiny trading settlement once known as Jakobshavn. Meeting your guide, you'll take a walking tour around the town, learning about its role in Greenland's history and how today's inhabitants cope with the extreme environment. On the way you'll pass the birthplace of explorer Knud Rasmussen, visit fishermen at the harbour and meet hunters at their trading post.

» **PRICES FROM:** £40 pp incl. guide. Duration 2hrs. Operates year round.



FINLAND

What first attracted Santa to Lapland wasn't the ready availability of helpful elves and flying reindeer, but the reinvigorating summer sun and a vast network of forests and lakes to explore after his whirlwind winter exertions. It's a theme of wild beauty that's repeated throughout the country, with stunning archipelagos that stretch into the Baltic Sea, a spectacular Lakeland and sprawling forests home to roaming elks and bears. Then there's Helsinki, Finland's design-conscious capital where you can enjoy excellent shopping and a lively nightlife.

As a country, Finland is surrounded on every side by blocs to which it does not belong: it is a Scandinavian afterthought, a Russian satellite, a nation with a long Baltic coast without being considered one of the Baltic States. Its neighbours have all had a considerable impact, and, like Poland, the Finns had to fight both the Soviets and the Nazis during the dark times of the Second World War. But influences that once tugged the country in all directions are now a

major benefit: Finland offers Nordic cool, Russian grandeur and Baltic novelty in one neat little package. You can spend hours fishing on the forested shores of a secluded lake, stay in fabulous country manors, sip coffee or something stronger between museum visits in the designer capital, or hop on a Baltic cruise to soak up the opulence of St Petersburg or the raucous nightlife of Tallinn. Laidback and madcap in equal measures, it's a winning formula for adventure and relaxation.



27

SOUTHERN FINLAND
SELF-DRIVE

NEW



5-DAY TAILOR-MADE TOUR

1 day Helsinki » 2 days Hanko
» 2 days Helsinki



» **PRICES FROM:** £1,255 pp incl. flights, 3 days car hire, 2 nights at Hotel Haven BB, 2 nights at Hotel Regatta BB, guided kayaking, tour of Ekenäs & EKTA Museum, entrance to Raseborg Castle ruins, 3 lunches & 1 dinner. Operates 30 Jun to 31 Aug.

While Helsinki rightly grabs the headlines for its modern innovation and rich heritage, this road trip will bring you out of the capital and into the rural beauty of southern Finland. Country roads will see you between port towns and quaint villages as you enjoy everything from kayak paddles and scenic cruises to guided tours, castle visits and a full spread of dining experiences.

Day 1 » Helsinki Flying out to Helsinki, you'll make your way to your central accommodation – Finland's first Small Luxury Hotel of the World. A fitting welcome to the city's diverse beauty, it straddles modernity and heritage charm, contrasting state-of-the-art design with a restaurant housed in Helsinki's second-oldest stone building. And, it's a juxtaposition felt across the city. One moment you could be admiring its 18th-century island fortress and the next immersing yourself among Helsinki's cutting-edge design scene. **(BLD)**

Days 2–3 » Hanko Leave Helsinki behind as you collect your hire car and drive out to explore the coast, heading towards Hanko for an included cruise out to the Bengtskär Lighthouse. Then, after a three-course dinner and a night in your spa hotel – an Art Nouveau gem that dates back to the turn of the century – you'll hit the waters once more with a kayak tour. Weaving through the countless islands that characterise the Finnish coast, your



HOTEL REGATTA

Fully renovated, this modern hotel occupies a 19th-century Jugend art nouveau building designed by renowned Finnish architect, Lars Sonck. Each of the hotel's 48 rooms are unique, decorated with their own motif to reflect the building's distinctive architectural style. But it's not all Scandinavian good looks. There's substance here too, not least in the Brasserie Regatta, where local ingredients are showcased in a menu of southern French classics. And also in the spa, where a heated pool and treatment rooms look out across the Baltic Sea.

expert guide will see you to Hauensuoli. A natural harbour, it features over 600 rock carvings, documenting the sailors that have sought shelter here since the 15th century. After an included picnic lunch, you'll then paddle back to Hanko where you'll have some free time to explore. **(BL)**

Days 4–5 » Helsinki A short drive will see you plunge through evergreen forests to arrive at the charming town of Ekenäs. Its rich history is brought to life on your guided tour, bringing you between its neoclassical churches and colourful timber buildings. Then, after a visit to the EKTA Museum's art galleries, you'll move on to Ramsholmen Forest Park before lunch at a 19th-century timber lodge and a visit to Raseborg Castle Ruins. End the day with the drive back to Helsinki where you'll spend the night after dropping your car off, flying home the next day. **(BL)**



HOTEL HAVEN

SUPERIOR



One of the Small Luxury Hotels of the World, Hotel Haven is perfectly located right on the Helsinki waterfront, within seconds of the city's central park, Esplanadi. Guests can eat gourmet Finnish cuisine next door at Havis, lounge in the trendy bar and work off any excesses in the gym. Rooms and suites are tastefully decorated with comfy furnishings, a kingsize bed and a spa-style bathroom, alongside the usual mod cons.

KLAUS K HOTEL

SUPERIOR



With a chic design inspired by contemporary Finnish artist, Akseli Gallen-Kallela, the interiors of this city centre hotel are everything you'd expect from a stay in one of Europe's most design-conscious capitals. Original Rooms come with Unikulma mattresses and amenities from Malin + Goetz, as do the new Sky Lofts, which also feature rooftop terrace access and wonderful views across the Helsinki skyline. Tuck into a delicious brunch, light snack or evening cocktail at the ever-so-stylish Klaus K Dine or embrace the flavours of Tuscany at the hotel's signature Toscanini Restaurant with its relaxed ambience and country-style cooking.

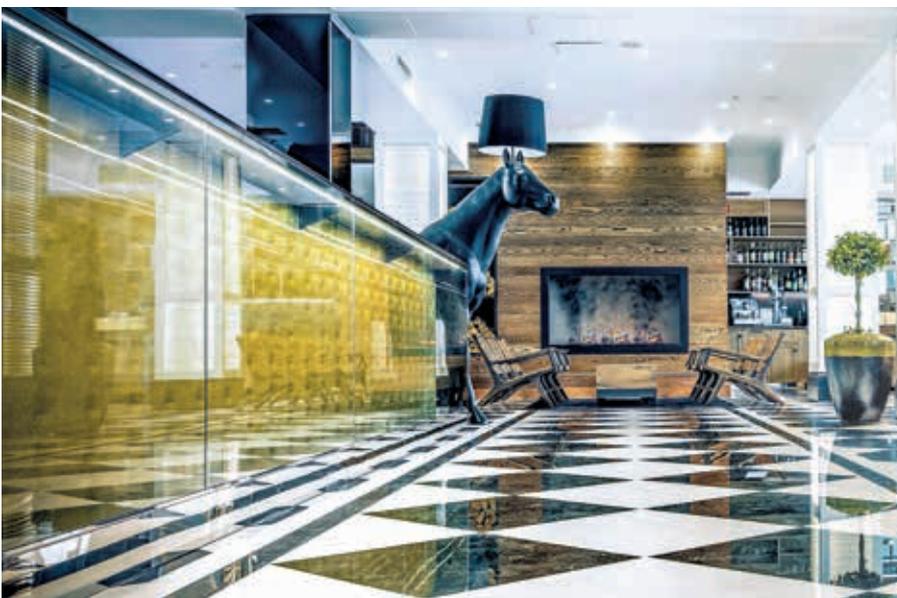


HOTEL LILLA ROBERTS

DELUXE



Located in the heart of Helsinki's Design District, the building that houses this boutique hotel was built in 1909 under the exacting gaze of leading Finnish architect, Selim A. Lindqvist. Once the headquarters of Helsinki's Energy Works, it's played host to, among other things, a power plant that provided the city's electricity for much of the 20th century. Now, as one of the capital's leading hotels, it brings the very best in modern luxury living and elegant dining to one of Helsinki's most vibrant neighbourhoods.



28

HELSINKI, ÅLAND
& STOCKHOLM

NEW



the sunset sea views of its pool, sauna and Jacuzzi before a five-course dinner where fresher-than-fresh ingredients are showcased across gourmet menus. The next day, showcase the region's history in medieval castles and 19th-century fortresses, and head onto the water with optional kayak paddles and boat rides. Then, returning to your hotel, you'll be treated to afternoon tea washed down with a Jacuzzi dip and complimentary sparkling wine before a three-course dinner, again at the hotel restaurant. **E D**

Days 4–5 » Stockholm Making the short hop over to Sweden, you'll soon be sailing through archipelagos formed of near-countless islets. It's scenery that will see you right into Stockholm, where you'll settle in to the 18th-century grandeur of your luxury hotel. Then, before admiring its chandeliers and perhaps imbibing with a drink at the champagne bar or private wine cellar, be sure to take a look around your historic surrounds. The cobbled streets and frescoed townhouses of Gamla Stan, are just a stroll away. Finally, on day five, transfer to the airport for your flight home **E**

5-DAY TAILOR-MADE TOUR

1 day Helsinki » 2 days Åland
» 2 days Stockholm



» **PRICES FROM:** £895 pp incl. flights, transfers, 1 night Hotel Haven BB, 2 nights Havsvidden Resort HB, 1 night Kings Garden Hotel BB & ferry crossing from Helsinki to Åland to Stockholm. Operates 1 May to 30 Sep.

Sailing across the Baltic, you'll weave between cragged islets and wild coastlines to arrive at the Åland Islands. Here, you'll stay right on its cliff-top jags, returning from lake walks and trips to sleepy fishing villages to an included spread of afternoon teas, sauna soaks and degustation dining, held at one of Finland's finest restaurants. Either side, you'll compare the rich heritage and cutting-edge modernity of Stockholm and Helsinki – two of Europe's city greats.

Day 1 » Helsinki Flying out to Helsinki, you'll have a day to take in its charms. While its UNESCO-listed island fortress, Art Nouveau old town and stern, 19th-

century cathedral remember the city's rich heritage, there's a certain cutting edge to the Finnish capital. Its world-famous design scene can be felt everywhere from hip boutiques and unique galleries to silent timber chapels and glass churches hewn out of rock.

Days 2–3 » Åland With the harbour on your hotel's doorstep, you'll board your ferry to sail the Gulf of Finland and onto the Baltic Sea. Then after a few hours of lazy cruising, you'll arrive onto Åland where you'll be met by a private driver and brought to the island's beautifully remote northern coast and your ultra-contemporary accommodation. Relax with



HAVSVIDDEN

Sprawled out across Åland's idyllic northern shore, this contemporary resort combines the sort of sleek sophistication for which Finland is renowned, with the stark beauty and wild nature of the Baltic. Rooms here are delightfully relaxing, as are the public areas, dotted with open fireplaces and framed by huge windows that let in sweeping coastal views. The food is excellent, all locally sourced and delicious, while the cleansing sauna and heated indoor pool add extra luxury.

29

BEST OF FINNISH
LAKELAND



9-DAY TAILOR-MADE TOUR

1 day Helsinki >> 2 days Rantasalmi
>> 2 days Savonlinna >> 2 days Anttola
>> 2 days Helsinki



>> **PRICES FROM:** £1,270 pp incl. flights, 7 days car hire, 2 nights Hotel Haven BB, 2 nights Järvisydän BB, 2 nights Lomamokkila BB, 2 nights Anttolanhovi BB, tours and meals per itinerary. Operates 1 May to 30 Sep.

The largest lake in Finland, Saimaa is a huge basin riddled with thousands of tiny islets, forested strips and narrow channels. Around the bounteous waters are a plethora of charming rural villages and dense forests. This self-drive tour takes you through its best features, staying at historic lakeside cottages and imposing manor houses.

Day 1 >> Helsinki Fly to Helsinki and check in at the waterfront Hotel Haven.

Day 2 >> Porosalmi Collect your hire car and embark on the four-hour journey to the Järvisydän Hotel & Spa near the village of Porosalmi. Settle in for the night in a traditional cottage on the shores of Ahvenlahti, a branch of Saimaa. **B**

Day 3 >> Porosalmi Explore the lakeside activities available around Järvisydän, including golf, fishing and forest foraging. **BL**

Day 4 >> Savonlinna Drive through the lakelands to Savonlinna, a town spread over three islands in Saimaa, resembling a little Venice. One island is occupied by Olavinlinna, a 15th-century castle that hosts a major opera festival each summer, where you take a guided tour. **BL**

Day 5 >> Savonlinna Enjoy a scenic cruise on the lake and, if you've booked ahead,

return to Olavinlinna for one of the nightly concerts (2018 dates 6 Jul to 4 Aug – visit operafestival.fi for more information). **B**

Day 6 >> Anttola Make for the Art & Design villas at Anttolanhovi, another luxurious lakeside property constructed from local materials. Enjoy the use of your own private sauna and opt to either make use of your villa's kitchen or have your meals cooked for you. **B**

Day 7 >> Anttola Continue to enjoy the tranquillity of your forest setting. The woods yield a variety of edible berries, and you won't be able to resist a visit to Ollinmäki Wine Farm for a tasting tour of their pioneering berry wines. **B**

Days 8–9 >> Helsinki Return to the capital for more cosmopolitan fun. Overnight at Hotel Haven, breakfast and transfer to the airport for your return flight. **B**

HOTEL AND SPA RESORT JÄRVISYDÄN

SUPERIOR



The family that owns and runs this lakeside resort have been welcoming travellers to the Porosalmi region since 1658 when it was a simple staging post on the new road connecting Russia and Sweden. Now, a collection of villas, traditional cottages and newly built hotel rooms – some with private balconies and Jacuzzis – blend seamlessly into their Lakeland surroundings. Complementing the accommodation is the Lake Spa and Finnish Sauna World where guests can choose from three types of sauna – wood smoke, traditional stove and steam – or relax in a hot tub under forestframed skies. And, after adventure-filled days, the hotel's restaurants and wine cellar serve summertime menus inspired by the hotel's 17th century origins.



LOMAMÖKKILÄ FARM

SUPERIOR



Set in a beautiful countryside on the shores of Lake Saimaa, Lomamokkila is a working farm that's been welcoming guests for four generations. Hotel rooms, guesthouses and garden houses provide intimate, country-style accommodation, but it's the timber-built lakeside cottages that are the real highlight here. With a living room, kitchen, private sauna, barbecue area and direct access to the beach, they're the perfect base for summer activities, which include everything from cycling and forest hikes to volleyball, tennis and badminton. Breakfasts are suitable hearty, as are the meals served in the traditional Finnish restaurant. There's also a farm shop for barbecue and picnic provisions.







RUSSIA & THE BALTICS

It's no surprise that the largest country in the world offers a huge array of landscapes and a vast collection of cultural curiosities, from the beautiful ballets of the Bolshoi and lost-in-time villages to wide open steppes and onion-domed skylines.

Most visitors stay west of the Ural Mountains, where the two great cities of Moscow and St Petersburg, replete with world-leading museums and grandiose architecture, provide plenty to linger on. Yet it's equally rewarding to move right across the country, perhaps travelling by luxury train through Siberia's lake-strewn national parks and rugged mountain ranges to the eastern city of Vladivostok on the faraway shores of the Pacific Ocean. Or, heading south to subtropical Sochi, gateway to the North Caucasus.

Shouldering Mother Russia are the Baltic States of Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania. Geographically speaking they have much in common; forests and lakes cover swathes of countryside and splendid beaches and friendly seaside towns line the coast of all three. History, too, has bound them together. For roughly 500 years they were under the influence of the Hanseatic League, of which Riga was the principal eastern trading post. Estonia's Tallinn is the oldest capital in northern Europe, and, just like Vilnius in Lithuania, holds UNESCO World-Heritage Status.



30

BELLES OF THE BALTIC



5-DAY TAILOR-MADE TOUR

2 days Stockholm » 1 day Helsinki
 » 1 day Tallinn » 1 day Helsinki



» **PRICES FROM:** £545 pp incl. flights, 1 night Stockholm BB, overnight cruise in an inside cabin, 2 nights Helsinki BB and a day trip to Tallinn. Operates 01 May to 30 Sep

This tour takes you to three fantastic capitals in just five action-packed days as you travel from Stockholm, to Finland's Helsinki and on to Tallinn, Estonia's former European Capital of Culture. It's the perfect introduction to the Baltic, hopping between vibrant cities aboard a Tallink Silja ship and staying at modern Scandic hotels throughout.

Days 1-2 » Stockholm Arrive in Sweden's capital and enjoy your first evening exploring the cobblestone streets of the Old Town, Gamla Stan. The following day, perhaps visit the Vasa Museum's 17th-century warship relic, or take in the ABBA Museum's all-singing, all-dancing tribute to Sweden's favourite popsters, Benny, Björn, Agnetha and Anni-Frid. Then, in the evening, board your Tallink Silja ship for an overnight cruise to Helsinki, sailing through the stunning Stockholm Archipelago.

Day 3 » Helsinki There are few better ways to arrive in a new city than by sea, and the final approach to Helsinki is no

exception. After you've enjoyed breakfast on board, disembarked and checked into your city-centre hotel, you can start exploring the Finnish capital on foot. Here, the Finn's love of art and design is played out in a seemingly endless array of museums and galleries. It's also worth taking time to visit Tuomiokirkko, a Lutheran cathedral set atop steep granite steps, which provide wonderful views across the city and beyond.

Day 4 » Tallinn After breakfast, you'll depart for Tallinn, a two-hour voyage bringing you to the World Heritage-listed delights of its medieval Old Town. It's one of Europe's most enchanting walled cities where cobblestone laneways and café-lined squares make for long, happy lunches and hours spent idly people watching. In the late afternoon you'll head back to Helsinki to spend the night.

Day 5 » Helsinki Enjoy a morning further exploring Helsinki before transferring to the airport in time for your flight home.

31

VISA-FREE CRUISE
TO RUSSIA**6-DAY TAILOR-MADE TOUR**

2 days Helsinki >> overnight cruise
>> 3 days St Petersburg >> overnight cruise
>> 1 day Helsinki



>> **PRICES FROM:** £945 pp incl. flights, transfers, 1 night Radisson Blu Seaside BB, 2 nights MS *Princess Anastasia* HB, 2 nights Sokos Hotel Palace Bridge BB and tours per itinerary. Operates year-round.

The Gulf of Finland is all that separates St Petersburg from the laid-back Finnish capital, Helsinki, and both look at their best in the long days of ice-free summer. Enjoy an overnight cruise to this worldrenowned mecca for shoppers, foodies, culture vultures and fans of rococo extravagance.

Day 1 >> Helsinki Touch down in Helsinki and check in at the Radisson Blu Seaside, a delightfully modern hotel just a 15-minute stroll from the city centre and with wonderful views across Helsinki's bustling West Harbour.

Day 2 >> Helsinki, MS *Princess Anastasia* Spend the day exploring the galleries and museums of Helsinki, including the orthodox Uspenski Cathedral, which should whet your appetite for all things Russian. Board the cruise ship MS *Princess Anastasia* for the evening sailing. **B**

Day 3 >> St Petersburg Arriving in Russia in the morning, you'll check into the Sokos Hotel Palace Bridge before embarking on a sightseeing tour to the Fabergé Museum and either the Hermitage or the Peter & Paul Fortress. The former, housed in the world-famous Winter Palace, is one of the largest and oldest in the world, with an extraordinary collection of paintings, decorative art and antiques. **B**

Day 4 >> St Petersburg Spend the next day touring the myriad palaces, orthodox churches and museums that pepper the city, and perhaps catch a show at the Mikhailovsky Theatre in the evening. **B**

Day 5 >> St Petersburg, MS *Princess Anastasia* You have most of the day free to have a final look round St Petersburg before boarding your cruise ship for dinner. **B**

Day 6 >> Helsinki The ship arrives in Helsinki in the early morning, so you will have free time in the Finnish capital before catching your flight home. **B**

New for 2018

It's now possible to swap Helsinki's cutting edge for a stay in Estonia's medieval capital, Tallinn. Call our specialists on 020 7590 0679 for more details.





AUTUMN AURORAS

The aurora is one of nature's true wonders. And, with the glorious kaleidoscope of season's change coupled with milder weather, chasing the Northern Lights in autumn is a truly enticing proposition.

It's also a fact that the Northern Lights are at their most active in those colourful months before winter, the Earth's orientation maximising the probability of solar flares. So, while you might miss out on long Arctic nights, from the wilds of Swedish Lapland to the rugged beauty of Norway's Lofoten Islands you can expect spectacular displays.

Excursions, too, take on a different flavour, with wilderness hikes, bike rides, foraging and food tours making the most of Scandinavia's great outdoors and its accompanying seasonal bounty. It's these ingredients – all fresh, all delicious – that are showcased in restaurants across the region; think wild game or succulent Lofoten lamb served alongside the likes of wild cloudberries and mushrooms picked from the forest that very day.

You'll also see the Northern Lights themselves in different ways, as you put aside the husky-sled rides of winter to spend balmy nights on pretty lakeshores and enjoy evening strolls in wildlife-filled forests free from snow. Then there's the accommodation, with everything from glass-domed igloos and treetop hotels to remote log cabins, all adding a touch of the unique to your Scandinavian adventure.

NEW

32

FINLAND'S AUTUMN AURORAS



4-DAY TAILOR-MADE BREAK

4 days Harriniva



» **PRICES FROM:** £995 pp incl. flights, transfers, 2 nights Harriniva Holiday Centre FB, 1 night Aurora Dome FB, hotel sauna, Northern Lights campfire tour, Aurora Explorer tour & Aurora hunt by mountain bike. Operates 24 Aug to 24 Sep.

This itinerary will see you explore the beauty of autumn in Finnish Lapland, with curated excursions included throughout, taking in the aurora on mountain bike rides, small-group tours and nights spent around a campfire. You'll also enjoy hearty full-board dining, along with stays in timber-clad accommodation and an Aurora Dome – a luxury igloo tent.

Day 1 » Harriniva Flying into the wilds of Finnish Lapland you'll be met at the airport and brought through old-growth forests to your cosy riverside accommodation, all blonde wood and Scandi chic. You'll also enjoy the first of your included dinners, with fresh, local ingredients showcased across menus of regional delicacies, served by a roaring fire, of course. Then, as night falls, it's time to begin your programme of aurora activities. Settling in by the campfire, your expert guide will teach you a little of the Lights' phenomena as you tuck into fire-cooked pancakes and gaze skywards for their ethereal appearance. **B**

Day 2 » Aurora hunt by mountain bike Today, you'll have some time to explore, perhaps taking in the spectacular autumn colours on forest walks or fishing expeditions. You can even visit the resident huskies and a nearby reindeer farm. After dinner, it's then time to saddle up to head out by mountain bike in search of the

aurora. Your expert guide will lead you through tree-lined trails and out to open clearings – the perfect spot to take in nature's greatest light show. **BLD**

Day 3 » Aurora Dome With your last full day, be sure to take some time to relax. And, there's no better way than making use of your hotel's sauna; you'll enjoy complimentary access throughout your stay. But, if you want something more active, look into canoeing or rafting along Harriniva's river. You'll also end your trip in style, checking into your Aurora Dome – a luxury igloo tent complete with open fire and panoramic views, hopefully of the Northern Lights. Then, after dinner, you'll head out to chase them with a small group, your aurora guide driving you out to remote locations, carefully chosen based on the night's weather. **BLD**

Day 4 » Depart After a last breakfast, an included transfer will see you to the airport for your flight home.



NEW

33

LEVI GLASS IGLOO
AUTUMN BREAK



4-DAY TAILOR MADE BREAK

2 days Levi Panorama » 2 days Levin Iglut



» PRICES FROM: £815 pp incl. flights, transfers 2 nights Levi Panorama BB, 1 night Levin Iglut BB & Northern Lights cruise. Operates 27 August to 30 November.

On this short autumn break, you'll get away to one of the best places to spot the Northern Lights – Finnish Lapland. In between taking in the auroras on an evocative lake cruise and a night in a luxury glass igloo, you'll enjoy gourmet local dining and showcase autumn's beauty on optional forest walks, canoe trips and horse rides.

Day 1 » Levi Flying out to Kittilä in the depths of Finnish Lapland, you'll be met by a private driver who'll bring you through pine forests to your stylish accommodation. Positioned atop Levi fell, the hearty meals of its homely restaurant and the Scandi-chic of its blonde-wood rooms are a delightful contrast to your wild surrounds. It's scenery showcased on everything from high-rope courses and canoe paddles to horse treks, bike rides reindeer-accompanied hikes. Whatever you choose, you'll be quickly immersed among a technicolour display of autumn foliage.

Day 2 » Northern Lights cruise Today, after a hearty breakfast, you'll have some more time to explore. Perhaps channel your inner Bear Grylls with a typical Scandinavian autumn activity – foraging. Then, come the evening, it's time to head out in search of the Northern Lights. After an included

transfer you'll board a pontoon ferry to head out onto a nearby lake, gently drifting along as eyes turn skywards in search of the aurora. As you go, you can warm up in the ferry's cosy sauna or by the deck's campfire, sipping hot beverages while cooking your own sausages and tucking into crepes. **E**

Days 3–4 » Glass Igloo Whether it's a photography course, a trip to a husky farm or simply a walk in the woods, you'll have some more free time to take in autumn's charm this morning. Then, after dinner, you'll head to your unique accommodation – a glass igloo resplendent in ultra-modern design. Lying back, you'll be perfectly positioned to take in unobstructed views of the Northern Lights, your motorised bed tilting to take in their magical display. After a good night's sleep and a final breakfast, you'll fly home on day four. **B**



AUTUMN IN LEVI

Tucked away in the heart of Finnish Lapland, Levi conjures images of a winter wonderland where snow-drenched landscapes are animated by dogsleds and snowmobiles. However, for something of the unique, look to autumn. Levi's fells kaleidoscope into burnished oranges and deep reds, antlered wildlife makes the most of temperate weather and ranging hiking trails open up, criss-crossing old-growth forests and ancient valley floors.

This is a season to stay active. There's everything from canoe paddles and horse rides to disc golf, high-ropes courses and reindeer walks. It's all complemented by what is the "purest air in the world" – according to the World Health Organization no less. Yet, for the quintessential Finnish experience, let a local guide bring you out onto the trails to forage for wild food. You'll search for identify edible herbs, mushrooms and berries before learning to how to cook



up a just-picked feast. Don't forget the obligatory sauna to end the day.

And, that's not to say that you'll miss out on the Northern Lights – far from it. The Earth's seasonal orientation maximises the probability of the all-important solar flares, meaning that the aurora is, in fact, at its most active around the autumn equinox – late September. What's more, positioned deep within the Arctic Circle, Levi is one of the world's best places to catch a glimpse of those dancing greens and ethereal reds.

There's also a truly exhaustive list of ways to spot them, many of which simply wouldn't be possible in winter. Saddle up an

Icelandic horse, trek out deep into the forest or simply hunker down by a fire for dinner and a lights show. You can even cruise out on glassy lakes to watch the aurora's glow refract into a million colours. However, perhaps the most evocative way to see them is with a night spent in a glass igloo. Lying back on your bed, you'll have a front-row seat for nature's greatest visual display. Of course there are plenty of log cabins for the traditionalists as well.

To book your autumn Levi adventure, call our Finland specialists on 020 7590 0679.

NEW

34

AUTUMN IN NORTHERN NORWAY



5-DAY TAILOR-MADE TOUR

2 days Lofoten Islands » 1 day Hurtigruten cruise » 2 days Tromsø



» **PRICES FROM:** £1,295 pp incl. flights, transfers, 3 nights accommodation BB, 1 night Hurtigruten cruise HB, Northern Lights guided tour & Husky Hike. Operates 01 Sep to 30 Nov.

Bringing with it both spectacular seasonal colours and some of the best Northern-Lights viewing, Norway's Arctic north comes to life in autumn. On this itinerary, you'll cruise the Norwegian coast with Hurtigruten, stay in a timber cabin in the Lofoten Islands and explore the fjord-side spectacle of one of Europe's northernmost cities. We've even included two Northern Lights excursions – a guided tour and a thrilling husky hike.

Days 1–2 » Lofoten Islands Flying out to the Lofoten Islands, an included transfer will then see you to your traditional fisherman's cabin on Svolvær's quayside. You'll then have three days to explore, with everything from fishing expeditions to hikes and kayak trips showcasing the dramatic beauty of the archipelago mountains. We've also included a Northern Lights hunt. Based on the evening's forecast, a local expert will bring your small group out to the best possible site to catch a glimpse of the aurora, teaching you a little about this natural wonder and how best to photograph it. **B**

Day 3 » Hurtigruten cruise Today you'll have some further time to take in the Lofoten Islands' myriad delights. Perhaps dip into the local art galleries, soak up the fishing-village charm or head out in search of sea eagles on a boat cruise. Then, come the evening, you'll board your Hurtigruten cruise ship, enjoying a dinner of local delicacies as you trace

the cragged Arctic coast on your journey north. It's a truly evocative experience, sailing aboard what is still a postal ship.

B **D**

Days 4–5 » Tromsø Arrive into Tromsø, settling into your attractive fjord-side accommodation. As Norway's Arctic capital, this quiet mountain-framed town offers plenty of adventure, including fjord cruises, spectacular cable-car rides and museums on the region's explorers' past. Then, come the evening, we've included a Northern Lights husky hike. You'll be brought out into the surrounding islands to meet the dogs themselves – puppies and all – before taking a few out for a hill walk. Between the huskies and your local guide, you'll be brought among the season's kaleidoscope colours before settling down for a fireside dinner, served in a traditional Sami tent and – hopefully – under the Northern Lights' spectral dance. Finally, on day five, transfer to the airport in time for your flight home. **B** **D**

TROMSØ & LOFOTEN AUTUMN EXCURSIONS

While autumn in northern Norway is superb for viewing the Northern Lights, there are also plenty of action-packed ways to fill your time between displays. With the season's changing colours providing a spectacular backdrop, activities such as hiking, cycling or, as featured below, kayaking and even husky walks, all provide unique and fun ways to appreciate the drama and beauty of the Arctic landscape.

SEA KAYAKING

Join a guide from Lofoten Aktiv for a memorable sea-kayaking adventure, one of the best ways to explore the Lofoten Islands during those dazzling autumn months. With a mild climate and Lofotens' jagged frame awash with golds, reds, browns and oranges, you'll paddle the islands' dramatic fjords and hidden bays, looking out for passing wildlife such as harbour porpoises, seals and soaring white-tailed eagles

» PRICES FROM: £135 pp incl. transfers, all kayaking equipment & services of a guide. Duration: 4 hours. Operates 1 Sep to 30 Apr.



HUSKY HIKE & AURORA CAMP

Heading out from Tromsø to the picturesque island of Kvaløya, you'll reach your overnight camp where expert guides will take you to meet some of the 300 resident huskies. Then, after spending time playing with some of the puppies, you'll join a team of older dogs for an island walk, watching the kaleidoscope of autumn colours unfold. Later on, as darkness descends, you'll return to the camp to sit around an open fire, watching two short documentary films and listening to stories as you tuck into a traditional Sami supper and wait for the Northern Lights to appear.

» PRICES FROM: £215 incl. transfers, guided husky walk, overnight at aurora camp with dinner & breakfast. Operates 01 Sep to 31 Aug.



35

AUTUMN ADVENTURE:
BRÄNDÖN LODGE & TREEHOTEL



5-DAY TAILOR-MADE TOUR

3 days Brändön Lodge » 2 days Treehotel



» **PRICES FROM:** £1,695 pp incl. flights, transfers, 3 nights Brändön Lodge FB, 1 night Treehotel FB, Wilderness Skills excursion & Northern Lights tour. Operates 01 Sep to 30 Nov.

Pairing the delightfully traditional with the daringly inventive, this Swedish Lapland itinerary will see you stay in an art-installation treehouse and a log cabin by the sea. You'll also enjoy the best in regional dining with full board included throughout, along with a pair of curated excursions – a wilderness skills session and a Northern Lights walk.

Day 1 » Brändön Lodge Flying out to Luleå, you'll be met at the airport and brought the short distance up the coast to your idyllic log-cabin accommodation. Set right on the shore, it overlooks an archipelago of 1,300 islands, inhabited by just 100 residents. It's a delightful sense of seclusion showcased across pretty hikes

and bike rides. You'll also be treated to the first of your included full-board dining with a two-course dinner. Throughout your stay you can expect the very best of local specialities informed by fresh, seasonal ingredients. 

Day 2 » Wilderness skills Today, you'll make your introductions to the remote beauty of Swedish Lapland with an included wilderness skills session. A local guide will bring you out into the forest, teaching you how to survive in the Arctic, with lessons on fire-making, cooking and the local wildlife followed by lunch around the campfire. But, with three days here, there's plenty of time to explore on your own, perhaps with kayak trips or cruises



NEW



out among the islands in search of the native seals. **BLD**

Day 3 » Northern Lights walk In between your hearty meals today, you'll have some further time for optional activities. Alternatively, simply relax with a spa treatment or indulge with that favourite Finnish tradition – the sauna. Your lodge's offering is particularly enticing, found overlooking the Gulf of Bothnia's shimmering waters. Tonight is then given over to a search for the Northern Lights. An expert guide will bring you out to a clearing away from any light pollution where, if all goes to plan, your wilderness dinner will be illuminated by those famous dancing greens. **BLD**

Day 4 » Treehotel Leaving the coast behind, an included transfer will see you head deep into Swedish Lapland's great forested interior. Then, after an included lunch at Brittas – a homely guesthouse packed full of early-20th-century charm – you'll settle in to your truly unique, treetop accommodation. There's everything from a mirrored cube and floating UFO to a bird's nest and an entire cabin strung up at canopy level. There's also a full range of activities available, including zip lines, river kayaking, forest hikes and moose safaris. End the day with an included dinner, again at the excellent Brittas restaurant; expect the likes of wild game complemented by berries foraged from the surrounding woods. **BLD**

Day 5 » Treehotel After a final delicious breakfast, an included transfer will see you to the airport for your flight home. **B**



BEST SERVED SCANDINAVIA

Best Served Scandinavia is an independent, tailor-made tour operator specialising in holidays to Scandinavia, Canada and the Nordic and Baltic regions. We are proud to be part of Wexas, a family-owned, leading luxury and experiential travel company, with more than 47 years' experience.

TERMS & CONDITIONS

All prices, fares, hotels and tours described in this brochure are correct at the time of going to press (4/10/2017) and are subject to change and availability. All prices are per person based on two people travelling together sharing twin/double accommodation (unless otherwise stated).

Many of the flights and flight-inclusive holidays in this brochure are financially protected by the ATOL scheme. But ATOL protection does not apply to all holiday and travel services listed. Please ask us

to confirm what protection may apply to your booking. If you do not receive an ATOL Certificate then the booking will not be ATOL protected. If you do receive an ATOL Certificate but all the parts of your holiday are not listed on it, those parts will not be ATOL protected. For more information about financial protection and the ATOL Certificate go to: atol.org.uk/atolcertificate. The Wexas/ Best Served Scandinavia ATOL number is 2873.

Full Best Served Scandinavia booking conditions can be found at best-served.co.uk/terms-and-conditions.

INSURANCE

We strongly advise that you take out adequate travel insurance, including cover for all activities in your itinerary, at the time of booking. Our specialists can arrange travel insurance for you, with single trip, multi-trip and annual policies available. Call us for more details.

FIND US ONLINE

Our Best Served Scandinavia website, best-served.co.uk, is packed with information and advice on travelling to Scandinavia and the Nordic and Baltic regions. You'll find an extensive range of itinerary and hotel options, our latest special offers, insightful articles and a downloadable version of this brochure. You can request a quote directly through the site and also sign up to our regular e-newsletter.

EXPERT KNOWLEDGE

It's hard to overstate the value of talking to an expert when it comes to planning your holiday. We ensure our specialists regularly travel to the regions to find out what's new and re-evaluate the old, so you can be assured of an up-to-date opinion. They have an honest, informed approach to planning holidays, offering suggestions based on first-hand knowledge and an average of more than ten years' experience in travel.

YOUR TAILOR MADE SPECIALISTS

All of our specialists have travelled extensively in Scandinavia and the Nordic and Baltic regions. Their recommendations are always up-to-date, and their honest, informed approach to planning holidays, together with insightful suggestions based on first-hand knowledge, will ensure your stay in Scandinavia is a special one.



REBECCA THERIAULT

Sea kayaking under the Midnight Sun in the Lofotens and a stay at Svinøya Rorbuer are absolute musts. And, now that ICEHOTEL 365 has arrived in Swedish Lapland, a summer visit is high on my bucket list, too.



AMY STAFFORD

September in Finland is all about long days in the great outdoors. There's even a chance to view the Northern Lights in the autumn skies without the chilly winter weather.



MIRANDA BERLIAND

The Eliassen Rorbuer is my favourite place to stay in the Lofoten Islands. Surrounded by stunning mountain scenery, it's a fantastic place to enjoy the outdoors and Midnight Sun.



SAIJA KOKKONEN

In the heart of Finnish Lapland, a stay at the Nellim Wilderness Hotel on the shores of Lake Inari gives you the perfect chance to enjoy long nights under the Midnight Sun in a truly gorgeous setting.



LISA AYLING

Just a short drive from historic Bergen, Norway's fjords provide endless summer fun from scenic hikes to cider tasting. Stay at Hotel Ullensvang for amazing regional food and fjord-view rooms.



MADDIE ELEINI

For me, the Faroe Islands are among the most magical places on earth. Pair stunning scenery with some amazing seafood, served up by *the* most welcoming locals for the perfect summer holiday.



PIPPA MCCARTHY

Stay at Sweden's Treehotel for delicious home-cooked food, a warm Lapland welcome and architect-designed rooms hidden in the forest canopy – my favourites are the UFO and Mirrorcube.



JOSEPHINE COX

Norway's fjords are spectacular in summer. Enjoy breathtaking scenery, adrenaline-filled fun and the chance to watch seals and eagles on a rib-boat safari through Lysefjord.



MADDALENA CARDONE

Head to Luleå in Swedish Lapland for a late-summer break full of beauty. There's everything from island picnics to cycling and birding tours. And, in autumn, the colours are spectacular.



BEST SERVED SCANDINAVIA

Winter is a truly magical time to visit Scandinavia and the Nordic regions, with dancing displays of the Northern Lights providing an ethereal backdrop. It's a season of adrenaline-fuelled action and exhilarating adventure, when snowmobiling and husky safaris take centre stage between nights spent in ice hotels, remote polar camps, glass igloos and cosy log cabins.

WINTER 2017/18

- » Northern Lights
- » Ice & snow hotels
- » Glass igloos
- » Santa visits
- » Husky safaris
- » Snowmobiling
- » Wildlife tours
- » Coastal cruises

Our 2017/18 winter Scandinavia showcase is filled with inspiration for the colder months.

Call **020 7590 0679** to order your copy.





BEST SERVED SCANDINAVIA

Dorset House · 27-45 Stamford Street · London SE1 9NT
020 7590 0679 · best-served.co.uk



INVESTORS
IN PEOPLE