

Scandinavia in Winter

Chasing the Northern Lights

March 2027 | 20 Days

Cost to be confirmed

Tour Highlights

- The magic of the Northern Lights
- Ride the scenic Oslo–Bergen railway via Flåm
- Sail Norway's iconic coastline aboard the Hurtigruten
- Remote and spectacular towns of the Arctic Circle
- Experience a Lapland winter by snowmobile, dogsled and moonlit campfire
- Breathtaking snowscapes and untouched wilderness



Scandinavia in Winter: Chasing the Northern Lights



Tour overview

Journey to Europe's remote, wild North on a small group tour designed to showcase the very best of winter in Scandinavia. This region is renowned for one of nature's most breathtaking phenomena: the Northern Lights, also known as the Aurora Borealis.

Experiencing the Northern Lights is on most people's bucket list. However, this tour isn't just about chasing the aurora; it's about discovering the soul of Scandinavia in winter, completely different from anything we know in Australia. Picture vast snowscapes glinting under the low Arctic sun, cozy candle-lit rooms, and night skies alive with swirling green light.

Our small group adventure begins in the charming, cobblestoned capitals of Stockholm and Oslo, before we leave the cities behind for the legendary landscapes this region is famous for. Ride the Flåm Railway past snowy peaks, frozen waterfalls, and UNESCO-listed fjords to the colourful town of Bergen, steeped in Hanseatic history.

Board the Hurtigruten ship, which has connected Norway's coastal communities since 1893, and sail through jaw-dropping scenery to the tip of the continent at Kirkenes. Being out at sea often means darker skies and wide-open horizons — ideal conditions for spotting the northern lights.

Cross into Finland's pristine Lapland, where Sámi culture and Arctic wildlife await. Drive a team of huskies across frozen trails, meet gentle reindeer, and join a moonlit snowmobile tour in search of the aurora borealis. Warm up by a crackling fire, savour local delicacies, and marvel at the silence only a Nordic Winter can bring.

Your journey ends in vibrant Helsinki — or, for those eager for more, extend your adventure across the Gulf of Finland to explore Tallinn's medieval streets.

Join us on this once-in-a-lifetime small group tour through Lapland and Scandinavia and experience the magic of winter.



Activity rating: Moderate

You must be capable of walking up to 8,000 steps daily; occasionally ascending 3-4 flights of steps; standing at attractions for 1-2 hours; boarding and disembarking transport unaided and handling your own luggage.

DEPARTURE: March 2027 (date to be confirmed)

Depart Australia for Stockholm, Sweden.

Day 1 : ARRIVAL – WELCOME DINNER

Welcome to the Swedish Capital. Today the group will be collected by coach and transferred to your hotel – The Nordic Light Hotel (or similar), where you'll stay for two nights. This hotel is ideally situated for those wanting to stroll the city. There's a welcome dinner planned for everyone to meet, greet and kick start your adventure. **D**

Day 2 : STOCKHOLM

After breakfast, the group will visit the core sights of this fabulous city by coach and on foot. First, you'll pass by the City Hall, renowned for its architecture, murals, and the site of the Nobel Prize Banquet. The tour continues to the Old Town, where Stockholm's history began almost 800 years ago. You'll pass by the Royal Palace, the Parliament, the House of Nobility, as well as the world's longest-established bank, the Bank of Sweden. You'll then head to the green island of Djurgården, where many of Stockholm's most popular museums and attractions can be found. Here you'll have the opportunity to visit one of the best-preserved 17th-century warships in the world at the Vasa Museum. The Vasa is the only preserved seventeenth-century ship in the world and a unique art treasure. More than 95 per cent of the ship is original, and it is decorated with hundreds of carved sculptures. Then, on to Stockholm City Hall, with its spire featuring the golden Three Crowns, is one of the most famous silhouettes in Stockholm. It is one of the country's leading examples of national romanticism in architecture. The City Hall, designed by architect Ragnar Östberg, is built from eight million bricks. OK, no visit to Sweden is complete without a visit to the ABBA Museum, so that's the next stop. Dinner at the Nordic Light Hotel (or similar). **B/D**

Day 3 : STOCKHOLM – OSLO

After breakfast, we'll transfer by coach to the train station for a long but rewarding train ride to Norway's capital city, Oslo. There's food available on the train, but there are minimal chances to get off, as most of the stops are pick-up/drop-off stops. The journey will take between 6 and 8 hours, depending on the final service selected. On arrival late in the afternoon, we'll transfer via coach to the Thon Opera Hotel (or similar) and have dinner. **B/D**

Day 4 : OSLO

Enjoy breakfast at the hotel before taking a half-day city tour of this lovely, small city. Your tour will begin in the city's centre, where you'll see the Parliament building, the National Theatre, the new Opera House, and the Royal Residence. You'll also see the City Hall where the Nobel Peace Prize is presented each year. Next, you'll proceed to the Vigeland Sculpture Park, where the work of Norway's famous sculptor, Gustav Vigeland, is on display. The sculpture park is Gustav Vigeland's life work, comprising over 200 sculptures in granite, bronze and wrought iron. It was installed mainly in the period 1940-1949, but is nevertheless a result of over 40 years of work. Your afternoon is at leisure to explore on your own timetable. Dinner and overnight at Thon Opera (or similar). **B/D**

Day 5 : OSLO – FLAM

Today we'll take one of the most scenic train journeys in Europe. On the section between Oslo and Myrdal, you'll come across Finse, the highest station on the line, at 1,222m. Once over the top and heading downhill the climate changes astonishingly. Then transfer to the Flåm Railway – one of Norway's major and most spectacular tourist attractions. On this 20 km-long section, you can see rivers that cut through deep ravines, waterfalls, snow-capped mountains and mountain farms clinging dizzily to sheer slopes. The train makes a photo stop at the beautiful Kjosfossen waterfall. Dinner and one overnight stay at Flåmsbrygga Hotel (or similar). **B/D**

Note. Today, your luggage will be transferred from the hotel in Oslo to Bergen, so you'll need an overnight bag as you will not have access to your main suitcase until the next day. (Time for luggage pick up and drop off is not known until the day before. You may need to leave it very early in the morning or even the night before. The service includes one suitcase per person.

Day 6 : FLAM – FJORD CRUISE – BERGEN

After breakfast, we'll take a Fjord Cruise one way from Flåm to Gudvangen. The boat tour winds around precipitous mountains, mighty waterfalls and small homesteads that cling to the mountain sides. Along the way, you can see Aurland's stone church from the 1200s and the village of Undredal. We will reach the Nærøysfjord, a minor fjord branching off from the Sognefjord, which is the world's narrowest fjord and which was also added to UNESCO's World Heritage List in 2005. Take a coach transfer from Gudvangen to Bergen (about three hours) and check in to your hotel for one night – the Zander K (or similar). **B/D**

Day 7 : BERGEN CITY TOUR – HURTIGRUTEN

This morning, you'll take a 3-hour walking tour of this picturesque city. We will show you the modern landmarks and the old wooden town, the broad streets and the narrow alleyways. The Fortress, St. Mary's Church, the Fish Market, the beautiful City Park and the Theatre are some of the sights we will see. We will take a closer look at the old UNESCO World Heritage-listed Wharf. Here, we will hear about the operations of the Hanseatic League in Bergen. We also pass statues of famous Norwegians such as Henrik Ibsen and Edvard Grieg, and we will get an overview of their interesting lives and work. A walk in Bergen is the ideal way of taking in the Bergen atmosphere. The city centre is compact and full of attractions, and the city's highlights and colourful history are presented to you as we walk at a leisurely pace. An early dinner is at your leisure (try one of the many restaurants along the bay), before taking a coach transfer to the Bergen pier and boarding the Hurtigruten's ship, MS Polarlys, where the group will sail to Kirkenes, departing at 8.30 pm. You'll spend six nights on board the boat in a Polar Outside cabin with all breakfasts, lunches and dinners included. **B**

Days 8, 9, 10, 11 & 12. ON BOARD THE HURTIGRUTEN LINE

Your voyage on Hurtigruten's MS Polarlys starts in Bergen and ends in Kirkenes. Over six nights, you'll sail North towards the tip of Norway, stopping at numerous ports along the way. Most of the stops are for dropping off and collecting mail and goods; however, each day we will be given the opportunity to disembark at certain destinations like Alusund, Trondheim, Bodo, Tromsø and Hommingsvåg. Here. You can either look around at your leisure or take a short, guided tour at a cost. A full schedule of the cruise with all stops will be provided closer to departure. All meals are provided on board. **B/L/D**



Day 13 : KIRKENES – INARI

The ship is likely to arrive in Kirkenes at around 9.00 am. You'll disembark with your luggage and board a coach and drive through this northerly township of about 3,500 people. Kirkenes, near the Finnish/Russian border, sits just short of 70 degrees north- 400 kilometres inside the Arctic Circle! We'll head south and drive on to The Sámi Museum and Nature Centre Siida, located in the town of Inari, in the Sámi Homeland. The Sámi Museum and Northern Lapland Nature Centre are responsible for organising activities at Siida. The exhibitions and events give the visitors a window into the north, providing information on the ancient and vibrant Sámi culture and arctic nature. Dinner and overnight at Santa's Hotel Tunturi (or similar). A little kitsch perhaps? Yes, but worth it. **B/D**

Day 14 : INARI – POSIO

Today's coach transfer will be around 3 hours to the township of Posio. Here, those interested will take a Snowmobile ride on a shared tour. The excursion lasts for around 3 hours. The extra light provided by the white snow reflection or the stars and the moon enables us to be guided on the snowmobile trails away from the lights of Posio to admire the sky. The guide will light up a campfire, and we'll enjoy a picnic while waiting for the Northern Lights to appear. Everyone can grill traditional Finnish "makkara" sausages on the fire, and we will be served hot Lappish berry juice to keep warm. (Tip for taking proper photos in the dark, bring along the monopod or tripod for your camera and adjust the settings for a fast shutter speed). We will have an early dinner in the hotel before departure. Dinner and overnight at the lovely, new Lights of Lapland Resort (or similar) where we'll stay for three nights. **B/D**

Day 15 : POSIO – ROVANIEMI – POSIO

Today, the group will drive to the township of Rovaniemi, about an hour's drive. The core item on the agenda today is a 6-hour Husky Safari and Reindeer farm, including a light lunch (shared with others). We drive to the husky farm and after getting acquainted with our dogs, we'll make a ten-kilometre trip. Around halfway, we'll take a break, you can change drivers and take photos together with the huskies! Once the tour with the dogs is over, some hot juice and pastries will be served by an open fire in a Lappish teepee. Next stop – the reindeer farm. We'll learn about reindeer herding and the way of life of the Sami people. Then, we will take a brief sledging into the forest, pulled by the reindeer. Later, head back to our hotel in Posio. **B/L/D**

Day 16 : POSIO – ROVANIEMI – POSIO

After breakfast, we'll drive to Rovaniemi, and visit the Arktikum Museum – a science centre and museum that lets you experience northern nature, culture, and history up close. This will include exhibitions and a visit to Santa Claus Village (Yes, you read that correctly). Dinner and overnight back in Posio. **B/D**

Day 17 : FLY TO HELSINKI

Today we transfer by coach to Kuusamo Airport (40-minute drive) for your flight to Helsinki. On arrival, transfer to your hotel and get ready to take a 3-hour guided tour of this lovely city. Helsinki is one of Europe's most modern and culturally progressive cities, yet it remains in touch with an intriguing history stretching back over 450 years. On this tour, you'll see the city's most significant and impressive landmarks such as the Senate Square and the Lutheran cathedral, the elegant Uspenski Cathedral, the unique Temppeliaukio Rock Church, the Sibelius Monument and many more. Dinner and overnight at Sokos Presidentti (or similar). **B/D**

Day 18: HOME OR NEXT DESTINATION

Today is at leisure before your departure home or to your next destination. A coach will transfer the group to Helsinki Airport.

OPTIONAL EXTENSION – TALLINN, ESTONIA

For those interested, we offer a lovely two-night stay in Tallinn, Estonia. This includes a ferry from Helsinki Port return, two nights' accommodation, guiding and entrance fees to core sights, and transfer to Helsinki Airport. Talk to Blue Dot about adding this option.

Day 19 : TALLINN

Transfer by ferry across The Baltic Sea to Tallinn. The trip takes around two hours. On arrival, you'll be collected by coach and transferred to your hotel, where you'll check in to the Hestia Hotel Europa (or similar) for two nights. A special dinner is planned tonight! The "Mastercook's Feast" at Olde Hansa is an authentic and immersive medieval dining experience, inspired by the grand banquets of the Hanseatic merchant guilds. Set in a historic ambience with candlelit tables, live medieval music, and a warm, rustic atmosphere, it transports guests straight into the heart of the Middle Ages. The menu is a feast of rich medieval flavours, featuring spiced and roasted meats such as wild boar, venison, and duck, hearty soups, artisanal dark bread, aged cheeses, and desserts made with honey and dried fruits. The meal is complemented by spiced beer, mead, or medieval-style wines, all crafted according to centuries-old recipes. **B/D**

Day 20 : TALLINN

Today, you'll take a half-day walking tour of this wonderful city. Begin with breakfast at the hotel, followed by a City tour and a visit to the Estonian Open-air museum. During your walk, you'll first explore the Upper Town, which was a stronghold of the former Tallinn nobility. Here you'll see two cathedrals, the Russian Orthodox Alexander Nevsky Cathedral and the Lutheran St. Mary's Cathedral. You'll also see the Estonian Parliament building inside Toompea Castle and enjoy a panoramic view of Tallinn from the viewing platforms. After seeing the Upper Town, you'll continue to the Lower Town. Here you'll see the medieval merchant's houses as well as St. Olaf's Church, the tallest building in the world during the 16th and 17th centuries. Then visit the Estonian Open Air Museum, a truly authentic and lively experience. The Estonian Open Air Museum is located in the middle of a forest and by the sea, which probably makes it one of the museums with the cleanest and freshest air in Estonia. Return to your hotel for dinner at your leisure. **B**

Day 21 : TALLINN

After breakfast at the hotel, take a coach transfer back to the cruise port for your ferry across the Baltic back to Helsinki. On arrival, you'll then be transferred to the airport for your flight home. If your flight doesn't connect, we suggest storing your bag and strolling the city at leisure before arranging for a transfer to the airport. **B**





Accommodation

Our hotels are carefully chosen to capture the local atmosphere and set you up in an ideal location. You can expect comfortable, boutique-style hotels with en-suite. Below are sample hotels on this tour:

Flåmsbrygga Hotel, Flåm
www.flamsbrygga.no

Lights of Lapland Resort, Poiso
www.lightsoflapland.fi

Santa's Hotel Tunturi
www.santashotels.hotel-tunturi-saariselka

Hurtigruten.com
www.hurtigruten.com/en/ships/ms-polarlys



Why Blue Dot?

Travel is more than just moving from one place to another; it is an opportunity to explore this vast planet, connect with its people and marvel at its beauty. We have established a group of loyal, like-minded travellers who share this feeling and have taken multiple tours with us. With Blue Dot, you'll experience

- Thoughtfully designed itineraries with unique experiences
- Small, inclusive groups with a maximum of 16 travellers on most tours, and often fewer
- The support of both an Australian tour leader* and experienced local guides
- Programs designed to meet the needs of mature-age travellers
- Hands on, personalised service including customised flight bookings
- Tipping included in your tour cost

*Australian leaders accompany groups with more than 10 travellers.



Blue Dot welcomes solo travellers

In fact, over half of our clients are solo travellers. We understand it can be daunting to travel on your own, and we'll ensure your travel is inclusive and enjoyable, while prioritising your safety. You can confidently join our groups, knowing that we bring solo travellers together to share the camaraderie of an unforgettable adventure.



Enquiries and bookings

A \$500 deposit is required to secure your booking.

For more information:

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