



## SCANDINAVIA NORTHERN LIGHTS SELF DRIVE TOUR

09 Nights / 10 Days

Helsinki (1N) – Rovaniemi (3N) – Abisko (2N) – Tromso (2N) – Oslo (1N)



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## OVERVIEW:

Northern lights, also called Aurora Borealis, is an exquisite display of coloured lights dancing across the night sky. During this 9-day adventure filled trip to Scandinavia, we will chase this mystical and rare phenomenon. The tour has been crafted in such a manner to maximise the chances of seeing this rare event.

We will begin our trip with the visit to the capital of Finland, Helsinki which is famous across the world for its architecture. During the sightseeing tour, we will visit the Temppeliaukio Church, which has been directly cut out from a rock and is famous for its amazing acoustics. We will also see the Sibelius monument. It consists of a huge structure arranged in the shape of a sound wave made up of 600 steel pipes. After Helsinki tour, we will turn north towards the hometown of Santa Claus, Rovaniemi.

Our hunt for the Northern lights begins here. After a brief one-day introduction of Rovaniemi and a visit to the Arktikum museum, we will visit the Santa Claus village. Here you can meet with Santa and send letters to your friends and family sealed by elves. Next, visit the world's oldest ice hotel which is built from scratch every year. From here, we will proceed to a small village in Sweden called Abisko which offers the best chances of viewing the Northern lights in the world. Rich in arctic flora and fauna, you can also explore the national park here on a snowmobile. We will be staying in Abisko for 2 days to maximize our chances of viewing the ethereal Northern lights phenomenon.

After Abisko, we will move even further north to the cultural hub of northern Norway, Tromso. Here you will get a sneak into the Sami culture and also meet reindeers at their reindeer farms. Tromso is also counted among the most popular places for catching sight of the northern lights. Our next stop is Oslo, the capital of Norway. Oslo is the green city of Europe and agglomeration of great culinary experiences, exciting nightlife, and unique cultural heritage. Here we will learn about Viking culture at a Viking ship museum and also visit, Vigeland park, the world's largest sculpture park.



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## DAY 01: ARRIVE IN HELSINKI

On arrival at Helsinki International Airport, you will be greeted by our local representative in Finland for a brief meet and greet. Later, proceed to your city centre hotel in Helsinki for check-in.

The World Design Capital for 2012 and venue for 1952 Summer Olympics, **Helsinki**, capital of Finland, was named as the World's most liveable city in 2011 by British Magazine Monocle. The largest city of Finland, Helsinki Archipelago consists of over 300 enthralling islands. Helsinki has been known to attract tourists from all over the World due to its sea facing landscape, Nordic cuisine, diverse architecture and rich history.

Rest of the day is free for you to explore Helsinki on your own.

Overnight stay at the hotel in Helsinki.



### HIGHLIGHTS

- Arrive at Helsinki International Airport
- Explore the city at your own leisure

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## DAY 02: HELSINKI CITY TOUR AND TRANSFER TO ROVANIEMI BY FLIGHT

After breakfast in hotel, proceed for a Helsinki City tour:-

We will begin the tour with visit to **Tempeliaukio Church**. Also known as the Rock Church, it is built directly into a solid rock and was opened in 1969. Owing to the excellent acoustics inside the church, it is a popular venue for concerts in Helsinki. Next on the list we have **Sibelius Monument**. Dedicated to the famous Finnish composer, Jean Sibelius, it consists of over 600 steel pipes which are grouped together to resemble a soundwave made of clusters of organ pipes.



In the evening, proceed to the airport to catch a flight to Rovaniemi – the official home town of Santa Claus! Upon arrival, transfer to the hotel followed by check-in.

**Rovaniemi** is the administrative capital of the Finland's Northern most province – Lapland. It is also known as the official home town of the Santa Claus. The city was completely destroyed during the World War II. But it was rebuilt to a plan by Alvar Aalto, with the major streets in the shape of a reindeer's head and antlers! Apart from the stunning Santa Claus village, the city boasts of witnessing the magical northern lights and riverside location.



Overnight stay at the hotel in Rovaniemi.

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## HIGHLIGHTS

- Visit the most popular sights in Helsinki on a sightseeing tour of the city
- Catch a flight to Rovaniemi and check in at the hotel

### DAY 03: SANTA CLAUS VILLAGE & REINDEER FARM

After breakfast in the hotel, we will proceed for the city tour of Rovaniemi followed by a visit to Santa Claus Village and Lapland tour.



We will begin the tour with a visit to **administration and cultural center** of Rovaniemi which consists of Library, Town hall and Lappia Hall. These building are an architecture lover's dream and say a lot about modern Finnish architecture. Then we will proceed to **Arktikum museum** which has exhibits on Lapland's nature and culture.

Later, we shall **travel through the Lapland** to cross the Arctic Circle and enter the **Santa Claus village**. This place has an exciting array of activities for both children and adults. You can enjoy a warm cup of coffee or get yourself clicked with the Santa. You can visit the museums, Santa's workshop, post a letter to yourself or just immerse in the knowledge of various Christmas traditions around the World!

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Later we will proceed to a **Sami Village** and visit a **Reindeer farm**. Sami is a collective term used for people living in Scandinavia and Russia north of the Arctic Circle. These Nomadic tribes have their own unique culture and their primary occupation is Reindeer herding. At the farm, you shall learn more about the life and culture of Sami people apart from petting and feeding playful Reindeers.



Overnight stay at the hotel in Rovaniemi.

### HIGHLIGHTS

- Explore the city of Rovaniemi
- Cross the Arctic Circle and enjoy at Santa Claus village
- Enjoy a reindeer sleigh ride and interact with them at a reindeer farm

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## DAY 04: KEMI ICEBREAKER CRUISE FROM ROVANIEMI

After breakfast at the hotel, we will head over to Kemi near Rovaniemi for a cruise in a real life icebreaker that has been continuously sailing since the 1960s.



By breaking the ice, the the **Sampo Icebreaker** used to ensure that trade routes through the sea did not choke during winters. As the ship sets sail and breaks new ice, you can take a tour of the vintage cruise or relax in its lovely coffee shop. Also included in the tour is a visit to the **snow castle in Kemi**. This castle made of snow and ice melts in summer and is therefore rebuilt every year by expert craftsmen. It looks like something straight out of a fairytale and is beautifully decorated with ice sculptures.

Overnight stay at the hotel in Rovaniemi.

### HIGHLIGHTS

- Sampo icebreaker cruise with Snow castle tour

## DAY 05: TRANSFER TO ABISKO BY DRIVE

After breakfast, we will check out from the hotel and transfer to Abisko. Upon reaching Abisko, check-in at your hotel.

**Abisko** is known as one of the World's best place to witness Northern lights. Located at north of Arctic Circle, it is a small village in Sweden with such a scanty population that the light pollution is almost nil. Apart from Aurora lights, the village is famous among tourists for its connectivity to great national parks such as Abisko National Park which

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was the first national park to be established by Sweden in 1909. Another highlight of the region is the Abisko Scientific Research Station which attracts scientists studying climate change from all over the world.



In the evening, board a chairlift car to **Aurora sky station**. In 2015, Lonely Planet awarded this place as the best place on earth to witness the northern lights. The station is situated on Mt. Njulla. The chairlift takes approx. 30 minutes, in which you can soak in stars visible abundantly and the Northern lights show even before reaching the station!

Overnight stay at the hotel in Abisko.



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## HIGHLIGHTS

- Travel to Abisko by public bus
- Evening enjoy chairlift ride to Aurora sky station to witness Northern lights.

### DAY 06: TOUR OF ICE HOTEL FROM ABISKO

After breakfast in the hotel, we will proceed to the **Ice hotel** in Kiruna.

This ice hotel in Kiruna was the World's first Ice hotel initially built in 1989. It is built from scratch each year with snow from Torne River. It has ever changing ice art on display with each room displaying art of some of the most talented artists from the World.



Overnight stay at the hotel in Abisko.

**SEGV'S RECOMMENDATION** – **Abisko National Park** was established in 1909 to protect the area home to wild Reindeers, Moose, Arctic fox and some of the oldest trees in the world. You can opt for a **guided hike** in the snow laden National park and soak in all the natural beauty of the place. A popular trail leads through birch forests to the Abisko River canyon, wanders through Abisko River Delta and takes you to the shore of Scandinavia's largest lake – Lake Tornetrask. Adventure lovers can opt for a **snowmobile tour** which allows you to speedily cover larger distances of the national park to catch sight of the arctic flora and fauna.



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## HIGHLIGHTS

- Visit the iconic Ice Hotel in Kiruna from Abisko
- Hike or snowmobile tour in Abisko National Park [RECOMMENDED]

### DAY 07: TRANSFER TO TROMSO BY DRIVE

After breakfast in the hotel, drive to Tromso. Upon arrival, check-in at the hotel.



**Tromsø**, which seems like a small suburb with mountains and fjords, is the largest urban area in Northern Norway and the cultural hub of the region. It is home of the world's northernmost university, brewery, cathedral and botanical garden. The sun does not shine at all between November to January and there is midnight sun in summers. This quaint town has so much to offer – from midnight or northern light concerts to cable car ride to Mount Storsteinen, from hiking on numerous trails to experiencing whale watching, from bustling nightlife to art exhibitions, Tromsø has it all! Upon reaching Tromsø, proceed for the hotel check-in.

Overnight stay at the hotel in Tromsø.

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## SEGV'S RECOMMENDATION

– Head to the **Polaria aquarium**, one of the two places in Europe where you can find the bearded seal! It is world's northernmost aquarium. The architecture of the building resembles ice floes pressed up against land by rough Arctic seas. This place is full of interactive and informational exhibits which will empower you with the knowledge of how animals and plants sustain in Arctic life. The highlight of this aquarium are the Arctic walkway and Theatre.



## HIGHLIGHTS

- Travel to Tromso
- Evening at leisure in the city
- Visit the Polaria aquarium [RECOMMENDED]

## DAY 08: VISIT SAMI VILLAGE IN TROMSO WITH REINDEER RIDE

After breakfast in the hotel, proceed for a tour of Sami culture including reindeer feeding and a short reindeer ride.



Sami is a collective term used for people living in Scandinavia and Russia north of the Arctic Circle. These Nomadic tribes have their own unique culture and their primary occupation is Reindeer herding. On the tour, you shall learn more about the life and culture of Sami people apart from petting and feeding playful Reindeers. You will also go for a short ride on sleigh pulled by reindeers.

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Overnight stay at the hotel in Tromso.

### SEGV'S RECOMMENDATION

– Embark on a **silent northern lights dinner cruise** in Tromso. As you cruise through the icy waters around Tromsø island, you will see snow-covered mountains and famous spots like the Arctic cathedral. The friendly shares their stories and cool facts about the area's history, the deep sea, and the awesome scenery all around. Enjoy a 3-course meal onboard the hybrid electric boat which provide minimum disturbance to the nature and observe these giants in their natural, wild and free environment.



### HIGHLIGHTS

- Experience Sami culture including reindeer feeding and reindeer sleigh ride
- Embark on a silent whale watching cruise [RECOMMENDED]

### DAY 09: FLY TO OSLO AND CITY TOUR

After breakfast at the hotel, we will proceed to catch a flight to Oslo.

**Oslo**, where the Nobel Peace Prize has been awarded since 1901, is the capital of Norway. The city is also a hub of Norwegian trade, banking, industry and shipping. The city is home to the world's largest shipping companies, shipbrokers and maritime insurance brokers. One of the largest and most rapidly developing cities, Oslo has maintained its forests striking a perfect balance between nature and development. It was officially The European Green Capital of 2019. There is never a dull moment when visiting Oslo.

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Upon reaching Oslo, check-in at your hotel. Later, proceed for a sight-seeing tour of the city:

We will begin the tour with a visit to the **Viking ship museum** which contains the world's best preserved Viking ships. These beautiful vessels were extracted from Viking grave sites where they were buried along with their rich owners. The next stop will be the **Oslo City Hall**. Every year in December, The Nobel Peace Prize is awarded in the City Hall to the deserving candidate since 1901. After the tour of city hall, we will proceed to the **Opera house**. Immerse in the views of the city from the rooftop where you can see fjord archipelago, city core and mountains surrounding Oslo. Later proceed to **Vigeland Park** which is the World's largest sculpture park by a single artist and is a must visit! This park consists of approx. 212 stunning statues made by artist Gustav Vigeland.

Overnight stay in Oslo.



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**SEGV'S RECOMMENDATION – Holmenkollbakken** is a large ski jumping hill which was built in 2010 for FIC Nordic World Ski Championship, 2011. Its iconic shape invites the adrenaline junkies from all over the world. Head over to Holmenkollen to enjoy a ride down this insane hill on a ski jump simulator, and learn more about the sport at Holmenkollen Ski museum

#### HIGHLIGHTS

- Explore the most popular attractions in Oslo on a sightseeing tour of the city
- Watch people ski jumping at Holmenkollen [RECOMMENDED]

#### DAY 10: FLY BACK TO INDIA

After breakfast in the hotel, proceed to airport for a flight back home. Arrive home with pleasant memories of your Northern lights tour in Scandinavia organised by State Express Global Voyages, which we are sure you will treasure for a lifetime

#### HIGHLIGHTS

- Board flight to return back to India



“TOUR END”

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