



# Northern Lights Cruise and Island Highlights



**HOLIDAY TYPE:** Small Group

**VISITING:** Iceland

**BROCHURE CODE:** 29002

**DURATION:** 7 nights

## In Brief

Explore the best of Iceland in autumn and search for the Northern Lights on land and at sea during this 7-night stay. On board the Ocean Diamond, you'll journey to Snæfellsnes and Westfjords where each night you could see the Auroras at sea. Back on land, you'll explore some of Iceland's natural highlights and enjoy a whale and wildlife tour.

## Our Opinion

“ Northern Lights, whales, and adventures on land and sea – this is a fantastic way to experience Iceland. On the water, the Ocean Diamond will provide you with a comfortable base for your voyage. Back on land, you don't have to worry about driving, because there will be a comfy bus to transport you from one highlight to another. At the end, you can finish with a final search for the Northern Lights with a bus tour taking you to the outskirts of Reykjavik and into excellent Aurora territory. ”

Amy Hope



## What's included?

**ALL OF THE ACTIVITIES AND SERVICES LISTED BELOW ARE INCLUDED IN THE HOLIDAY PRICE**

- **Accommodation:** 3 nights on the MS Ocean Diamond (Cabin Type P – 'outside cabin with porthole' - upgrades available), 1 night in a hotel in Husavik, 1 night in a hotel in Western Iceland and 2 nights in a Reykjavik hotel (please see the 'Accommodation' section for examples)
- **Meals:** 7 breakfasts, 5 lunches, 5 dinners
- **Transfers:** return airport transfers and taxi transfer from Reykjavik hotel to city harbour
- **The following activities are included in the holiday:** tour of Lake Mývatn, visit to Dimmuborgir lava formations and Skutustadir craters, Dettifoss Waterfall visit, RIB whale watching tour, Goðafoss waterfall visit, Deildartunguhver hot spring visit, visit to Hraunfossar Waterfall, Thingvellir National Park, Reykjavik city tour, Northern Lights coach tour (**the order of activities is subject to change**)
- Fully qualified guides and instructors during activities
- Expert-led cultural presentations, onboard entertainment and use of gym facilities on the Ocean Diamond
- Tea, filter coffee, apple and orange juice and still water are included onboard the Ocean Diamond
- Fully qualified guides during excursions
- **A note on flights:** flights are not included in the holiday price so that the best possible fares and schedule can be found at the time of booking. There are low cost and scheduled flights operating this route and our travel experts will happily provide a quotation and arrange the flights as part of the package

**Please note:** the itineraries and excursions are subject to change due to weather, sea, and ice conditions and may be changed without prior notice.

## Trip Overview

Combining three nights at sea and four nights on land, this holiday provides an all-round introduction

to Iceland in the autumn. At this time of year, the long days of the Midnight Sun have made way for longer nights and Northern Lights, with the country painted in seasonal colours.

Following an evening in Iceland's charming capital of Reykjavik, you will travel on the Ms Ocean Diamond for the first half of the trip. This fine cruise ship will take you around Iceland's coast from the south-west to the north, stopping at the beautiful Snaefellsnes and Westfjords peninsulas. The first is commonly referred to as 'Iceland in miniature', with a wonderfully varied landscape; the second is one of the most secluded parts of the country and is truly off-the-beaten-track. In both locations, you will have the chance to add daytime excursions to your itinerary, including trips to the Snaefellsjökull Glacier and Dynjandi waterfall, kayaking, and a 'Viking Sushi Tour'. Please see the '[Personalise](#)' section for more information.

Given your location offshore, you should be well placed to see Aurora displays during your nights at sea. Voyaging the Icelandic waters, you are also likely to spot different types of whales. Onboard the Ocean Diamond, we have included a series of fascinating presentations on both the Northern Lights and whales in this region, as well as subjects of local history and culture. In addition, the ship offers a full entertainment programme in its theatre-style auditorium.

Back onshore, you will spend three nights exploring Iceland's highlights, staying at an assortment of welcoming hotels. You will begin at the pristine Lake Myvatn before exploring the stunning lava formations of Dimmuborgir. Iceland has a number of picture-perfect waterfalls and our holiday includes a visit to Dettifoss, which is Europe's most powerful waterfall, and Goðafoss, which is believed to contain the statues of Norse Gods. Search for Iceland's marine life with a guided RIB wildlife and whale safari and enjoy a guided tour of the colourful city of Reykjavik. A Northern Lights hunt will bring a memorable end to this holiday, particularly if you are lucky enough to witness an Autumn Aurora display as these can be utterly breathtaking.

Image credit: Visitreyjavik.is, VisitIceland, VisitNorthIceland, Iceland Pro Travel



## Agenda

Please note the order of activities is subject to change

DAY  
1

NIGHT IN REYKJAVIK

Following your arrival at Keflavik Airport, you will be transferred to your hotel in Reykjavik. Depending on your arrival time, you will have the remainder of the day to explore the world's northernmost

capital.

Reykjavik is a charming city characterised by its colourful buildings and dominated by Hallgrímskirkja which is a modern cathedral 74.5 metres high. It is an architectural masterpiece and well worth a visit.

The city itself is famous for its incredibly fresh seafood and there are some fine restaurants and cafés, particularly down by the old harbour. Reykjavik is small in comparison to most European cities and the best way to experience the city is by simply walking the streets and admiring the colour and stunning landscapes which surround it.

For dinner, we would highly recommend trying out one of the many seafood restaurants. For recommendations, please speak to one of our Travel Experts.

**Included Meals:** None

DAY  
2

## ON-BOARD THE OCEAN DIAMOND

During the day you can spend your leisure time exploring the charming delights of Iceland's colourful capital Reykjavik. You will be transferred from the hotel to the harbour, which is just a five-minute walk from the city's lively downtown area. From here you can enjoy its assortment of shops and eateries. Be sure to return to the harbour in time for boarding the Ocean Diamond, which starts at 18:00; the ship will leave the docks at 20:00.

During your three nights on the Ocean Diamond, you can enjoy a selection of specialist presentations covering topics such as the Northern Lights, local history and culture.

After dinner in the restaurant area, you can head outside and look to the skies for the Northern Lights.

**Included Meals:** Breakfast, Dinner

DAY  
3

## STYKKISHÓLMUR

In the morning, the Ocean Diamond will reach the village of Stykkishólmur, based in the scenic Snaefellsnes Peninsula. This region is often referred to as 'Iceland in miniature', as it showcases many of the island's varied landscapes in a small area.

After breakfast, there are some excellent optional excursions which you can add to your itinerary for an additional cost. Try a 'Viking Sushi Adventure' and combine bird watching on the water with seafood tasting. You may also like to enjoy a bus tour of the Snaefellsnes Peninsula, taking in its amazing landscapes. Please see the '[Personalise](#)' section for more information.

Lunch and dinner are included today. At 18:00, the Ocean Diamond will leave Stykkishólmur for the Westfjords Peninsula. As you sail along, be sure to search for the Northern Lights in the sky before turning in for the night.

**Included Meals:** Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner

DAY  
4

## ÍSAFJÖRDUR

The quiet town of Ísafjörður is the capital of the Westfjords Peninsula – a region that is notably untouched, even by Icelandic standards. There are some very impressive fjords in this area providing many photo opportunities.

Following breakfast, there are more excursions which you can add to your itinerary. Try your hand at catching different types of fish on a sea angling tour, see the magnificent Dynjandi waterfall or kayak the waters around Flateyri. Please see the '[Personalise](#)' section for more information.

Lunch and dinner are included today. In the late afternoon or early evening, you can attend an onboard presentation about the Northern Lights before keeping watch on the skies later on this evening.

**Included Meals:** Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner

DAY  
5

## LAND PROGRAM – LAKE MYVATN, DUMMUBORGIR LAVA FORMATIONS AND DETTIFOSS WATERFALL

In the early morning, you will arrive into Skjálfandi Bay in Northern Iceland. One of the highlights in this area is the volcanic Lake Mývatn which was formed during an eruption over 2300 years ago. Following disembarkation, you will explore the natural beauty of the area, including the extreme lava formations of Dimmuborgir.

Dimmuborgir is known as the 'dark castles' and you will understand why as you walk up the footpath towards the lava fields. The formations are shaped like a crumbling, ancient citadel and you will undoubtedly feel like you have stumbled into a fantasy film set.

Your tour of Lake Mývatn will also include a visit to the pseudo craters of Skutustadir, which were formed by gas explosions when boiling lava flowed over the wetlands. These magnificent craters further highlight the extreme diversity of Iceland's landscape, which is unrivalled anywhere else in the world.

Following lunch, you will return to the coach and head to the northern part of Vatnajökull National Park. Here you will find the magnificent Dettifoss Waterfall, which is the most powerful in Europe and is a splendid example of mother nature. The sound of the cascading water is incredible and we would highly recommend making sure your camera is fully charged as you will no doubt want to take photographs.

You will overnight in Husavik, which is a charming little fishing town on the shores of Skjálfandi Bay. Dinner will be enjoyed at your hotel.

**Included Meals:** Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner

DAY  
6

## RIB WHALE AND WILDLIFE SAFARI, GOÐAFOSS WATERFALL AND AKUREYRI

After enjoying breakfast at the hotel, you will enjoy a whale and wildlife safari on a RIB (rigid-inflatable boat). Husavik is the whale watching capital of Iceland and the town's offshore waters are home to 15 different species of whale, including Orca and Humpback. In addition to these graceful animals, you may also potentially spot seals, dolphins and various seabirds. It is the perfect way in which to experience Arctic wildlife whilst also admiring the stunning surroundings of Skjálfandi Bay. The tour will take approximately three hours.

Following the tour, you will return to the coach and head towards Akureyri, which is Iceland's second largest city, but with a population of only 18,000 residents, it feels more like a bustling fishing town. The drive to Akureyri will include a stop at Goðafoss Waterfall, which translates to 'waterfall of the gods'. According to legend, law speaker Þorgeir Ljósvetningagoði declared Christianity the official religion of Iceland and threw his statues of the Norse gods into the waterfall. You can understand why the area is a place of myth and legend as the waterfall itself is majestic, cascading from a vivid green valley.

Lunch will be provided during the journey and you will overnight in North West Iceland in either Laugarbakki or Gauksmyri. Dinner will be enjoyed at the hotel.

**Included Meals:** Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner

DAY  
7

## DEILDARTUNGUHVER, HRAUNFOSSAR WATERFALLS, THINGVELLIR NATIONAL PARK AND REYKJAVIK

Following breakfast, you will return to the coach and head back towards Reykjavik, enjoying numerous stops along the way. Firstly, you will visit Deildartunguhver which is Europe's most powerful hot spring. Most of the water used for central heating in the towns of Borganes and Akranes is taken from Deildartunguhver. In fact, if you happen to take a shower within 65km of the hot spring then you have bathed in its waters! The billowing clouds of steam created by the spring are an impressive sight to behold.

After visiting the hot spring, you will then return to the bus and make your way to Thingvellir National Park, which is one of the major highlights in Iceland and is alleged to have been the location of the world's first parliament. You will stop at Hraunfossar waterfalls en-route, before arriving into Thingvellir. Lunch will be provided along the way.

Following your exploration of Thingvellir National Park's historical sites, you will return to Reykjavik and enjoy a guided tour of the city. You will then have a final opportunity to seek out the Northern Lights with a bus tour to the outskirts of Reykjavik where there is minimal light pollution. Hopefully, your final evening in Iceland will be spent admiring Nature's greatest light show.

**Included Meals:** Breakfast, Lunch

DAY  
8

DEPARTURE

After breakfast, you will be transferred to Keflavik Airport for your flights home. If you wish to extend your stay in Reykjavik, then please speak to one of our Travel Experts.

**Included Meals:** Breakfast

## Personalise this tour

### Our pick



### Pingeyri and Dynjandi Waterfall bus tour

Explore the secluded regions of Westfjords on this bus tour, which takes you to the little-populated town of Pingeyri, which holds the honour of being the region's first trading post. Following this, you will be taken to the impressive Dynjandi Waterfall, which is the highest waterfall in the region. It is appropriately named, as 'Dynjandi' is said to translate as 'thunderous'. Packed lunches are included.

**Duration:** 6 - 7 hours

**Group size:** 20 - 45 participants

**Availability:** Day 4

**Price:** 145 USD per person

**Please note:** clients pay for this excursion on board in USD.

### Other options

#### ACTIVITIES



## Viking sushi adventure

You will be taken around the many islands of Breiðafjörður, looking out for and learning about the different types of birds which can be found here. You can also admire the incredible rock formations that are dotted around these waters. That covers the 'Viking' part of this adventure – as for the 'Sushi', that comes in the form of delicious scallops, straight from the sea!

**Duration:** 2 hours 15 minutes

**Group size:** 1 - 30 participants

**Availability:** Day 3

**Price:** 70 USD per person

**Please note:** clients pay for the excursion on board in USD

Image credit: Fotografie.Opzolder.Co



## Snæfellsnes Peninsula bus tour

The Snæfellsnes Peninsula is often regarded as being 'Iceland in miniature', as it seems to showcase many of the country's different environments in one location. You will be taken by bus to the Snæfellsjökull Glacier, the coastal formations of Snæfellsnes, and the basalt pinnacles of Lóndrangar. There will also be a stop in the village of Arnarstapi and a visit to the Shark Museum of Bjarnarhöfn, with entrance included. Packed lunch is also included in the price of this activity.

**Duration:** 8 hours

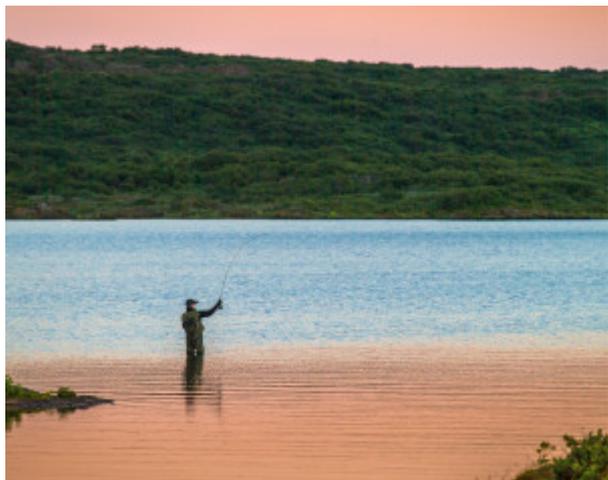
**Group size:** 20 - 45 participants

**Availability:** Day 3

**Price:** 125 USD per person

**Please note:** clients pay for the excursion on board in USD.

Image credit: Anna Guðmundsdóttir



## Sea angling tour

The rich waters of the Westfjords region are full of marine fauna, and this trip gives you the chance to try your hand at catching the likes of cod, haddock, and halibut. The outing will either start from Flateyri or Suðureyri, both of which are fishing villages. This is quite an active excursion, and we recommend wearing plenty of warm layers and bringing a bottle of water along with you.

**Duration:** 4 hours

**Group size:** 5 - 10 participants

**Availability:** Day 4

**Price:** 195 USD per person

**Please note:** clients pay for the excursion on board in USD.



## Flateyri kayaking

Kayak around the coast of Flateyri, a quiet fishing village in the Westfjords region. You can take in the lovely mountain scenery and look out for local birds in the sky.

**Duration:** 4 hours

**Group size:** 8 - 20 participants

**Availability:** Day 4

**Price:** 165 USD per person

**Please note:** clients pay for the excursion on board in

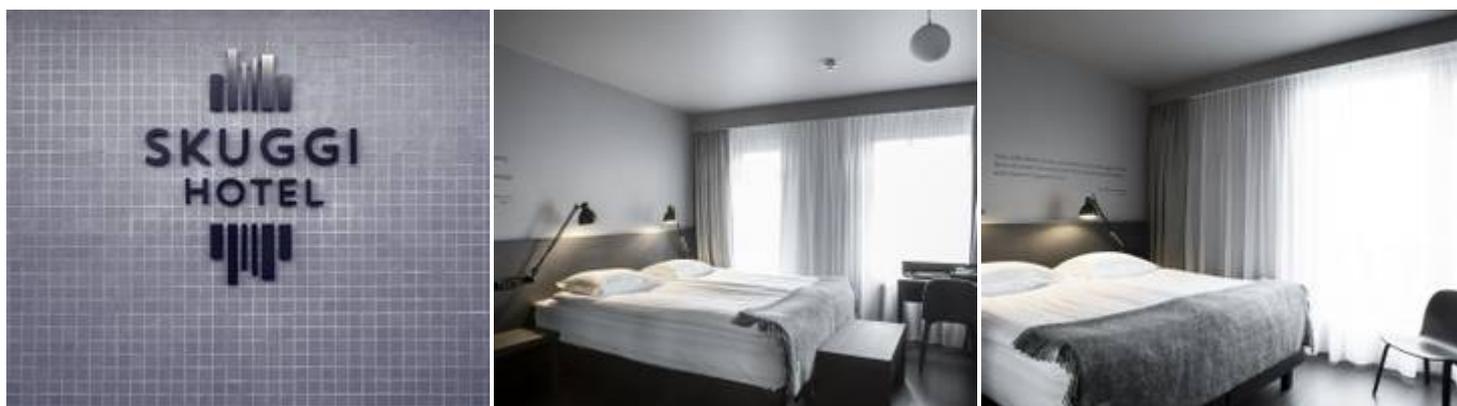
USD

Image credit: Iceland ProTravel

# Included Accommodation

Other options are available - see below for details.

Hotel in Reykjavik (Nights: 1,7)



Reykjavik is one of the most walkable cities in the world, which means your hotel will be in easy reach of all the main attractions. Though your accommodation will be confirmed at the time of ticketing, you will be staying in a standard hotel in the city centre.

All hotels have en-suite double or twin rooms, a restaurant, 24 hours reception and Wi-Fi. Examples can include but are not limited to Hotel Skuggi (pictured) and Hotel Storm.

## Ocean Diamond (Nights: 2-4)



A modern cruise vessel, the Ocean Diamond has been specially fitted for Arctic journeys with stabilisers and a strengthened hull for icy conditions. Run by a skilled crew and boasting a variety of excellent facilities, it provides guests with a first-class cruise experience. Built to carry a maximum of 224 passengers, the ship has a compact design which allows it to get to areas of water which are otherwise inaccessible to larger vessels. The Ocean Diamond has an average speed of around 15.5 knots and is the first passenger ship in the history of polar travel to be carbon neutral.

There is a full range of facilities on the Ocean Diamond to make your stay as enjoyable as possible.

- All your meals will be included onboard, prepared by the Ocean Diamond's dedicated chefs. Breakfasts and lunches follow a buffet format, while dinner is à la carte. With a casual dress code and panoramic views, it offers a relaxed dining atmosphere
- Tea, filter coffee, apple and orange juice, and still water are included during your stay, as is a late evening snack, served on Deck 4
- Look for the Northern Lights and across the sea from the vessel's deck and observation areas
- Pick up a souvenir from the onboard store
- Visit the Polar Library with its selection of books and DVDs
- You can book a range of massage and aromatherapy treatments to unwind during the voyage
- Keep fit with free access to the gym facilities
- A programme of insightful presentations about the Northern Lights, whales, and local historical and cultural subjects is included
- Wi-Fi can be accessed on-board for an additional cost

## Cabin types

Your holiday includes Cabin Type P accommodation. Please see below for the upgrade options and ask our Travel Experts for a quotation.

**Cabin Type P** (outside cabin with porthole): These en-suite 19m<sup>2</sup> cabins have double or twin beds. In addition to the shower room, there is a television with a DVD player, a hairdryer and wardrobe, a fridge, a safe, individual temperature control, access to a satellite telephone, and two portholes. Please note that the view can be restricted by lifeboats or other objects on deck.

### CABIN UPGRADE OPTIONS

**Cabin Type T** (triple cabin with porthole): These en-suite 19m<sup>2</sup> cabins have two twin beds and one upper bed. In addition to the shower room, there is a television with a DVD player, a hairdryer and wardrobe, a fridge, a safe, individual temperature control, access to a satellite telephone, and two portholes. Please note that the view may be obstructed.

**Cabin Type O** (outside cabin with an obstructed view): These en-suite 19m<sup>2</sup> cabins have double or twin beds. In addition to the shower room, there is a television with a DVD player, a hairdryer and wardrobe, a fridge, a safe, individual temperature control, access to a satellite telephone, and a picture window. Please note that the view will be restricted by lifeboats or other objects.

**Cabin Type D** (outside cabin with picture window): Between 17-19m<sup>2</sup>, these en-suite cabins have double or twin beds. In addition to the shower room, there is a television with a DVD player, a hairdryer and wardrobe, a fridge, a safe, individual temperature control, access to a satellite telephone, and a picture window.

**Cabin Type A** (balcony suite): These 30m<sup>2</sup> cabins have a double bed, an en-suite bathroom with a bath and shower, a seating area, a television with a DVD player, a hairdryer and wardrobe, a fridge, a safe, individual temperature control, access to a satellite telephone, and a full-size window with a sliding glass door and a balcony.

**Cabin Type B** (suite): These 37m<sup>2</sup> suites have either two twin beds or a double bed, as well as an extra two twin beds. There are two bathrooms with a shower or bathtub. In addition, these suites have

a seating area, a television with a DVD player, a hairdryer and wardrobe, a fridge, a safe, individual temperature control, access to a satellite telephone, and a picture window.

Image credit: Iceland pro cruises



## Hotel in North Iceland (Nights: 5)

As you travel further north, you'll experience more of the dramatic and ever-changing landscape and your hotel will be situated right in the heart of the stunning surroundings.

Your accommodation will be confirmed at the time of ticketing but all hotels include double, twin or single en-suite rooms, a restaurant, 24 hours reception and Wi-Fi. Example hotels can include Fosshotel Husavik and Hotel Gígur.



## Hotel in West Iceland (Nights: 6)

When you visit the west of Iceland, you will stay in a hotel that has fantastic countryside surroundings so you can really appreciate the beauty of the landscape here.

Your accommodation will be confirmed at the time of ticketing but all hotels include double, twin or single en-suite rooms, a restaurant, 24 hours reception and Wi-Fi. Examples can include Hotel Laugarbakki and Hotel Bifröst.

Images: Akureyri and Norden Godafoss

# Other accommodation options

Contact us for a personalised quote.



## Hotel Sveinbjarnargerði

Sveinbjarnargerði is a family owned hotel which is a 10-minute drive from Akureyri. The setting is fabulous, with stunning views of the Eyjafordur area, its mountains and the fjord itself. An outdoor terrace is the perfect spot to admire the countryside and during the dark autumn nights, you may even spot the Northern Lights.

The hotel contains a stylish in-house restaurant which has a cosy fireplace and a particular focus on traditional Icelandic cuisine. There is also a relaxation area which features a hot tub, ideal for those winter evenings.

## Hotel facilities

- A highlight of this hotel is the location and the views from the outdoor terrace are spectacular. During the autumn evenings, you may witness the Aurora dancing in the northern sky
- The cosy restaurant has a fireplace and is ideal for an evening of relaxation after a day of exploration
- There is something special about entering a hot tub, during an Arctic autumn evening. Enjoy the views from the hotel relaxation area

## Room types

**Double or twin room:** the rooms at Sveinbjarnargerði are bright and cosy and the location ensures a fantastic outlook. Each room is equipped with a double, or two single beds, a flat-screen TV, a work desk, private bathroom, hairdryer and a seating area.

Available on request

## Grand Hotel Reykjavik (Day 7)



The four-star Reykjavik Grand Hotel is conveniently located in quiet surroundings, close to the city centre. The hotel has 311 rooms and provides excellent service and a wide range of facilities.

The hotel is equipped with a modern and elegant restaurant with a focus on Icelandic and Nordic cuisine. You can enjoy dinner made with fresh produce or simply relax with a drink by the cosy fireplace.

The Reykjavik Grand Hotel has a fully equipped gym which guests can use free of charge and extensive spa facilities. Guests are given a 20% discount on the spa admission fee.

## Facilities

- Take advantage of the hotel's excellent location and enjoy a stroll through Laugerdalur's Botanical Garden before heading into downtown Reykjavik.
- Keep active and enjoy free use of the hotel gym.
- Sample local Icelandic cuisine or enjoy a drink in the cosy hotel restaurant.
- Enjoy the free Wi-fi service which is available throughout the hotel.

## Room type

**Superior double/twin room:** Superior double rooms are both bright and spacious with hardwood flooring and large windows. The rooms are equipped with a comfortable queen size bed or two large single beds and a private bathroom with a shower and bathtub. A satellite TV, hairdryer, coffee and tea making facilities and free Wi-Fi access are all included.

**Triple Room:** Triple rooms are spacious and decorated with brand new furnishings. The rooms contain either three single beds or a double and a single bed. A private bathroom with a shower and bathtub is included and each triple room is equipped with a hairdryer, satellite TV, coffee and tea making facilities and free Wi-Fi access.

Available on request.

## The Specifics

## Holiday group size (approximate)

Approximately 150-220 on board the ship

## Group Size

We always try to provide an approximation of the group size you can expect to be with for the duration of each of our holidays. It may be that you are joined by others for parts of your holiday (such as transfers and particular activities) but the above number reflects those you can normally expect to be with from beginning to end. If group size is something which is particularly important to you, please speak to our Travel Experts and they can suggest the best holidays for you.

Tailor-made holiday group sizes will vary for all activities as will the group size for any additional activities you book.

## Minimum numbers required for a holiday to operate

Some of our holidays require a minimum number of participants to operate (as listed in the 'Group Size' section). If your holiday departure has not yet reached the minimum number, you will be told at the time of booking. In the unlikely event that your chosen date is not guaranteed by nine weeks before your scheduled departure date, we will contact you to discuss the available options as per our [booking conditions](#).

## Minimum and maximum age

If a specific minimum age applies to this holiday, it can be found in the Key Facts box on the holiday Overview page.

Unless otherwise stated in the Key Facts box on the holiday Overview page, the minimum age for participation in an Aurora Zone holiday is typically 12 years old (there may be younger children in some destinations who have booked with other companies). If an adult-only environment is important to you, then please contact our Travel Experts and they will advise on the best dates and destinations for you. If you are looking for a holiday designed specifically for families then please see our sister company [www.activitiesabroad.com](http://www.activitiesabroad.com).

## Itinerary amendments

The order of activities listed in this agenda is provided for guidance only, your final and detailed itinerary will be provided either with your final travel documents (which are uploaded into your online account around a week prior to departure) or upon arrival.

## Terms and Conditions

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Our full booking terms and conditions can be found on our website: <https://www.theaurorazone.com/booking-conditions>