

# Inari - Aurora in the Sámi Heartlands



**HOLIDAY TYPE:** Small Group

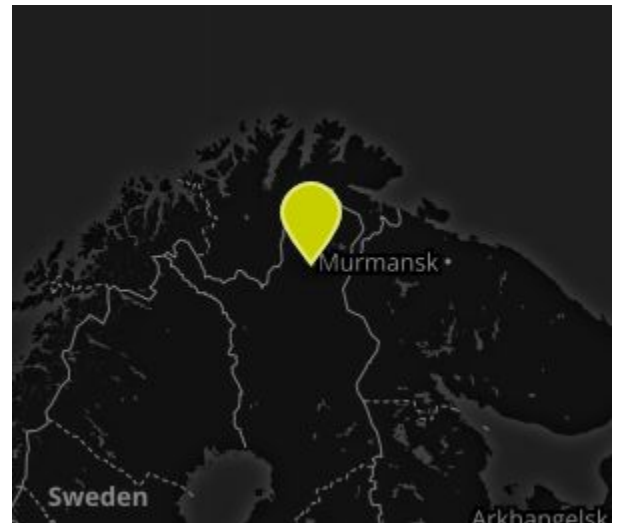
**VISITING:** Finland

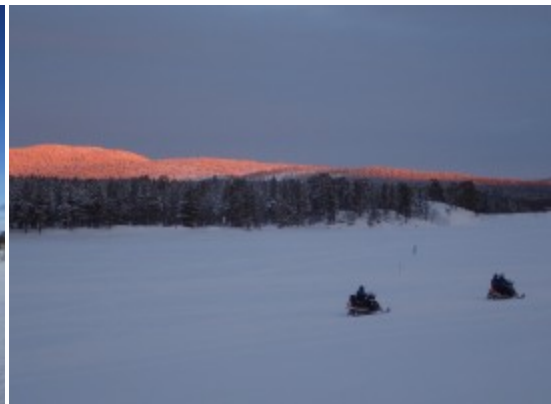
**BROCHURE CODE:** 22001

**DURATION:** 4 nights

“ Knowing exactly the best places to see the Northern Lights invariably comes down to local knowledge and experience. Every holiday provided by The Aurora Zone has been designed in conjunction with our local partners in Finland, Sweden, Norway and Iceland to ensure that we are providing the best possible Aurora hunting experience. Similarly, during daylight hours when you are not Aurora hunting, we want you to experience the absolute best of your chosen destination. To achieve this goal, we have again engaged local experts and guides to ensure that your entire stay is an unforgettable experience. ”

Ali Mclean





## Key facts

Pace: Balanced

### Suitable for:

Ages 18+. Please see our terms for further information

### In Brief

Inari is the at the heart of Sámi Culture in Finnish Lapland and so if you want to gain a sense of the region's traditions there is no better place to be. This holiday provides a range of truly memorable activities which include snowmobiling, cross-country skiing, dog sledding and a reindeer safari. At night, there are three exceptional Aurora hunts included maximising your chances of witnessing this wonder.

## Our Opinion

*“The main reason that Inari is so wonderful is that it is steeped in Sámi culture, offering a fascinating insight into the people who have lived in Northern Finland for centuries. The other reason that it is a great location is down to its Aurora potential – here the light pollution is minimal, and what's more, your Northern Lights hunts in the evenings will take you into the vast wilderness which surrounds the hotel. This is an incredible place to spend some time.”*

Ali Mclean



## What's included?

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

- **Flights:** Direct return flights between London Gatwick and Ivalo. Regional and non-UK departures available on request. Routings are subject to change
- **Transfers:** Return group airport transfers
- **Accommodation:** 4 nights' accommodation in twin/double hotel rooms
- **Meals:** 4 breakfasts, 3 lunches, 4 dinners
- **The following activities and equipment are included in the price:** Sámi snowmobile safari, Aurora hunt, Sámi Siida Museum, reindeer farm visit, Aurora snowshoe, husky safari and Aurora snowmobile (**the order of activities is subject to change**)
- Cold weather clothing is provided for the duration of your stay
- Services of our expert local guides

## Trip Overview

This Aurora Borealis holiday offers you the chance to really get to know the traditions and culture of the Sámi people of Lapland. Based in Inari, the hub of Sámi culture in this region, you can explore the traditions that underpin this remote corner of the world. Furthermore, this small village is surrounded by the wilds of the Arctic and is at the heart of the Aurora Zone. You will enjoy Aurora hunts on three of your nights here, helping to maximise your chances of catching a glimpse of the Northern Lights.

Our accommodation in Inari is a delight and our guests stay at the Kultahovi New River Hotel. The very comfortable rooms boast their own private sauna, a terrace or balcony and tea and coffee making facilities (a rarity in Finland). The Kultahovi is renowned for its food, with culinary delights such as Inari white fish and local reindeer appearing on the menu frequently.

Your daytime activities are well balanced and include some wonderful experiences. You will take in some of the local heritage and the thrill of driving across the frozen lake during a snowmobile safari, as well as taking control of a team of huskies as you try your hand at dog sledding. Your cultural encounters will include a visit to a reindeer farm as well as the chance to visit the Sámi Siida Museum, just a short walk from the hotel.

Your evening pursuits will be dedicated to seeking out the Aurora and hopefully witnessing a spectacular display. Travelling on foot during a snowshoe hunt, via snowmobiles and also via minibus, your guides on all of the evening



activities will utilise their local knowledge to give you the best possible chance of seeing an Aurora display.

We have also designed a two-night extension for those who want some extra time in which to hunt out the Aurora and experience some more of the region's many highlights. Details of the extension can be found in the 'Personalise' section of the holiday page.

**Image credit: VisitInari.fi**

## Agenda

Please note the order of activities is subject to change

DAY  
1

Flights, transfers and introduction

Upon arrival at the airport, you will be greeted and transferred to the Kultahovi New River Hotel. The hotel is on the edge of the small village of Inari, home to the Sámi Siida Museum and Sajos, the Sámi cultural centre and base for Sámi parliament.

After arriving at the hotel there is the chance to settle into your rooms before a welcome dinner in the renowned restaurant. Following dinner and an introduction to the programme ahead, your cold weather clothing will be provided.

It may be that you are arriving on a later flight. Should this be the case a chilled supper is provided on arrival and your cold weather clothing and welcome talk will take place the following morning.

**Included Meals:** Dinner

DAY  
2

Sámi snowmobile and Aurora hunt

Snowmobiling offers the opportunity to cover some distance and, as there is so much to see in the region, today begins with a snowmobile safari to introduce you to your new surroundings.

Following a hearty breakfast, full instruction regarding the safe operation of a snowmobile will be provided before you hit the trails.

Today's safari is centred on sites of great importance for the local Sámi people, including the wilderness church at Pielpajarvi and the island of Ukonkivi, an ancient sacrificial site. Travelling two people per snowmobile, the safari will last around three to four hours including transfers (any driver of a snowmobile must have a full driving licence, you will have the chance to swap driver should you wish to do so). Weather permitting your guide will cook up lunch over an open fire.

**Please note:** if you are travelling on the 29th November date the route used for above snowmobile safari is unlikely to be possible as sections rely on travelling across frozen lakes and rivers and this cannot be guaranteed earlier in the season until the ice has thoroughly frozen. On this departure date, the snowmobile safari will take place along a route travelling through stunning forest scenery. For this date only the snowmobile safari will last around 2 hours including transfers and lunch will be served at the hotel restaurant.

Following your adventure, you will have the afternoon free to relax and enjoy your surroundings before tonight's exciting Aurora hunt.

After dinner at the hotel, your Aurora adventure begins in earnest. You'll head out with your guide for a Northern Lights hunt using a car or minibus to help you outrun any localised cloud cover. Your driver will use their local knowledge along with the latest Aurora forecasts and weather reports to determine your route.

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

DAY  
3

Sámi culture, reindeer farm and Aurora snowshoe

This morning you can take the short walk to the Sámi Siida Museum. The exhibitions here are world-renowned and you will learn a huge amount about life in the region and the culture which underpins the traditions to this day. There is also a wonderful short film including imagery taken in the local area and some spectacular Northern Lights pictures.

After visiting the Sámi Siida Museum, you will have lunch at the hotel and following this, you will then visit a local reindeer farm. Here an insight will be provided into the importance of herding and the value of the animals. You will meet Tuula, who herds her reindeer around the stunning Muddas Lake. Reindeer have been herded in this corner of the world since the Stone Age and the way of life has been carefully passed down through the generations, modernised of course, but always maintaining its integrity. You will see some of the animals up close before Tuula also gives you an insight into how some traditional handicrafts are made, including the likes of reindeer skin boots.

After dinner in the hotel, tonight your guide will lead you on a snowshoe hike through the forest, deep into the darkness and to a prime Aurora viewpoint. If conditions are favourable, then hopefully the Northern Lights will make an appearance for you tonight.

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

DAY  
4

Husky safari and Northern Lights snowmobiles



Besides the chance to witness the Aurora in all its glory, a highlight for most visitors to Lapland is a husky safari. So, after breakfast, you will transfer to a local husky centre to meet with the mushers and their trusted dogs before you take control of the sled yourself.

After full tuition, you will head out with your teams (two people per sled) for a safari lasting around two hours. You will have the chance to swap places so you can each take it in turns to take the reins and sit in the sled and enjoy the scenery. The dogs' enthusiasm for pulling the sleigh is seemingly endless.

After a morning of fun and excitement, lunch will be served back at the hotel. You will have the afternoon free to unwind, relax and make use of your own private sauna.

Alternatively, snowshoes and cross-country skis are available for you to hire (payable locally) from the tourist office which is a five-minute walk from the hotel should you wish to once again try these activities and explore on your own.

After your final meal in the hotel's restaurant, tonight you will be back on snowmobiles for your final Northern Lights hunt. If you prefer not to drive at night, then you can travel in a sleigh behind the guide's snowmobile and keep an extra close watch on the skies as you wind along the trails. Again your guide will choose the best spot available from which to hopefully witness a display of the Aurora.

**Please note:** Due to your early departure tomorrow morning, you will get a light breakfast to take with you on your airport transfer. You can collect this from the hotel this evening, after your dinner.

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

DAY  
5

Depart or extend your stay

Today it is sadly time for you to head home. If you can't quite bear to leave just yet, we can arrange for you to extend your stay in Inari with our three-night package. This extension allows you to enjoy three further nights of Aurora opportunities and more exceptional experiences.

We can also help arrange a stopover in Helsinki for you should you wish to enjoy the city en route to home.

All of the options can be found in the 'Personalise' section of the holiday page.

**Included Meals:** Breakfast

## Included Accommodation

New River Hotel Kultahovi (Nights: 1-4)



The Kultahovi New River Hotel resides in the northeast of Finland in the small town of Inari and offers views to the north over the River Juutua. It is owned and run by Kaisu and Heikki, a brother and sister with Sámi roots in Inari which goes back generations.

The original building was constructed in 1956 on the foundations of the original Tourist Hotel which was destroyed during the Second World War. Today it consists of two buildings – the Traditional Hotel which houses the newly renovated restaurant and older style rooms and the New River Hotel where you will stay during your time here.

## Hotel facilities

- The Kultahovi enjoys a deserved reputation for its wine and food with enthusiasm for local produce and traditional dishes with a modern flair. Guests enjoy a set menu, with the option to upgrade to the à la carte menu if you wish (payable locally). Dishes such as reindeer and whitefish are common, with a focus on flavour and style.
- All meals will be served in the newly renovated restaurant which offers a wonderful view over the rapids of the river. Next to the restaurant, there is a wonderful lounge area with a central fireplace which is a lovely location to relax in the evening.
- Other facilities include a drying cupboard and free wireless internet throughout. There is also a riverside sauna that is free for guests to use.
- The hotel has a 360° camera on the roof which takes a photo of the sky once every minute. These photos are then projected onto the TVs in the bedrooms, lounge and bar area. The idea is that you get a real time update of the weather outside and can keep an eye should the Northern Lights appear. Should they make an appearance we would strongly recommend heading outside though as a photo can never do them justice.

## Room types

### Double/twin rooms

The New River Hotel has 16 rooms in total. These are over two floors so each has either a patio or balcony. Inside, they are decorated to a very high standard with a TV, hairdryer and tea/coffee making facilities. The highlight of these rooms though is that each has its own private sauna (with the exception of one room) - the ideal place to relax in the evening before heading out on your Aurora hunts.

## The Specifics

Holiday group size (approximate)

Minimum 4 people; maximum 12 (approximately)

## Group Size

As a requirement the majority of our holidays must reach a minimum number of participants to go ahead, minimum numbers can be found on each individual holiday's page however they are always approximate numbers. Tailor made holiday group sizes will vary for all activities. Unless you have discussed and agreed specific private activities whilst on a Private Departure booking you might be joined by other guests on an activity. So that you are aware you will be informed at the time of booking if your selected date has not yet reached minimum numbers. In the unlikely event that your chosen date has not reached the required minimum numbers nine weeks before your scheduled departure date we will contact you and discuss the various options available to you.

We will always do all we can to operate a holiday and in some cases we may be able to operate the holiday by combining your itinerary with that of other guests for some activities (this may mean that the maximum group size is increased for some activities but this will be discussed in full with you).

You will be offered the chance to transfer to an alternative holiday or date (subject to availability) if we are unable to operate the holiday. If the alternative is more expensive you will be asked to pay the difference, if it is cheaper then you will be reimbursed. You will also be offered the option to cancel and receive a full refund of all monies paid.

## Guides & Safety

When partaking in any activity it is imperative that everyone in your group listens very closely to the instructions provided by the guide and that they are abided by. Our guides are experts in their field and no one knows the environment better than these highly knowledgeable and experienced activity providers.

**Please make it clear to our guides prior to starting any activity if you are unsure of anything mentioned during the safety briefing.**

Our guides will always take local conditions into account when considering the suitability of an activity to go ahead. This is why your itinerary is subject to change at short notice this rarely happens however if it does we will always endeavor to go ahead the activity on the day when conditions change or if time allows, to provide the activity on another day during your holiday. If the activity cannot be carried out during your stay due to adverse conditions you will be refunded on your return home. Our guides' word on activities is always final and your safety is their principal concern at all times, please respect their decisions. By following their instructions, your safety and enjoyment during each activity will be greatly enhanced.

## Minimum and maximum age

You can find the minimum age for any of our holidays in the key facts. For some activities and shared transfers, our guests may be joined by others and these may include those of a younger age. Any younger participants will be fully supervised by an adult and the guides will ensure that they are only able to participate if there will be no effect on the activity experience. None of the hotels we feature have a minimum age and so there may be families staying at them with younger children, especially during the holiday periods.

To drive a snowmobile you must have a full driving licence and be over 18 years old.



There is no maximum age for our holidays but please note our sections on fitness and pre notification of any medical issues or disabilities.

## Booking activities locally

Additional activities can be booked locally in almost all of our destinations, however, please note that we cannot be held responsible for any injury or loss that occurs through any activities that are booked at your destination (see our terms and conditions for further details).

When arranging any such activity please always ensure that your safety is your primary concern.

## Medical History and Advice

If you or any member of your party is pregnant or has any medical condition or disability which may affect your holiday or has any special requirements as a result of any medical condition or disability (including any which affect the booking process) you must inform us at the time of booking.

You must also promptly advise us if you become pregnant or any medical condition or disability which may affect your holiday develops after your booking has been confirmed. It is imperative that you do this as we cannot be held accountable for any situation which may arise out of your failure to disclose any such information.

## Experience and Fitness

All of our activities that are included in your itinerary have been designed for beginners who have no prior experience and are of all age ranges and fitness levels. Our guides provide expert advice, tuition and instructions prior to any activity going ahead. If you are unsure as to whether your fitness levels match our highlighted level of fitness on certain itineraries please get in touch and talk to one of our experts.

If you or any member of your party is pregnant or has any medical condition or disability which may affect your holiday or has any special requirements as a result of any medical condition or disability (including any which affect the booking process) you must inform us at the time of booking.

You must also promptly advise us if you become pregnant or any medical condition or disability which may affect your holiday develops after your booking has been confirmed. It is imperative that you do this as we cannot be held accountable for any situation which may arise out of your failure to disclose any such information.

## Snowmobile Safety

We are extremely proud of our safety record and believe this is entirely due to the excellence of our activity providers.

It is absolutely essential when partaking in any activity that you listen very closely to, and abide by, the instructions provided. Nobody knows the environment better than our activity providers who work here almost every day. Consequently, their knowledge and experience are unsurpassed.

If there is anything that you are unsure of during a safety briefing, or that you would like to clarify with the guides, please make this clear to them immediately.

Please always respect any decisions made by our guides. Your safety is their principal concern at all times. By following their instructions, your safety and enjoyment during each activity will be greatly enhanced.

If you or any member of your party is pregnant, or has any medical condition or disability which may affect your holiday, or has any special requirements as a result of any medical condition or disability (including any which affect the booking process), please tell us before you confirm your booking so that we can assist you in considering the suitability of the arrangements and/or making the booking. In any event, you must give us full details in writing at the time of booking and notify us if any change in the condition or disability occurs. You must also promptly advise us if you become pregnant or if any medical condition or disability which may affect your holiday develops after your booking has been confirmed.

There may be rare occasions when our guides consider local conditions unsuitable for a certain activity, e.g. if temperatures drop below  $-25^{\circ}\text{C}$  some activities will not be operated. Hence, your itinerary may be subject to change at short notice but we will always endeavour to, firstly find a replacement on the day and, secondly, to provide the cancelled activity later in your stay whenever possible. Very occasionally it proves impossible to provide the activity, in which case you will be refunded when you return home.

### **Snowmobiles**

Driving a snowmobile should be considered the same as driving a hire car. The owner of the vehicle will have third-party motor liability cover in place which complies with the local legislation and extends to include hire and reward. If you (as the hirer of the snowmobile during any safari) injure someone or damage someone else's property, then the owner's third party liability cover will cover such risks.

Any damage to the snowmobile you are riding will also be covered under the owner's motor insurance policy; however, you as the driver will have to cover the policy excess. In most cases, this will be somewhere between £400 - £1200 (the equivalent in local currency) but it can vary in each destination. Please ask the local activity provider for their own individual excess before taking part in any snowmobile safaris.

Drivers of snowmobiles should be in possession of a full driving licence. The minimum age for driving a snowmobile varies but, for insurance purposes, you generally need to be 18 years old to drive a snowmobile. You must ensure that the snowmobile driver(s) takes a valid driving licence (either the old paper licence or the photo card licence). This is not necessarily to show your instructors or guides but for spot checks by police which occur regularly. There are strict rules governing snowmobiles and alcohol consumption and therefore, alcohol should not be consumed at all before participating in a safari.

Snowmobile accidents are rare but the driver should take extra care throughout. You will be provided with a full briefing on how to use a snowmobile. If you are unsure of any instructions or aspect of operating the machine then you must inform a guide immediately and get clarification.

In some cases, children under the age of 16 will travel in a sled pulled by the guide's snowmobile. If sleds are unavailable, as is the case with some safaris, children over a certain height will ride as pillion passengers. In our opinion children under the age of 12 are typically too young to travel on the back of a snowmobile. Discretion may be applied in resort by our expert guides based on the individual child.

Almost all of our snowmobile safaris are based on two people sharing a snowmobile. There is usually the opportunity to swap drivers during the safari, assuming that both people have a valid driving license.

If you are a single traveller or if there is an odd number of people in your party, then in the majority of destinations (excluding Luosto where an obligatory single snowmobile supplement will apply), you will be paired up locally with either another person taking part in the activity or you will ride pillion with the guide. As this all depends on the number of people doing the activity on the day this will be decided locally. The only way to avoid this is by paying a single snowmobile supplement which guarantees you your own machine.

By agreeing to share with another member of the group you are acknowledging that you are responsible for alerting the driver and the guide if at any time during the activity you feel unsafe either as a driver or passenger.

Your guide will provide a comprehensive safety briefing before every activity including hand signals to attract attention – you must use these during the activity if you are unhappy at any point and the guide will answer any questions you have or do anything within their power to make the activity more enjoyable for you.

## **Insurance**

As the rider or passenger of the snowmobile, you must take out adequate travel insurance to cover yourself for medical costs in the event you sustain an injury requiring medical treatment overseas. If you are a UK resident travelling in the EU you should also ensure that you carry with you your EHIC card (European Health Insurance Card). Please see our insurance documents for further details. Drivers of snowmobiles should be in possession of a full driving licence. The minimum age for driving a snowmobile varies but for insurance purposes, you generally need to be 18 years old to drive a snowmobile.

To our knowledge (and we have searched extensively) there is no travel insurance policy which can be purchased in advance of travel that will cover you for the snowmobile excess. Some of our local partners offer an excess waiver cover which can be arranged locally and if you choose to partake in this, it is a direct agreement between yourself and the activity provider so please ensure you read all information very carefully.

## **Unscheduled activities in your free time**

In some of our destinations, you are able to borrow or hire equipment such as cross-country skis and snowshoes for use in your free time. Participation in these activities is entirely at your own risk. You must ensure that you are properly prepared, have the necessary maps of the trails and ensure that you stay on the marked trails. We recommend discussing your route with the local guides who will be able to advise on the most suitable routes based on your level of fitness and the amount of time you wish to be out exploring.

Always let the reception desk know where you are planning to go and take a torch and mobile phone (with the hotel phone number stored) so you are able to call them should you get lost. It is also a good idea to leave your contact number and the time you expect to return to the hotel should the hotel need to contact you.

Please also read the section in our terms and conditions which refers to booking activities locally.

## **What to take**

### **Standard Packing List**

For each and every one of our holidays, we will provide you with a list of items that you need to take with you when you travel. These will vary depending on the country you are visiting and the time of year. Country-specific packing information can be found below. This information will also be uploaded to your online account at the time of booking.

There are however some items which, irrelevant of your holiday, you need to make sure that you pack.

Speak to one of our Travel Experts, call us on 01670 785012, or email [This email address is being protected from spambots. You need JavaScript enabled to view it.](mailto:info@theaurorazone.com)

- Passport and visas: please see our passport and visa section for more information.
- Final travel letter: this contains vital information and your emergency contact numbers.
- Airline tickets: approximately 10 days to one week prior to your departure your tickets will be uploaded into your online account for you to print and download (if we are arranging your air travel).
- Trip dossier: this contains vital information. The order of all itineraries is subject to change however and you will be provided with your final itinerary upon arrival at your destination.
- Travel insurance: this is a pre-requisite to travelling with us. Please see our section on Travel Insurance for further details.
- Full driving licence: if you are hiring a car or wanting to drive a snowmobile then please ensure that you take your licence with you. You either need to take your old paper licence or the photocard part of the new licence.
- Money or credit cards: most major credit cards are accepted in our destinations. However, we would recommend you avoid depending on American Express or Diners Club as these are less widely accepted. Cash points are not generally available in our destinations. It is worth advising your bank that you are travelling overseas to ensure that you do not have issues using your cards abroad.
- Glasses/Contact Lenses if required: you are going to see some spectacular places and it would be a shame to miss any of it!
- First aid kit and medication: you should always carry a first aid kit with you when you travel and ensure that any medication you require is carried in your hand luggage. You will need to ensure that you have the relevant accompanying documentation for any medication and that it complies with all of the rules and regulations regarding items that you are allowed to carry on board an aircraft.
- Toiletries: although some accommodation may provide the basics this is not the norm and so you should take all that you need with you.
- Chargers for cameras and phones.
- Travel plug adapters: suitable for the country you are visiting.
- Luggage: please see your flight confirmation for your luggage allowance. Suitcases are fine for travelling, but if your trip includes an overnight safari you will need to pack your belongings into a soft large backpack or bag that can be easily transported on a sled. On such trips luggage should be kept to a minimum as space in the wilderness cabins is limited. Any items that you do not wish to take with you can be stored at the hotel.

## Additional items for Finland

### Clothing – the essentials

**What to travel in:** You should travel in comfortable clothes and sensible shoes with a good grip. If you have access to a hat and gloves in your hand luggage this is advisable. We recommend dressing for a cold winter day in the UK and having a warm jacket available to you on arrival. Generally, you only need to cross from the airport terminal to the transfer vehicle but you should be prepared.

### Autumn Holidays

During the autumn in Finland, the weather varies drastically even within a few hours and should the weather conditions be on the chilly side all of the below cold weather clothing will be available to you. Please just ask your guide if you would like access to any of the specialised winter clothing during your holiday.

We recommend bringing lots of warm and comfortable clothing with you including plenty of layers and indeed the majority of the winter packing list will be applicable in clothing terms. You will also need to bring with you outer wind

and waterproof clothing under which you can fit layers to keep warm. Finally walking boots or shoes with a good sturdy sole and a good grip are a must during the autumn months.

## Winter Holidays

There is no need to invest lots of money in specialised winter equipment as the below items will all be provided for the duration of your stay. Below this you will find a list of clothing and equipment to bring with you which will make your stay more comfortable and help you get maximum enjoyment out of your time in Finland.

**Thermal overalls:** These overalls are the ultimate in insulated outdoor gear. They are big, cosy and designed specifically for the Arctic. You will be given either a one-piece suit or a two piece set to wear. This is your outer clothing under which all your additional layers will go so they tend to be fairly loose fitting.

**Winter boots:** The boots are large, well insulated and very sturdy. They are generally worn slightly larger than normal as you need to allow air to move around the boots as well as needing ample room for thick socks.

**Mittens or gloves:** Our partners have large, warm gloves available for you to borrow for the activities. Generally, these are mittens as they keep your hands warmer than finger gloves.

**Hat:** Although in many cases clients like to take their own hats they are available for you to borrow should you wish.

**Woollen socks:** These big woollen socks provide excellent insulation and they are generally loose fitting to allow for the circulation of warm air. You may like to take your own but they will be available for you to borrow.

**Please note:** During tours including more than one accommodation you will need to hand back the cold weather clothing when checking out of the accommodation and upon check in at your next destination new clothing will be re-issued to you then.

## What you need to take

During the winter months, guests should take warm, comfortable clothing. We recommend taking the following items with you which will enhance the cold weather clothing provided to you upon arrival.

**Thermal underwear:** Forget sartorial elegance and invest in some thermal long johns and long sleeved tops to wear under your overalls. You should take more than one set if you are travelling for a week as you will wear them every day.

**Sweaters:** Wool is the best material. We recommend wearing one or two such garments in sub-zero temperatures. They give you added flexibility should temperatures drop or rise.

**Fleece jacket:** A fleece is an excellent addition to your winter clothing and provides excellent flexibility and warmth.

**Tracksuit bottoms or walking trousers:** These are ideal for relaxing in the evenings and an excellent additional layer for under your overalls and over your thermals. Please do not take Denim jeans to wear during activities, they are not appropriate during the very cold temperatures.

**Socks:** Again, wool is the best material. You should take several pairs both thin and thick.

**Mittens:** You will be provided with large mittens for activities but you may want to take your own pair. Mittens are recommended over gloves and ideally you should have access to them in your hand luggage.

**Hat:** Hats are available to borrow for activities however you may wish to take your own. You should take something that covers your ears fully and provides protection from the wind should you require it. We recommend taking one which also covers your ears to protect against any cold winds!



**Glove liners and hand warmers:** Thin glove liners can provide an excellent extra layer of warmth on really cold days as they fit easily underneath mittens. Hand warmers can be excellent for added comfort, especially during long safaris.

**Sturdy shoes or boots:** You will be provided with winter boots for activities but we recommend taking alternatives that are suitable for snowy/icy conditions. Shoes or boots with good grip are essential for the icy conditions (you may want to consider adding some additional shoe grips/ crampons but these should be packed into your hold luggage). To save space you may want to travel in the boots (minus the additional grips).

Foot warmers can also be an excellent addition.

**Thermal neck warmer:** A neck warmer (fleece tube or similar) is excellent for keeping out the cold and keeping your neck and face warm.

**Balaclava:** Freshly washed balaclavas are often provided by our activity providers but you may like to consider taking your own as they can be very useful in the cold.

**Head torch:** These can be very useful especially if you want to be out Aurora hunting. If you are staying in a wilderness cabin then they are also particularly useful. Ensure you have enough battery life or spare batteries with you.

**Slippers and warm comfy clothes:** These are excellent for lounging around in after a day of winter activities. They can also be very useful in wilderness cabins after a day on the trail.

**Swimwear:** Some destinations have swimming pools so be sure to take your swimwear. Although swimwear is generally not worn in saunas in Scandinavia we find many clients like to take theirs with them to wear.

**Ski goggles:** Although not essential these are especially useful during husky safaris and if you wear glasses or contact lenses. They provide excellent protection from the cold, snow and wind should you need it. These are available to borrow for husky safaris.

**Small rucksack:** You should take a small rucksack to carry any extra clothing during activities and this is especially important during overnight safaris.

**Sunglasses:** The glare of the sun on snow can be blinding and so you should ensure that you have a good pair of sunglasses that are practical for the activities. In late December and early January, this is less of a problem as the sun is rarely above the horizon during this period.

**Suntan lotion and lip balm:** You need to take these products with you but you should always take the advice of your guide before applying them. At very low temperatures guides will recommend the best course of protection as products may freeze and it can be dangerous to have these on the skin. High factor sun cream which is waterproof is best. Those which are designed for skiing tend to be ideal as they are designed for doing activities in cold and snowy conditions.

**Tissues:** These are very useful during safaris, as are wet wipes (although unless you keep them close to your body they will freeze!)

## Camera

You won't want to miss out on the photo opportunities so here are a few hints!

- ensure you have plenty of film or memory card space before you set off
- make sure you remember your battery charger and a travel adapter
- ensure you have spare batteries as there will be nowhere to charge anything once out on the trails
- batteries perform poorly in cold temperatures so take multiple batteries and store the spares in a warm place (a pocket next to your body is ideal). NiCad and Li-ion have better performance characteristics than alkaline

batteries but are still affected. There are some restrictions on carrying certain Li-ion batteries onboard aircraft. Please see the IATA website for current and up to date information:

[http://www.iata.org/whatwedo/cargo/dangerous\\_goods/pages/lithium\\_batteries.aspx](http://www.iata.org/whatwedo/cargo/dangerous_goods/pages/lithium_batteries.aspx)

- when photographing the Northern Lights it is recommended that you use a tripod. Some of our destinations may have tripods that our clients can use but we would recommend that you take your own.

**Towel:** (holidays including overnight safaris only): If you are travelling on overnight safaris then you will generally need to take your own towel with you – a travel towel is ideal for space saving.

**Flask:** (holidays including overnight safaris only): You may want to take a thermos flask so that you can take drinks with you on the trail if the guides suggest it.

**What to wear in the evenings:** this depends a little on the holiday you choose but the vast majority of our destinations are very relaxed and people are there to enjoy the Great Outdoors and stay warm when outside. Typically all of the hotels are casual in their approach and guests will often dine in jeans and casual clothing. There are no dress codes to worry about.

## Flights & Transportation

### Special requests & in-flight meals

Due to the remote locations of our holidays, especially those above the Arctic Circle, flight availability can be exceptionally limited. In order to ensure that you can travel on the seats that we have pre allocated to a certain holiday, flight options might be restricted. Please discuss this with our Travel Sales Experts at the time of booking.

Generally we are unable to assign specific seating on flights although we can make requests on your behalf. We cannot guarantee this however and if a request is unable to be actioned then this is not classed as a breach of contract on our part.

If your booking allows for online check in then you should do so as early as possible to ensure you are allocated seats next to your travelling companions. Details regarding this will be provided in your final travel documents around one week before you travel.

If you require special seats or assistance at the airport due to a medical condition, reduced mobility or disability then please let us know at the time of booking (or as soon as possible prior to travel if the issue occurs after booking). You may be required to provide written confirmation of your fitness to travel from your doctor.

Flights within Europe and on domestic flights may not provide meals or snacks onboard so it is always worth remembering this if you are due to land late in the evening when opportunities to buy food may be limited.

We always forward any dietary requirements to the airlines but we cannot guarantee the availability of the chosen diet onboard so please confirm at check in. You may want to consider bringing your own food on board the plane if you do have any specific requests to guarantee there will be something you will be able to eat. This is the approach our staff with any dietary requirements take when flying within Europe.

### Flight schedule changes and connecting transportation

On your confirmation documentation we will confirm your flight schedule. Sometimes the flight number, routing and

timings might change prior to your departure. If the change is classed as a significant change and we will contact you as soon as possible to discuss this. Please see our terms and conditions for further details.

Flight schedule changes can impact on your pre and post-holiday travel arrangements if these have been booked separately to your holiday. We strongly recommend that you do not book transport (such as trains or transfers), car parking or non-connecting flights to the departure point for your holiday until you have received your final voucher with the confirmed travel times.

We are not responsible for the effect of any schedule change on your pre or post travel arrangements. We strongly recommend that you do not purchase non flexible or non-refundable tickets to avoid cancellation and penalty charges.

## Land only prices

In some cases we are able to offer our holidays on a land only basis (i.e. not including flights). If you choose to book your holiday on a land only basis it is vital you do not finalise any arrangements until we have confirmed you are able to do so. Once your trip reaches minimum numbers of bookings it is guaranteed to run so we will write to you to confirm this. As soon as your trip is 'guaranteed to run' you will be free to make your flight arrangements. Before you book your flights you should check whether airport transfers are included in your trip. If they are then please ask us for the transfer times that you will be required to meet. If you do not meet the planned transfers then private transfers can be arranged for an additional cost. Once your flights are booked, please send us a copy of your detailed flight itinerary.

We cannot be held liable for losses incurred relating to any flight booking you have made yourself if in the unlikely eventuality that we should be forced to amend the itinerary or even cancel the holiday. Please be aware that most of the cheaper airline tickets available for sale on the internet or from low cost carriers are non-refundable in the case of cancellation. For this reason we strongly advise you check the rules of the ticket when you make a flight booking and check the limitations of any cancellation insurance policy you have. Should your holiday be cancelled and you no longer wish to use the flights it is important that you are able to amend or cancel your booking and receive a booking. It is with regret that we are unable to accept liability for any travel arrangements that you make (including change or cancellation costs) in the event of any change to, or cancellation of, our holiday; or for any other reason that makes you unable to use your booked travel arrangements

## Banned airlines

The list of banned airlines is available for inspection at <http://europa.eu> we must bring this to your attention as due to an EU Directive, (EC No 2111/2005 Article 9) some airlines are banned from operating within the EU. In accordance with European regulations we will also inform you of the carrier or carriers which will operate your flights at the time if booking. If we are unable to confirm this at the time, we will do so as soon as we are made aware of the carrier following confirmation. We will also notify you of any changes to your carrier after booking as soon as possible. If the airline then becomes subject to a ban, our terms and conditions will apply. Please see sections 8 and 19 of our booking terms for further details.

## UK foreign office advice

The FCO regularly issue a variety of travel advice and warnings and in some rare cases this may include advising against all travel to a certain country or area. If such a warning is issued, then we will act appropriately and this may include the cancellation, ruminantion or amendment of an itinerary. Such decisions are made on the basis of ensuring our clients' safety as this is central to our operations around the world. If for any reason our local partners suggest an

amendment due to a situation developing locally then we may also make the decision to amend any itinerary appropriately. Safety is non-negotiable here at The Artisan Travel Company. If we have to cancel your holiday prior to departure, you will be offered the option of an alternative trip (any price difference will either be refunded to or covered by the guests) or a full refund of the monies paid. If we have to curtail a holiday then you will be refunded for any costs for the part of the holiday that we have been unable to deliver where we have been able to secure a refund from our suppliers. If we have to re-route a holiday then any basis for refund is determined on a case by case basis and dependent on whether the central holiday experience was provided or not.

## Finland

Below you will find the specific link for the current FCO advice for the country/countries that you are visiting which is applicable to British passport holders only. It is vital that you read this as early as possible as the content includes details on entry requirements, embassy information, local laws and customs as well as specific safety and health advice.

<https://www.gov.uk/foreign-travel-advice/finland>

Most governments will issue their own travel advice for a region and, if you are resident outside of the UK, then you can find some helpful links below:

Australian Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade <http://www.smartraveller.gov.au/>

New Zealand Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade <http://www.safetravel.govt.nz/>

Canadian Consular Affairs Bureau <http://voyage.gc.ca/>

The U.S. Bureau of Consular Affairs <http://travel.state.gov/content/travel/english.html>

## The finer details

### Financial Protection

We know that your holiday will be one of the most important investments you make in a year and we understand how important it is for you to know that you are financially protected and that your money is secure. Alongside our ATOL financial protection (ATOL 6865) you may book with confidence as we are a fully bonded member of ABTA (ABTA number Y6261) which means that you have the benefit of ABTA's code of conduct and your money is fully protected regardless of whether we are arranging your flights for you or not. We also offer our clients our Peace of Mind Promise to really help put your mind at ease. Please see the following link for full details:

<https://www.theaurorazone.com/about-us/financial-protection>

### Responsible Travel

Responsible Travel is at the heart of our business and our approach is based on ensuring that our holidays are environmentally, socially and economically responsible. We work in some of the most pristine environments in the world and with suppliers who we class as friends; protecting and providing for both is central to our ethos. Full details of our responsible travel policy can be found on our [website](#)



## Insurance

Insurance is not included in your holiday and so you will need to ensure that you have cover for all of the activities that you will be participating in during your holiday. Details of our preferred provider, who will cover you for all activities we offer, can be found on our [website](#)

## Terms and Conditions

### Terms and Conditions

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

## Terms & Conditions

### Terms

#### Minimum age

The minimum age for participation in our itinerary is 18 years old however, for some activities and shared transfers, our guests may be joined by others and these may include those of a younger age. Any younger participants will be fully supervised by an adult and the guides will ensure that they are only able to participate if there will be no affect on the activity experience. None of the hotels we feature have a minimum age and so there may be families staying at them with younger children, especially during the holiday periods.

To drive a snowmobile you must have a full driving licence and be over 18 years old.