

Muotka - Autumn Auroras



HOLIDAY TYPE: Small Group

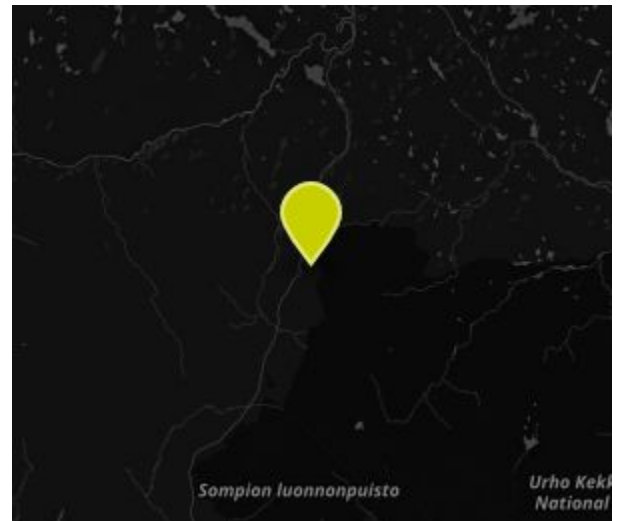
VISITING: Finland

BROCHURE CODE: 20013

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

In Brief

Nestled in Northern Finland, Muotka is situated in one of Lapland's most picturesque areas. The autumn season signals the beginning of the Aurora season and some of the most spectacular displays can be witnessed at this time of year. During your holiday you will hunt for the Aurora by car and visit a local Aurora camp. You will also explore the culture and traditions of the region as you visit the Sami capital of Inari and the colourful Siida Museum.

Our Opinion

“ Muotka is a beautiful region and perhaps the most picturesque area of Lapland. The autumn brings simply stunning colours and to witness the Northern Lights dance above the vibrant landscape was a memorable and magical experience. The Siida Museum was also a highlight, providing a unique opportunity to gain insight into the traditions of the Sámi who have thrived in harsh winter conditions for generations. ”

Amy Walkington-Gray



What's included?

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

- **Flights:** return from London to Ivalo (via Helsinki). Regional and non-UK departures available on request (flight routes are subject to change)
- **Transfers:** return airport transfers
- **Accommodation:** 4 nights accommodation in twin/double hotel rooms. Log suite with Sauna and Cabin upgrades available (supplements apply)
- **Meals:** 4 breakfasts, 3 lunches, 4 dinners
- **The following activities are included in the holiday:** Northern Lights presentation and Aurora stake-out, Sámi Siida Museum, Aurora Camp, nature walk, Aurora hunt, Aurora workshop (**the order of activities is subject to change**)
- Fully qualified guides and instructors during activities

Trip Overview

Muotka is located deep within the forest in Northern Lapland. The setting is perfect for an autumn getaway, particularly as the nights grow darker and the Aurora Borealis returns to the northern skies. There is very little light pollution in the area and the hotel is very close to Urho Kekkonen National Park, which becomes a spectacle of vibrant colours during the short autumn season known as 'Ruska'.

Autumn hails the beginning of the Aurora season when the night sky grows dark enough for the lights to be visible and this trip will allow you plenty of opportunities to seek out the Northern Lights. A presentation will give you an insight into the science behind the Aurora from a knowledgeable, local guide. You will then visit a nearby Aurora Camp which provides unobstructed views of the night sky. Once here, you can keep warm by the fire and enjoy listening to your guide's stories as you keep a lookout for any flickers of light in the sky above. You will also hunt the lights via car or minibus. This will hopefully enable you to outrun any localised cloud cover as your guide seeks out the best spots for potential Aurora activity.

The autumn season in Lapland brings vibrant, colourful landscapes and a guided nature walk is the perfect introduction. Wildlife is more active at this time of year, so you may be lucky enough to spot reindeer and various species of bird. Your guide will also point out edible berries which are in season and give you an insight into the

forest's flora. In November, you may witness the first snow of winter and in this case, you may swap your hiking boots for snowshoes.

Muotka itself is close to Inari which is the heart of Sámi culture. A visit to the Siida Museum offers an engaging insight into this ancient indigenous culture and how the local people have adapted to the changeable seasons north of the Arctic Circle. A Northern Lights photography presentation set to music is also played throughout the day.

In short, autumn is both colourful and peaceful as you are travelling ahead of the winter crowds. Some of the best Northern Lights displays can be witnessed at this time of year and the scenery is spectacular.

Image credits: Markku Inkila, Tarja Manninen & Inari-Saariselkä Tourism Ltd

Agenda

Please note the order of activities is subject to change

DAY
1

Arrival

After arriving into Finland's most northerly airport you will be transferred* to the stunning region of Muotka, which is a true Lappish wilderness location. Following check in you will enjoy an evening meal whilst settling into your picturesque surroundings.

* Transfers are based on a scheduled group shuttle to a few nearby hotels. If you would prefer to upgrade to private taxi transfers please ask our Travel Experts for a quotation.

Included Meals: Dinner

DAY
2

Northern Lights Presentation and Aurora Stake Out

Following breakfast, the morning will be yours to spend at your leisure. Settle into your new surroundings with a walk amidst the stunning terrain or relax in the hotel sauna. Alternatively, if you would like to enjoy an authentic Lappish experience then an optional visit to a husky farm is available. Please see the ['personalise'](#) tab for details.

Following a delicious dinner, you will be given an introduction to the science behind the Northern Lights in addition to some of the local legends associated with the Aurora Borealis. You will then venture to a specially created Aurora Camp amidst the beautiful autumn nature. The camp locations have been carefully selected to provide unobstructed views of the night sky with minimal artificial light. You will spend time at the camp (warm drinks and fire provided) and hopefully, you will get your first sighting of the majestic and unforgettable Northern Lights.

Included Meals: Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner

DAY
3

Sámi Siida Museum and Aurora Camp

After breakfast, you will join a local guide and visit Inari which is the capital of Sámi culture in Finnish Lapland. In Inari, you will visit the Sámi Siida Museum, which will give you a fascinating insight into the culture of the indigenous people who reside north of the Arctic Circle. The museum has a Northern Lights photo presentation and there is a small gift shop displaying a range of Sámi handicrafts made by the local people which are ideal for those looking to pick up some authentic souvenirs.

Following your trip to the museum, you will be driven back to Muotka where you can enjoy an evening meal before heading out once more in search of the Aurora. You will once again visit an Aurora camp away from artificial light. Keep an eye out for any flickers of colour as you enjoy the warmth of an open fire.

Included Meals: Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner

DAY
4

Nature Hike and Aurora Hunt

Following breakfast, you will have an opportunity to explore the vibrant autumn landscapes surrounding Muotka. Your expert guide will lead you through pine forest and over sweeping fields highlighting any edible berries and giving you an insight into the local flora and fauna. You may encounter wildlife as they are generally more active at this time of year.

For those travelling in November, you may arrive just in time to witness the first snow of an Arctic winter. In this case, you will swap your hiking boots for snowshoes.

After returning from your walk, you will enjoy a delicious meal before heading out for your final Aurora hunt. On this occasion, you will travel via mini bus or car which will enable you to venture further into the wilderness, hopefully outrunning any cloud cover. In addition, the use of a vehicle allows you to reach some of the best spots for potentially spotting the Northern Lights.

Included Meals: Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner

DAY
5

Departure

Following breakfast, unfortunately, it will be time to leave this stunning region and you will be transferred back to the airport in preparation for your flight. Alternatively, you may wish to extend your stay or enjoy a city break in Helsinki. Please speak to one of our Travel Experts for more details

Included Meals: Breakfast

Included Accommodation

Other options are available - see below for details.

Wilderness Hotel Muotka (Nights: 1-4)



Muotkan Maja Wilderness Hotel resides around 40km from the main town of Ivalo, tucked away in the corner of North-East Finland. Recently renovated and restored it is owned and run by the same couple as the popular Nellim Wilderness Hotel, Mari and Jouko Lappalainen. They run the hotel with the same hard-working ethos and it exudes the same warmth and charm for its much-welcomed guests.

The hotel boasts some wonderful scenery, tucked away in the forested-fells with roaming reindeer frequently seen amongst the trees. It consists of two main accommodation buildings, one with the majority of the bedrooms and another with hosts additional bedrooms, the main restaurant and the reception area.

Hotel facilities

- The focal point of the main building is the restaurant which is where you will have the majority of your meals. Food will be served buffet style with a variety of continental and cooked food for breakfast and the choice of two or three options for each course at dinner. The menu has been designed with a focus on both traditional and international cuisine using fresh, locally-sourced ingredients
- There is a bar which is usually open until 1 am and serves a variety of spirits, wines and beers and a lounge area with comfortable armchairs to relax in during your free time
- There is a sauna in the main building which is heated daily for guest use
- Free Wi-Fi is available in the main building (at the bar and in the restaurant)
- In the main building, you will also find two fireplaces, games and books, which makes it a perfect place to relax
- The rooms do not have tea and coffee making facilities but tea and coffee are available free of charge and available in the restaurant area
- Hairdryers are available from the main hotel reception.

Room types

There are 12 double and twin rooms in the main building and 11 in the additional building just across the courtyard. All rooms are en-suite with shower room, wardrobe, hairdryer and nightstand and can be made up as either a double or twin. They have also been recently renovated and offer lovely Scandinavian décor and charm.

Image credits: Jouko Lappalainen, Markku Inkila

Other accommodation options

Contact us for a personalised quote.

Wilderness Hotel Muotka - Superior Sauna Rooms

From: **£112pp**



Muotka Wilderness Hotel has 16 Superior Sauna rooms, located a short distance from the main hotel building. These rooms are designed to offer rustic luxury and are ideal for small families and groups or those that simply wish for more space to relax in during their stay at Muotka. The rooms are approximately 33m² and each separate building has four superior sauna rooms inside.

Facilities

- All rooms will contain their own private sauna, sofa and an electric kettle to make your stay as comfortable as possible
- Each has a queen-size bed within and space for 1-2 extra beds
- All meals will be served in the hotel restaurant which is just a short walk away
- Hairdryers are available from the main hotel reception

Wilderness Hotel Muotka - Log Cabin

From: **£222pp**



Situated not far from the main hotel, the 10 log cabins at Muotka are a wonderful upgrade option for those looking for a little more space during their stay or if you are travelling as a small group or family.

Each log cabin is approximately 50m² and is fully equipped to make your stay cosy and comfortable.

Log cabin facilities

- All cabins will contain their own log burner and private sauna - ideal for warming up after a day in the snow!
- Each has a double bed and space for 1-2 extra beds
- All cabins have a small kitchenette and a kettle
- The log cabins are equipped with large north facing windows so you can easily keep watch for a potential Aurora display
- All meals will be served in the hotel restaurant which is just a short walk away
- Hairdryers are available from the main hotel reception

The Specifics

Holiday group size (approximate)

Minimum 2 and maximum 16 people (approximately)

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.

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 at all times. Our guides are experts in their field and no one knows the environment better than these highly knowledgeable and experienced providers.

Prior to starting any activity, please make it clear to your guide if there is any element of the safety briefing you are unsure of or would like to clarify before you set off.

Our guides will always take local conditions into account when considering whether an activity can go ahead. This is, in part, why your itinerary is subject to change at short notice. This rarely happens, however, if it does, we will always endeavour to reschedule the activity for later in your holiday. If this is not possible then the cost of the activity will be refunded to you when you 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.

NB: In order to participate in our holidays, all guests must be able to understand instructions given in English. These instructions may be delivered verbally or in writing and will include vital safety information and ongoing instruction during activities.

Minimum and maximum age

The minimum age for this holiday can be found in the dates and prices section of the holiday page, under 'Terms'.

For some activities and transfers, you may be joined by other guests and this may include some of a younger age than stated. Any younger participants will be fully supervised, and the guides will ensure that their participation takes place only if the activities will be unaffected.

Very few hotels have a minimum age and there may be families staying at them with younger children, especially during the holiday periods. We do have some itineraries and destinations which are guaranteed to be adult-only, so if this is important to you please speak to one of our Travel Experts.

Booking activities locally

Additional activities can be booked locally in almost all our destinations. However, as per our booking conditions, we cannot be held responsible for any injury or loss incurred through participation in activities which are booked at your destination outside of our holiday itinerary (see our 'Terms and Conditions' for further details).

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

In some of our destinations, you can borrow or hire equipment for use in your free time. You do so entirely at your own risk. You must ensure that you are properly prepared, have the necessary equipment and knowledge (maps, etc) and ensure that where applicable, you follow marked routes. We recommend discussing your plans with the local teams who will be able to advise on the most suitable options for you.

Always let the reception/guide know where you are planning to go and take a torch and mobile phone (with the hotel/guide's phone number stored). 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.

Medical History and Advice

If you are pregnant at the time of booking your holiday or you discover you are pregnant prior to your departure, firstly – congratulations! Secondly – please tell us as soon as possible. This situation does frequently arise and we are able to advise you both from our own first-hand experience and from discussing this at length with our expert local partners who have experience in this area. The more notice you can give us the better, in order to suggest any adaptations to the itinerary you have

booked which will reduce the risk to both mother and baby. Please contact our customer service team at This email address is being protected from spambots. You need JavaScript enabled to view it. for more information.

We want our holidays to be accessible as they can be and will do our best to accommodate any special requests and requirements where possible. We have a wide range of holidays and destinations and so our travel experts will help find the best holiday for you.

In order to give us the best possible chance to do this we ask that if you or any member of your party has any medical condition or disability which may affect your holiday or has any special requirements, that you tell us at the time of enquiry or booking. You must also promptly advise us if any medical condition or disability which may affect your holiday develops after your booking has been confirmed. You may need to provide a doctor's note and proof of insurance in some cases as the health and safety of our clients is absolutely paramount.

In providing this information you are allowing us to work with our expert local partners to ensure that your whole party can enjoy the holiday. By letting us know in advance we can discreetly work with you to adapt any part of the holiday which may potentially be challenging. Being able to prepare for this in advance makes an incredible difference to what we can offer and minimises any impact on your party and the rest of the group.

Unfortunately, if you choose not to share this information with us in advance then it may limit some or all of the itinerary you have booked, and we cannot be held accountable for any additional costs or missed activities resulting from this.

Experience and Fitness

Most of the activities we offer 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. Activities are designed to be enjoyed and not endured, but some, such as cross-country skiing and snowshoeing, do require a more basic level of fitness than, for example, riding on a snowmobile. If you have any questions, then please contact one of our Travel Experts who can provide first-hand advice.

The only holidays which are not as suitable for complete beginners are the multi-night safaris which involve several days in wilderness cabins travelling by either snowmobile or husky safari. Again, this all depends on the individual taking part, but some prior experience and understanding of these types of activities can be very helpful.

Snowmobile Safety

If your holiday includes snowmobiling or the chance for you to add on this activity, then please read this important information.

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 (including another snowmobile), 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 £500 - £1,500 (the equivalent in local currency) but it can vary.

To our knowledge (and we have searched extensively) there is no insurance policy that will cover you for this excess and it cannot be waived. In some cases, it may be possible to pay to lower this, but this is rare and always arranged locally. Ask the guides if you have any queries regarding the excess, etc.

Snowmobile accidents are rare, but the driver should take extra care throughout. You will, of course, be provided with a full briefing on how to use a snowmobile. However, if you are unsure of any instructions or any aspect of operating a snowmobile, then you must ask a guide for clarification immediately.

Whether you are driving or riding as a passenger, you must ensure that your travel insurance provides full cover for snowmobiling. This includes 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 your EHIC card (European Health Insurance Card).

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 anyone who may be required to drive a snowmobile takes a valid driving licence on holiday (either the old paper licence or the new 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.

If you are unable to drive a snowmobile, then you may not be able to take part in a safari, however, you may be offered the chance to travel as a pillion passenger on another machine if you agree to do so. If this option is not available, then in some cases the guide may be able to arrange for a sled to be pulled for you behind their own machine.

Those under the age of 16 will normally travel in a sled pulled by the guide's snowmobile. If sleds are unavailable, as is the case with some safaris, older children may be able to ride as pillion passengers. Discretion may be applied in resort by our expert guides based on the individual child. Please note for Canada and the US different rules and regulations may apply.

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 for 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
- 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 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, flight availability can be exceptionally limited. 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 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 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 which will be provided approximately one week prior to 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 a doctor.

Domestic flights and those within Europe, 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. You may want to consider bringing your own food to guarantee there will be something you will be able to eat. This is the approach our staff with dietary requirements take when flying within Europe.

Flight schedule changes and connecting transportation

On your 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 then we will contact you to discuss this. Please see our booking conditions for 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 confirmed travel times when your final travel documents are issued. 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

If you have chosen to book your own flights, then you will need to wait until we confirm to you that the holiday departure has met the minimum numbers required to run (if applicable to your chosen holiday). Once the holiday is guaranteed to run, you will be informed and you can then make your arrangements.

If transfers are included in your holiday, please ensure that any potential flights will be met by our standard transfers (speak to one of our Travel Experts for advice) otherwise private transfer supplements may be applicable. Once your flights are booked, please send us a copy of your detailed flight itinerary.

Please be aware that most tickets are non-refundable in the case of cancellation. For this reason, we strongly advise you check the rules of the ticket and check the limitations of your cancellation insurance before booking. We cannot be held liable, in the unlikely eventuality that we should be forced to cancel or amend your trip, for losses incurred relating to any flight booking you have made.

UK foreign office advice

Our clients' safety is at the centre of everything we do, and our operations team continually assesses and monitors the destinations we feature. We carry out thorough risk assessments and work closely with all of our suppliers to continually follow best practice. For up to date travel advice the UK government offers its [Travel Aware website](#) as well as the advice detailed below.

The Foreign and Commonwealth Office Advice

We receive all updates from the [Foreign and Commonwealth Office \(FCO\)](#) with regards to travel advice and we always ensure that we follow this advice in our operations. The FCO issues travel advisories for countries based on a very wide range of factors. They may provide notification about things as simple as a football match and crowds, or they may go so far as to advise against all travel to a region. We ask all our clients to refer to the relevant [Travel Advice by Country](#) for the destinations they are visiting in order to make an informed decision on the safety of the destination based on the details provided. It also provides vital information regarding entry requirements, embassy information, local laws and customs as well as specific safety and health. Guests should take responsibility for

keeping themselves up to date with this advice. Please also ensure that, if you are transiting through another country, you have read the advice and meet the entry requirements for that destination too.

The FCO travel advice is applicable to British Passport Holders. Most governments will issue their own travel advice for a region and, if you are not a UK resident 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>

If the FCO deems that there is an unacceptable level of risk for UK citizens then, together with the government, they may issue an advisory against all travel to a region or country. If such an advisory is published, then we will act accordingly, and this may require the cancellation, curtailment or amendment of a holiday itinerary. These decisions are made on the basis of ensuring our clients' safety and will affect all clients on the holiday, regardless of their nationality.

If one of our local experts suggests an amendment due to a situation which develops locally then we may also take the decision to amend an itinerary appropriately.

If we have to cancel your holiday prior to departure you will be offered the option of an alternative trip (where any price difference will either be refunded to or covered by you) 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 elements we have been unable to deliver, where we have been able to secure a refund from our suppliers. If we must reroute 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). This 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 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, but it is a pre-requisite to travelling with us. You will need to ensure that you have cover for all the activities that you will be participating in during your holiday.

It is extremely important that you take out a suitable travel insurance policy at the time of booking. Plans do sometimes change, and you will need this policy should you need to cancel your holiday.

If you are struggling to find a suitable policy then details of our preferred provider, who will cover you for all the activities we offer, can be found on our website by [clicking here](#). Please note that this policy is available to EU residents under the age of 75 only.

Terms and Conditions

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

Itinerary amendments

Itinerary Amendments

The order of activities is always subject to change and guests will be provided with their final itinerary upon arrival.

Terms & Conditions

Terms

Travelling in the Autumn requires a degree of flexibility. This period is a time of change in the far North and the arrival of the first snowfall can be very unpredictable.

Autumn activities: The daytime activities included in this holiday may be amended to accommodate the arrival of winter's first snows (an unpredictable science!). Walks may become snowshoe treks and guests may need to be flexible in their approach. This is unlikely to be the case in September but changes become more likely in October and November. Your Aurora hunting activities should be unaffected.

If cold weather clothing is required and will make your stay more comfortable then this will be included and issued to you upon arrival. If you would like to borrow any additional equipment then please just speak to one of the local guides. For more information please see the trip dossier.

Minimum age

The minimum age for participation in our itinerary is 12 years old, however, for some activities and transfers, you may be joined by other guests and this may include some of a younger age than stated. Any younger participants will be fully supervised and the guides will ensure that their participation takes place only if the activities will be unaffected.

Very few hotels have a minimum age and there may be families staying at them with younger children, especially during the holiday periods. We do have some itineraries and destinations which are guaranteed to be adult-only, so if this is important to you please speak to one of our Travel Experts.

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