Itinerary

14 Day Follow the Lights Southbound 2027/28

***IMPORTANT NOTE: Any extra nights, optional tours or other amendments, will not be visible on this itinerary.**

Day 1: Arrive Helsinki, Finland

Welcome to Helsinki, Finland's compact and design-forward capital on the Baltic Sea. Broad boulevards, neoclassical architecture and a strong maritime influence shape the city's character, offering a calm and comfortable introduction to your Nordic journey. From the airport, make your own way to your centrally located hotel and settle in. Depending on your arrival time, you may wish to explore the city centre or stroll along the waterfront before meeting your fellow travellers. This evening, meet your guide and fellow travellers before enjoying a welcome dinner at the hotel. Overnight in Helsinki.

MEALS: Dinner

OVERNIGHT: Radisson Blu Plaza Hotel, Helsinki

Day 2: Helsinki ~ Rovaniemi

After breakfast, we'll start our journey north with a short 5 minute walk to the city's railway station for your train journey into Lapland. As the train departs Helsinki, the landscape gradually shifts from lakes, farmland and small towns to Arctic forest and open fells, offering a changing view of Finland's scenery. You'll arrive in Rovaniemi in the late afternoon and transfer to your centrally located hotel. The town sits on the edge of the Arctic, where forested landscapes and northern light define the pace of life. This could be your first opportunity to spot the Northern Lights, so make sure to look skyward this evening.

MEALS: Breakfast

OVERNIGHT: Original Sokos Hotel Vaakuna, Rovaniemi

Day 3: Husky Safari

After breakfast at the hotel, enjoy a relaxed morning at leisure before departing for one of today's highlights – a husky safari in the forests of Finnish Lapland. This "Born to Run" experience includes a guided husky cart or sleigh ride, depending on the snow conditions. At the kennels, learn how the enthusiastic dogs are trained and conditioned to become the remarkable Arctic athletes they are. Gain insight into their care and preparation before setting out along the trail. For animal welfare reasons, husky carts are used when the snow conditions are unfavourable. When there is sufficient snow, the programme changes to a safari by sled. This is not a self-driving experience, allowing you to focus on the scenery and the energy of the dogs as they move through the landscape. A simple soup lunch is included, followed by time to mingle with the dogs. The remainder of the afternoon and evening are at leisure, with optional

excursions available locally or time to relax at your hotel.

MEALS: Breakfast, Lunch

OVERNIGHT: Original Sokos Hotel Vaakuna, Rovaniemi

Day 4: Santa Claus Village and Northern Lights Village Stay

After breakfast at the hotel, check out and meet your long-distance coach for the journey north. A short drive brings you to the Santa Claus Village, located directly on the Arctic Circle. You'll have time to explore this well-known landmark at your own pace – cross the Arctic Circle line, browse the shops or simply take in the atmosphere. Lunch is at your own arrangement. Continuing north towards Saariselkä, we pause in Sodankylä for a brief stop to view the town's historic Old Church, a simple wooden structure reflecting Lapland's rural heritage. By late afternoon, arrive at the Northern Lights Village on the outskirts of Saariselkä. Here, you'll spend the night in a private Aurora Cabin or Glass Igloo, designed to offer uninterrupted views of the night sky away from light pollution. Dinner is served in the hotel restaurant. In the evening, enjoy a reindeer safari hosted by local Sámi guides. Visit the reindeer farm, learn about traditional herding culture and gather inside a wooden kota around the fire for hot berry juice and smoked reindeer meat. If the conditions are right, you can step outside to look for the Northern Lights overhead. Overnight in an Aurora Cabin or Glass Igloo.

MEALS: Breakfast, Dinner

OVERNIGHT: Northern Lights Village, Saariselkä

Day 5: Saariselkä ~ Inari ~ Kirkenes, Norway

Today we depart Saariselkä and continue north through Finnish Lapland. After around an hour, we arrive in the small township of Inari, where entrance is included to the SIIDA Museum, the national museum of the Sámi in Finland. Here, exhibitions present the spiritual and material culture of the Sámi people and explore the relationship between community, identity and the Arctic environment. Lunch is included during the visit. Later, we continue north, crossing the border into Norway before arriving in Kirkenes. At the Snowhotel Kirkenes, enjoy a short tour of the property, which is home to resident reindeer and a husky farm. Entrance and a drink are included. You may choose to join the included King Crab Experience, beginning with an expert presentation at the pier before enjoying a freshly prepared king crab tasting. Dinner is served in the farmhouse restaurant, Låven. You'll overnight in a traditional Gamme Cabin, inspired by hunting and fishing huts typical of the Lapland wilderness. Optional Northern Lights excursions may be available in the evening.

MEALS: Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner

OVERNIGHT: Gamme Cabin, Snowhotel, Kirkenes

Day 6: Kirkenes ~ Embark Ship

After breakfast at the hotel, the morning is at leisure. Later, transfer by coach to the Hurtigruten pier in Kirkenes for check-in and embarkation procedures. Your voyage on board the Coastal Express begins here in Arctic Norway. Shortly after departure, we call at Vardø, home to the distinctive star-shaped Vardøhus Fortress, built in 1737 and still in military use today. Weather permitting, the hardy may even

consider a brief dip in the icy Arctic Ocean. Continuing along Norway's northern coastline, we arrive in Båtsfjord in the evening before sailing onward to Berlevåg. Along the way, you may glimpse Mount Tanahorn rising to the west or see Kjølnes Lighthouse blinking atop the cliffs above the Barents Sea. These remote fishing communities are also known for their celebrated male choir, formed by local fishermen. Dinner is served on board.

TIME IN PORT:

Depart Kirkenes: 12:30

Vardø: 16:05 to 17:00

Båtsfjord: 20:00 to 20:30

Berlevåg: 22:25 to 22:35

MEALS: Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner

OVERNIGHT: Hurtigruten Coastal Vessel

Day 7: Hammerfest & Arctic Ports

During the night, we call at Mehamn, where there is the option to join a snowmobile excursion into the Arctic wilderness. This guided adventure takes you across open snowy plains and through quiet valleys under the vast northern sky. With crisp winter air and minimal light pollution, it can be an excellent opportunity to search for the Northern Lights. As morning breaks, we continue along Norway's far northern coastline, calling at ports including Honningsvåg and Hammerfest. In Hammerfest, you may wish to visit the UNESCO-listed Meridian Column, erected in 1854 to commemorate the first precise measurement of the Earth's meridian arc – a landmark in scientific history. Throughout the day, the ship threads between islands and exposed headlands, revealing the scale of this remote region. Late in the evening, we arrive in Tromsø. An optional Northern Lights concert may offer a memorable end to the day, combining Arctic atmosphere with local culture.

TIME IN PORT:

Mehamn: 01:20 to 01:30

Kjøllefjord: 03:25 to 03:35

Honningsvåg: 05:45 to 06:00

Havøysund: 08:00 to 08:15

Hammerfest: 11:00 to 12:45

Øksfjord: 15:50 to 16:05

Skjervøy: 19:30 to 19:45

Tromsø: 23:45 to 01:30

MEALS: Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner

OVERNIGHT: Hurtigruten Coastal Vessel

Day 8: Lofoten, Vesterålen and the Trollfjord

This morning, we arrive in Harstad. Here, you may choose to join the optional excursion A Taste of Vesterålen, exploring local history, coastal landscapes and cultural heritage sites that define this northern region. Those remaining on board experience our passage through Risøyrenna, a shallow channel constructed in the 1920s specifically for Hurtigruten, allowing safe navigation through these waters. As we continue south, the scenery becomes increasingly dramatic. We sail through the island chains of Vesterålen and Lofoten, where steep mountains rise sharply from the sea and fishing villages cluster along sheltered harbours. After a brief call at Risøyhamn, we arrive in Stokmarknes, the 19th century birthplace of Hurtigruten. Further south, it may appear as though we are heading directly towards a mountain wall, but soon we enter the narrow Raftsund. Weather and conditions permitting, we detour into Trollfjord, where sheer cliffs rise almost vertically from the water, creating one of the voyage's most memorable moments.

TIME IN PORT:

Tromsø: 23:45 to 01:30

Finnsnes: 04:20 to 04:40

Harstad: 08:00 to 08:30

Risøyhamn: 10:45 to 11:00

Sortland: 12:30 to 13:00

Stokmarknes: 14:15 to 15:15

Svolvær: 18:30 to 20:30

Stamsund: 22:15 to 22:30

MEALS: Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner

OVERNIGHT: Hurtigruten Coastal Vessel

Day 9: Helgeland Coast and the Arctic Circle

Just after breakfast, we cross the Arctic Circle, marking our exit from Arctic Norway to the mainland regions further south. The moment is traditionally celebrated on board, often with a spoonful of cod liver oil – a light-hearted rite of passage for those on deck. Sailing along the Helgeland coast, you'll soon spot Torghatten, the distinctive mountain known for the natural hole through its centre. Local legend offers an explanation for this unusual formation, and your Expedition Team will be happy to share the story. Further south, we pass the Seven Sisters mountain range. According to folklore, seven troll sisters were caught by the sunrise and turned to stone, forming the peaks that rise dramatically from the coastline. Although we are now south of the Arctic Circle, winter skies can still offer opportunities to see the Northern Lights, should conditions allow.

TIME IN PORT:

Bodø: 02:30 to 03:30

Ørnes: 06:25 to 06:35

Nesna: 10:25 to 10:35

Sandnessjøen: 11:45 to 12:15

Brønnøysund: 15:00 to 17:25

Rørvik: 21:00 to 21:30

MEALS: Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner

OVERNIGHT: Hurtigruten Coastal Vessel

Day 10: Trondheim and coastal traditions

Today, we arrive in Trondheim, offering time to explore Norway's former capital at your own pace. Visit Nidaros Cathedral, built over the burial site of King Olav II, who reigned from 1015 to 1028. Its Gothic façade and intricate stonework make it one of Scandinavia's most significant religious landmarks. Wander through the Bakklandet district, where colourful wooden warehouses now house cafés and small shops. You may wish to pause for coffee and a Nordic pastry before walking up to Kristiansten Fortress for views across Norway's third-largest city and its surrounding fjord. As we continue south, the coastline reveals how closely Norway's communities are tied to the sea. In Kristiansund, long known as Norway's "dried cod capital," fishing traditions remain central to local life. An optional excursion to the Bergtatt marble mine offers a contrasting experience, taking you deep inside a mountain and across an illuminated underground lake before a meal is served in the mine's impressive hall.

TIME IN PORT:

Trondheim: 06:30 to 09:30

Kristiansund: 16:30 to 17:30

Molde: 21:15 to 21:45

MEALS: Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner

OVERNIGHT: Hurtigruten Coastal Vessel

Day 11: Bergen ~ Disembark Ship

During the night, we call at Ålesund, Torvik and Måløy as our sea voyage gradually draws to a close. Before docking in Bergen, there is still striking scenery to experience, including Nordfjord beneath the vast Jostedal Glacier. South of Florø, we cross the mouth of the Sognefjord, Norway's longest and deepest fjord, taking in views of the island-dotted coastline. In the early afternoon, we arrive in Bergen, marking the end of your Coastal Express journey. After breakfast on board and disembarkation, meet your private coach and English-speaking local guide for a city sightseeing tour. Explore the UNESCO-listed Bryggen wharf, with its colourful wooden warehouses reflecting Bergen's Hanseatic heritage. Continue to St Mary's Church and Håkon's Hall, reminders of the city's medieval importance. Your city tour concludes with a return journey on the Fløibanen funicular to the top of Mount Fløyen, where wide views stretch across the harbour and surrounding mountains. You'll then be brought back to your hotel where dinner is by your

own arrangement.

TIME IN PORT:

Ålesund: 00:30 to 01:20

Torvik: 02:35 to 02:45

Måløy: 05:45 to 06:00

Florø: 08:15 to 08:30

Arrive Bergen: 14:45

MEALS: Breakfast, Lunch

OVERNIGHT: Clarion Admiral Hotel, Bergen

Day 12: "Norway in a Nutshell" to Flåm

After breakfast at the hotel, check out and transfer to Bergen railway station for the start of today's Norwegian fjord journey. Your luggage will be forwarded to your hotel in Oslo, allowing you to travel comfortably with a small day bag. Travel by train from Bergen to Voss, where you change to a coach. The journey continues through a valley landscape shaped by rivers and cascading waterfalls as you make your way to Gudvangen. In Gudvangen, board a ferry for a fjord cruise along the UNESCO-listed Nærøyfjord, one of the narrowest arms of the Sognefjord. Sheer mountain walls rise from the water, waterfalls thread down the rock face and small farms cling to the slopes, offering a sense of scale that is distinctly Norwegian. On arrival in Flåm, walk to your hotel and check in. Dinner is included at the hotel restaurant this evening.

MEALS: Breakfast, Dinner

OVERNIGHT: Fretheim Hotel, Flåm

Day 13: Flåm Railway ~ Oslo

This morning you'll board the Flåm Railway, one of the world's most renowned rail journeys. The ascent from the fjord to the mountain station of Myrdal reveals waterfalls, steep valley walls and sweeping views as the train climbs through dramatic terrain. At Myrdal, change trains and continue onward to Oslo. As the journey progresses, the landscape gradually shifts from mountain scenery to farmland, forests and small towns as you approach the capital. On arrival in Oslo in the afternoon, walk to your hotel and check in. The remainder of the afternoon is at leisure, with lunch at your own arrangement. This evening, gather with your fellow travellers for a farewell dinner at the hotel restaurant, marking the conclusion of your journey through Finland and Norway.

MEALS: Breakfast, Dinner

OVERNIGHT: Thon Hotel Opera, Oslo

Day 14: Oslo ~ Departure

After breakfast, check out of your hotel. Your tour concludes today, with onward travel arrangements to the airport at your own leisure.

MEALS: Breakfast