

DESTINATION NORTH

9 nights / 10 days

Finland, Sweden and Norway

Self – Drive



Destination North is a tour for those who would like to explore the very most of northern Scandinavia and Finland including the Sami-region, Island life on Vesterålen and Sortland and the North Cape. You will travel above the Arctic Circle which marks the southernmost extent of the midnight sun on the summer solstice and the ragged edge of the polar night on the winter solstice. At the North Cape the Midnight Sun can be seen from mid May to the end of July. On your journey northwards you will experience how the landscape changes between almost drifting islands, steep mountains, mighty rivers and endless plains showing off rare but beautiful Nordic flora and fauna.

Day 01: Arrival in Rovaniemi

Arrival in Rovaniemi according to your own itinerary. Rovaniemi is the capital of the Finnish Lapland and is located just above the Arctic Circle. This is also known as the home of Santa Claus! Rovaniemi's most prominent landmarks include the Jätkänkynttilä bridge with its eternal flame over the Kemijoki river, the Arktikum House which rises out of the bank of the Ounasjoki river, the Rovaniemi Town Hall, the library and the Lappia House which serves as a theatre, concert hall and congress centre. The last three mentioned buildings are designed by the famous Finnish architect and designer Alvar Aalto. Accommodation at Cumulus Hotel Rovaniemi.

Day 02: Rovaniemi – Kiruna (398 km)

Breakfast at the hotel. Drive west along E75 / 4 towards the Swedish border and Kiruna. Kiruna is the Northernmost city in Sweden and is sometimes listed as the largest city in the world by area, even if most of its territory of course is non-urban. Just around the corner you will find unique Swedish wilderness with high mountains, dense forests and flowing rivers. Kiruna has a long tradition of mining and in 2004 a new iron ore was found just under the city centre. This led to the decision of moving the entire city during the next decade, which means moving a lot of buildings. Therefore, in Kiruna you just might meet a house on the roads! Accommodation at Scandic Hotel Ferrum.

Day 03: Kiruna – Sortland (336 km)

Breakfast at the hotel. Today you will be heading for Norway and the Vesterålen Islands. The Vesterålen Islands are famous for its great nature and animal life. Eagles and seals can easily be spotted around the islands and Langøya where Sortland is located.

In 1999 the artist Bjørn Elvenes started his project to paint the buildings in Sortland blue. All around the city you will find buildings in different blue tones presenting the picture of Den blå byen – the blue town.

Accommodation at Sortland hotel.

Day 04: Sortland

Breakfast at the hotel. Today we recommend a drive around the islands. Southwest of Sortland the village of Storkmarksnes is located. Here you can visit the museum of the famous coastal express Hurtigruten. The need for transportation of fish, post and goods from Storkmarksnes started the route along the coast and the traditional Hurtigruten was created. This route is now called one of the world's most beautiful sea voyages starting in Bergen going all the way up to Kirkenes.

If you are interested in a true nature experience we would recommend an excursion by boat. From Andenes approximately 100 km from Sortland it is possible to go for a safari to see one of the seas most spectacular animals – whales. Daily departures all summer. Please ask us for details.

Accommodation at Sortland hotel

Day 05: Sortland – Tromsø (378 km)

Breakfast at the hotel. You are now heading for the largest Nordic city above the Arctic circle also known as the Capital of the North. When arriving in Tromsø we recommend a visit to the Arctic Museum - Polaria. Polaria has an Arctic aquarium presenting many of the amazing species who lives in the Arctic Sea. With its spectacular architecture, that symbolizes fallen ice bergs you will easily spot it in from the city centre.

Other sights of interest are the Lyngen Church built in 1731 and is the largest wooden building in northern Norway and also the majestic Arctic Cathedral.

Accommodation at Clarion hotel Bryggen

Day 06: Tromsø – Alta (404 km)

Breakfast at the hotel

Alta is the biggest city in Finnmark, Norway's largest and northernmost county. Alta is a modern coastal town with an ancient history from long before the Sami traditions. To experience it we recommend a visit to the Alta Museum which holds more than 2 500 prehistoric rock carvings that have been listed as an UNESCO world heritage site since 1985. The museum is located approximately 5 km south of Alta which makes it a perfect stop on the way from Tromsø.

Accommodation at Rica hotel Alta.

Day 07: Alta – Honningsvåg (210 km)

Breakfast at the hotel. Departure from Alta towards the North Cape. Drive along the Road of the Midnight Sun to Kåfjord where an underwater tunnel will bring you to Honningsvåg. In the evening we recommend an excursion to the North Cape Plateau where you can admire the panoramic view of the open wide expanse of the Arctic Ocean and perhaps have the opportunity to enjoy the Midnight sun.

Accommodation at Rica hotel Honningsvåg

Day 08: Honningsvåg – Karasjok (238 km)

Breakfast at the hotel. Drive south over the extensive plains of the Finnmark county towards Karasjok – ‘the Capital of the Sami People’. We recommend a visit to Sápmi (“the land of the Sami”), a cultural park where you will get an exotic and living experience of the Sami culture, history, traditions and mythology. There are guided tours at the Sami Parliament and at the National Museum for Sami Culture. You will find both within walking distance from Sápmi Park in the town centre.

Accommodation at Rica hotel Karasjok

Day 09: Karasjok – Kautokeino (130 km)

Breakfast at the hotel. Continue towards the interior Sami town Kautokeino, which is the area with the highest density of Sami people living the traditional way with reindeer farming. In Kautokeino we also recommend a visit to Juhls Silvergallery, which is a spectacular building with exhibition of silver artifacts made by local artists who will be your hosts.

Accommodation at Thon hotel Kautokeino

Day 10: Kautokeino

Breakfast at the hotel. Departure according to your own itinerary.

From Karasjok you can choose to go back to Alta where domestic flights departures or perhaps continue back to Finland and Ivalo which is located approximately 150 km from Karasjok.

- **End of services** -

Hotel description:

Accommodation at good tourist class hotels (3-4 stars). If any of the quoted hotels are fully booked we will find alternatives of equal standard.

Services:

- 9 nights hotel accommodation in shared double room with shower/WC.
- 9 x Scandinavian breakfast buffet.

Prices are valid from 01.05.12 – 30.09.12