

EXPLORE!



Nordkapp Adventure

NORWAY, RUSSIA - TRIP CODE NKP

DISCOVERY

Why book this trip?

This unique trip ventures from St. Petersburg to the Nordkapp. Experience the cities of Murmansk, Alta and Tromso, and hike across the tundra to the actual most northern point in Europe, Knivskjellodden, which few travellers discover.

- **Murmansk** - See the Soviet architecture in this Arctic city and Lenin, the world's first nuclear-powered icebreaker ship
- **Kizhi Island** - See traditional Russian wooden architecture on the UNESCO Listed Kizhi Island in Lake Onega
- **Solovetsky Island** - Take a boat across the White Sea and visit the monastery which was a former prison camp for politicians of Imperial Russia.



INCLUDED MEALS
Breakfast: 15
Lunch: 1



TRIP STAFF
Explore Tour
Leader
Driver(s)
Local Guide(s)



TRANSPORT
Bus
Boat
Ferry
Train



ACCOMMODATION
1 nights simple chalet
11 nights standard hotel
1 nights simple hotel
2 nights simple overnight train



TRIP PACE:
Full on



GROUP SIZE:
12 - 18

Itinerary

Itineraries on some departure dates may differ, please select the itinerary that you wish to explore.

DAY 1 - Join trip in St. Petersburg, Russia

Our journey of discovery, to the most northerly point in mainland Europe, begins in Russia in the attractive city of St. Petersburg. Built on the hundred islets that form the Neva River Delta, the city formerly known as Leningrad, was founded by Peter the Great as his 'window on the West'. It's regarded as one of the most romantic cities in the world with its picturesque canals and Baroque and Neo-Classical buildings that give it a very European feel. It was here that the Russian Revolution began, and where, arguably, the first shoots of democracy sprouted, 70 years later.

After checking in to our hotel and meeting the rest of the group, the evening is free for you to enjoy the city's many bars and restaurants. Russian cuisine is hearty with a number of delicious soups and stews and most dishes are accompanied by a variety of pickled vegetables and sour cream. Well known soups include borscht made with beetroot, and solyanka which is spicy and normally has at least three different types of meat, olives, lemons, gherkins and more in it - it's much more tasty than it sounds. Popular main dishes include pelmeni - meat filled dumplings and of course beef stroganoff.

On this trip we'll have a tour of St. Petersburg which will give us a feel for the city's extensive history, however there is very little free time in the city, so if you wish to spend time discovering more on your own then we would recommend extending your stay for a night or two.



ACCOMMODATION:
Hotel Kravt (or similar)



Grade: Standard Hotel



SINGLE ROOM AVAILABLE



MEALS PROVIDED: NONE

DAY 2 - Tour of St. Petersburg and visit to Milutin Fort; train to Petrozavodsk

This morning our leader will take us on a tour by coach and metro of all the city's main highlights. Amongst other things we will see the facades of the Alexander Nevsky Convent, Kazan Cathedral, the monument to Peter the Great, Church of the Saviour of the Spilled Blood and Palace Square, as well as the numerous canals and rivers and the bridges that cross them. Along the way we will visit the Museum of Political History, where we have an audio guide to enhance our understanding of the exhibits. The museum building itself is significant; it's an Art Nouveau mansion that was originally built for a mistress of Nicholas II before he became Emperor. In 1917 it was seized by the Bolshevik revolutionaries who turned it into their headquarters. It became the Museum of the Revolution in 1957 and then in the 1990s it was reworked to reveal the Soviet Union's secret history and turned into the fascinating museum it is today.

This afternoon we have an excursion by boat to Milutin Fort. This island has been used as a maritime fortress since 1807. Tsar Alexander II visited the fort in 1880 and named it Count Milyutin. After the Russian Revolution the fort was modernised and was an important strategic location in the Gulf of Finland. The Red Army stormed the fort several times during the 1921 rebellion and during World War II anti-aircraft guns were installed and helped to protect the city. The fort was however disarmed in the 1950s and now lies abandoned with nature taking back over.

This evening we board our overnight train to Petrozavodsk at approximately 10pm. We'll spend the night in sleeper carriages with four bunk beds and bedding provided in each compartment. There's a shared toilet and wash basin in each carriage.



ACCOMMODATION:

Overnight Train from St Petersburg to Petrozavodsk



Grade: Simple Overnight Train



MEALS PROVIDED: BREAKFAST

DAY 3 - Arrive in Petrozavodsk; boat to UNESCO Listed Kizhi Island

Our train arrives in Petrozavodsk at around 6.30am and we'll then transfer to our hotel to check-in and have breakfast. After which we depart by boat to Kizhi Island, which is home to one of Russia's greatest

open-air museums, and located in Lake Onega, Europe's second largest lake. During the Soviet Union, various pieces of wooden architecture were collected from around the country and brought to Kizhi for preservation purposes. Today the island is a UNESCO World Heritage Site and there are nearly 100 structures showcasing traditional Russian architecture with their octagonal shape, spires and magnificent onion domes. Central to this is Kizhi Pogost where we find an enclosure with two churches and a bell tower. The Church of the Resurrection of Lazarus was moved here from the Murom Monastery on the east shore of the lake. It dates back to the 14th century and is the oldest wooden church left standing in Russia. After spending a few hours here exploring on foot we take the boat back to Petrozavodsk for the evening.



ACCOMMODATION:
Hotel Severnaya (or similar)



Grade: Standard Hotel



SINGLE ROOM AVAILABLE



MEALS PROVIDED: BREAKFAST

DAY 4 - Full day train to Kem; overnight stay in Rabocheostrovsk on the White Sea

This morning at around 11am we board the train to the historic town of Kem, which takes about eight hours. We'll make a stop at a food shop to give you the chance to buy a packed lunch and refreshments for the journey and tea is available onboard. On arrival this evening we'll have a brief tour by bus of the main sights before transferring the short distance to our hotel in Rabocheostrovsk.

Rabocheostrovsk is a small town sandwiched between the rocky coastline and dense forest and it's here that the Kem River joins the sea. It has long been known as the gateway to the White Sea and the starting point for pilgrims travelling to the Solovetsky Archipelago. Both Rabocheostrovsk and Kem have been under the control of the Finnish and Swedish during its long history and Kem grew massively during World War I with the construction of the railway to the new port of Murmansk. Then after the Bolshevik revolution the area was occupied for two years by the White Army, but with the return of the Soviets it became part of a corrective camp system created by the political police in 1919 in Solovetsky Monastery.

Our accommodation tonight will be near the harbour; ready for our adventure across the White Sea to Solovetsky tomorrow morning. We will be staying in two-storey, simply decorated cottages and there is a restaurant and bar on site.



ACCOMMODATION:
Hotel Prichal (or similar)

Grade: Simple Chalet



SINGLE ROOM AVAILABLE



MEALS PROVIDED: BREAKFAST

DAY 5 - Boat to Solovetsky Island; visit the monastery and stone labyrinths

This morning we take the boat across to Solovetsky Island in the White Sea, which will take around two hours. This archipelago is made up of six islands and is located around 160 kilometres below the Arctic Circle.

We visit the Solovetsky Monastery Complex, which is 10 minutes' walk from our hotel. Built in the 15th century the monastery is a UNESCO World Heritage Site. By the 17th century the monastery was a commercial hub with salt and iron works, and was home to some 350 monks. However, in the 20th century it was closed and in 1923 it was converted into a gulag for political prisoners. The camp wasn't too bad at first with the prisoners keeping a botanical garden and having a library. But in 1937 Stalin changed that and made it into one of the most severe in all of Russia and it's estimated that over one million people died here including priests, artists and writers - anyone who was deemed 'an enemy of the state'. The camp was in operation up to 1939 and then during World War II it became a naval base. The monastery finally reopened in the early 1990's and is now once again home to a few monks. A large wooden cross commemorates those that lost their lives in this former prison camp.

In the monastery complex we will find Uspensky and Preobrazhensky Cathedrals, a watermill and the Church of Saint Nicholas. The Annunciation Church here still holds regular services. We have a guided tour for three hours exploring the monastery.

This afternoon we will take a boat trip to the neighbouring Zayatsky Island where we spend a couple of hours exploring and the boat crossing each way takes around 45 minutes. The island has been considered sacred since ancient times and has numerous Pagan stone labyrinths and barrows dating back to as early as 30,000 BC. The island is small but home to a dozen well preserved and fascinating labyrinths.

Later this afternoon back on Solovetsky Island we will walk back to our hotel. The decor in our hotel tonight is a bit old fashioned and the in room facilities are simple, but bedrooms are en suite and there is a bar and restaurant.



ACCOMMODATION:
Solovetskaya Sloboda Hotel (or similar)

Grade: Simple Hotel



SINGLE ROOM AVAILABLE



MEALS PROVIDED: BREAKFAST

DAY 6 - Visit to the Gulag Museum; overnight train to Murmansk

This morning we drive to Mount Sekirnaya, which is the highest point on the island. From here we get a fantastic view over the coast, but this is also a very historically important place. Here we can see the Holy Ascension Monastery, which during the days of the prison camps was used as a punishment cell and for solitary confinement. Next we'll visit the Gulag Museum which explains more about how Solovetsky played an important part in the USSR's correctional prison camp system back in the 1920s and 1930s. The forest road used today to reach Mount Sekirnaya is very bumpy and therefore may not be suitable for anyone with a back condition.

This afternoon at around 4pm we take the boat back to Rabocheostrovsk and drive the short distance to the railway station in Kem. En route to rail station we'll make a brief stop at a memorial dedicated to the railway workers of the Kemsy branch of the Kirov Railway, who died during their labour post in the years of the Winter War between Soviet Russia and neighbouring Finland.

In Kem there will be free time for dinner before we board the overnight train to Murmansk. We spend the night in sleeper carriages with four bunk beds and bedding provided in each compartment. There's a shared toilet and wash basin in each carriage. Our train departs at about 9pm.



ACCOMMODATION:

Overnight Train from Kem to Murmansk

Grade: Simple Overnight Train



MEALS PROVIDED: BREAKFAST

DAY 7 - Arrive in Murmansk; city tour including the British Naval Cemetery

We arrive in Murmansk this morning at around 9am and have breakfast in our hotel. Murmansk is a relatively new city, with it celebrating its 100th birthday in 2016, but it's also the largest Arctic city, which has grown primarily because of its port location, which is kept ice free by the warm waters of the Gulf Stream and also by the prime mineral mining territory of the nearby Kola Peninsula. The city was originally called Romanov-na-Murmanye and was built quickly during World War I. It was then occupied by the White Army fighting the Bolsheviks until 1920 and was renamed, as the 'hero city' after it was obliterated by bombing in World War II. The city's image is rather severe with blocks of Soviet architecture surrounded by weatherworn arctic scenery, but it's a lively place and is a playground for outdoor adventurers during the spring and summer months when the midnight sun is in full swing (from late May to late July). In winter the city endures six weeks of darkness, but is blessed with great displays of the Northern Lights.

After some time to relax and get our bearings we will explore the city this afternoon to see the main sights including the British Naval Cemetery. Here are the graves of a number of sailors who lost their lives in 1919 when Churchill sent them in to help the White Army to try and defeat the Reds. We will also walk past the pretty Semyonovskaya Lake and up through a hilly park to the Alyosha Statue. This giant concrete monument of a soldier is in place to remember those who were lost their lives in World War II.



ACCOMMODATION:
Park Inn Polyarnie Zori (or similar)



Grade: Standard Hotel



SINGLE ROOM AVAILABLE



MEALS PROVIDED: BREAKFAST

DAY 8 - Explore the icebreaker ship Lenin; free afternoon in Murmansk

This morning we'll visit the World's first nuclear-powered icebreaker ship, Lenin, which was once used to carve its way through to the North Pole. The ship was built in 1957 and we will get to see its canteen, map room, captain's bridge and the nuclear reactor. During her time at sea there were two cooling system accidents, which weren't widely known about until after the collapse of the Soviet Union. In 1974 she was awarded the Order of Lenin honour, which was the highest that could be bestowed in the Soviet Union. She was decommissioned in 1989 because her hull had worn too thin from all the ice she'd navigated through. She has been permanently docked in Murmansk ever since and opened as a museum in 2005.

This afternoon is free for you to explore the city of Murmansk. You might like to visit the Murmansk Regional Museum to learn more about the area's history or perhaps the Museum of the Northern Fleet. The exhibits here tell the story of Russia's first navy at Arkhangelsk, their early Arctic explorations and the joint Allied Arctic Convoys (call sign PQ) to Soviet Russia during World War II. Another interesting museum is the Murmansk Ethnographic Museum of European North Indigenous Peoples where you can learn more about the Sami and Vepsian culture.



ACCOMMODATION:
Park Inn Polyarnie Zori (or similar)



Grade: Standard Hotel



SINGLE ROOM AVAILABLE



MEALS PROVIDED: BREAKFAST

DAY 9 - Drive to Kirkenes, Norway via the Trifonov Pechengsky Monastery

Today we leave Russia and drive to Kirkenes in Norway, which is around 225 kilometres away, so it will take us about four hours. En route we stop at the Trifonov Pechengsky Monastery. There has been a monastery here since 1533 at the point where the Pechenga River meets the Barents Sea. Sadly the lower monastery was destroyed by fire in 2006. However, a couple of years later they constructed an exact replica of the 1886 wooden monastery. We will be shown around this by a monk who will explain its history and importance and will also have free time here for lunch.

During our journey we'll also make a brief photo stop at a waterfall and at a memorial dedicated to those lost during the liberation of Norway from Nazi occupation during World War II. There are a few artefacts that can be seen here as well as the memorial itself.

Kirkenes is a small town close to both the Russian and Finnish borders and on arrival we visit the Andersgrotta World War II civilian bomb shelter to learn more about its history. The city was heavily bombed in the war with more than 300 raids from Soviet planes. The shelter was built in 1943 beneath the bedrock in the city centre and was very well hidden.

We check-in to our hotel in Kirkenes this evening and you'll have the opportunity to buy a packed lunch and refreshments for tomorrow.



ACCOMMODATION:
Scandic Kirkenes (or similar)

Grade: Standard Hotel



SINGLE ROOM AVAILABLE



MEALS PROVIDED: BREAKFAST

DAY 10 - See the Ekkeroy bird cliffs and Sami Museum; arrive in Karasjok

This morning we drive to the coast to the seabird cliffs at Ekkeroy to try and spot some of the 50 plus different bird species found here including white-tailed eagles, rough-legged buzzards, red-throated pipits and kittiwakes. Flaget, or Bird Rock as it is known is a high cliff that is a designated nature reserve. Here we'll also hopefully be able to see the fish drying racks that are typical to this stretch of coastline and there's also a small museum near the cliff that you may like to visit.

There'll also be the chance for a picnic lunch stop during our journey today. From the coast we'll walk for about 15 minutes each way to a nearby traditional village grocery store where you'll have the chance to sample hot chocolate and waffles.

We return to the bus and drive to nearby Vadso where we visit the Sami Museum. The Sami are the northernmost indigenous people found in Europe. Many people in Northern Norway have Sami heritage and still follow the traditional cultural practices and wear the traditional dress. We can learn more about their history and modern day life at this museum.

We drive on to Karasjok, which takes about three hours and on arrival we check-in to our hotel.



ACCOMMODATION:
Scandic Karasjok (or similar)



Grade: Standard Hotel



SINGLE ROOM AVAILABLE



MEALS PROVIDED: BREAKFAST

DAY 11 - Visit the Sami Parliament before reaching the Nordkapp

Karasjok is the Sami capital and is the centre for this culture in Norway. There are almost 3,000 people living here and around 60,000 reindeer. For the majority of inhabitants, Sami rather than Norwegian is their first language and nomadic reindeer herders have lived in the area for hundreds of years. This morning before leaving Karasjok we visit the Sami Parliament, which is shaped like a lavvu - a traditional shelter that is used by the reindeer herders.

After a short visit to the parliament we drive for around four hours through the rugged and isolated tundra scenery until we reach the Nordkapp. Here we will visit the North Cape Hall where you might like to look around the historical exhibitions, the Cave of Lights and watch the film in the movie theatre that shows the scenery at the Nordkapp through all four seasons. You can of course also see the globe marking the Nordkapp, which was erected in 1978 on a 307 metre high cliff overlooking the Arctic Sea. There's also a restaurant here where you can have lunch. After exploring for a few hours we'll go to our nearby hotel to check-in.



ACCOMMODATION:
Scandic Nordkapp (or similar)



Grade: Standard Hotel



SINGLE ROOM AVAILABLE



MEALS PROVIDED: BREAKFAST

DAY 12 - Hike to the true most northern point in mainland Europe, Knivskjellodden

Today for many will be the highlight of our trip as we drive back to the Nordkapp where we leave our bus and start our walk. Our goal is to reach the most northern point in mainland Europe. Many people believe this to be at Nordkapp where the globe sits as a monument to its northern location, but in fact the true position, is at little known Knivskjellodden, which is a peninsula that stretches out to sea a further 1,457 metres north. Although Nordkapp is easily reachable, Knivskjellodden will be more of a challenge as we can only get there on foot. This hike will be 10 kilometres per way from where we leave the bus, so its 20 kilometres in total, which will take us between six to seven hours. The terrain is similar to that found in the English Lake District and is rocky, boggy and uneven underfoot, so sturdy, waterproof walking boots with excellent tread are a must and you may find walking poles useful too. It can be snowy and slippery underfoot at any time of year (it is especially likely to still be snowy in June). The track is marked by stone cairns and as well as our tour leader we will be accompanied by a guide who will be the back marker during our hike to ensure we stay together. Our hotel will provide us with a packed lunch, so we can have a stop for a picnic along the way.

There aren't many trees on this windswept coast but the Gulf Stream keeps the temperatures in summer to an average of 1°C, which isn't bad considering we're only around 1,935 kilometres away from the North Pole. Along the way we may be lucky enough to spot reindeer grazing. Marking the most northern point is a stack of granite pieces in a beehive shaped obelisk. There is also a tin box nearby containing a logbook where we can add a note to prove we've succeeded in reaching the edge of Europe. From this spot looking out to sea we may be fortunate enough to see puffins and cormorants bobbing in the Arctic Ocean before we begin our walk back to the bus. We return to our hotel where we can have a hot drink and a warm shower after our exciting adventure into the northern wilderness.

If anyone doesn't wish to join our walk today then it's possible to stay at our hotel and the nearest town of Honningsvåg can be reached by taxi or shuttle bus.



ACCOMMODATION:
Scandic Nordkapp (or similar)



Grade: Standard Hotel



SINGLE ROOM AVAILABLE



DAY 13 - Discover the ancient Alta rock art and visit the Tirpitz Museum

This morning we take a scenic drive to Alta where we may well spot reindeer along the way. Our drive takes around three hours. Alta is the largest town in Finnmark and has a lot of Sami cultural links. The town is found inside the Alta Fjord, so has the coast on one side and beautiful mountainous forest on the other. On arrival we will go to visit the UNESCO Listed rock carvings at Hjemmeluft. The carvings date from around 4200 to 500 BC and prove that there was human activity this far north even in prehistoric times. We'll have an audio-guide and spend around three hours discovering the site.

Next we visit the Tirpitz Museum, which has one of the largest collections of artefacts from the Bismarck battleship which served Germany during World War II and attacked the allied Arctic Convoys en route to Murmansk. It was one of the largest, most powerful and feared ships in the Nazi fleet, but on the 12th November 1944 it was successfully bombed and sunk not far off the coast at Tromso. We'll be shown around the museum by a local guide and also taken to see the crate from a Tallboy Bomb explosion and visit the local graveyard to see the resting place of Cornish miners and a memorial to the crews of the midget submarines who didn't make it.

We check-in to our hotel in Alta and have the evening free in the town.



ACCOMMODATION:

Thon Hotel Alta (or similar)



Grade: Standard Hotel



SINGLE ROOM AVAILABLE



MEALS PROVIDED: BREAKFAST

DAY 14 - See the German fort at Spakenes; explore Tromso

We depart this morning for Tromso, which is about 305 kilometres away and will take us around six hours to reach. We'll make a coffee stop along the way at Gildetun where there is a viewpoint overlooking the Kvaenangen Fjord, mountains and Oksfjordjokelen Glacier and the Arctic Ocean. We will also stop in Spakenes where we will take an easy walk (covering about four kilometres and taking us around an hour) to the remains of a World War II fortification that has excellent ocean views and where we can see the Lyngen Alps across the fjord. The fort was built by the Germans and although it was destroyed when they left, a number of bunkers and gun sites remain.

On arrival in Tromso we explore the city with our tour leader. The city centre has the largest concentration of traditional wooden houses in Northern Norway with the oldest dating back to 1789. The city's most iconic building though is probably the Arctic Cathedral with its distinctive and eye-

catching triangle shape. The city is one of the most populated northern locations in the world and has rich Sami and Norse history.

This evening if the weather is good and depending on the time of year, you might decide to take the cable car up Mount Storsteinen (420 metres) to take advantage of the midnight sun and capture some amazing photos of the city below in the unique light. From mid-May to mid-Aug the cable car is open until past midnight.



ACCOMMODATION:
Scandic Grand Hotel (or similar)



Grade: Standard Hotel



SINGLE ROOM AVAILABLE



MEALS PROVIDED: BREAKFAST

DAY 15 - Free day in Tromso with the chance to join a beer safari

Today is free for you to explore Tromso. You might like to visit the Tromso Museum, which displays information about its culture and nature including the world's northernmost botanical garden. It's possible to purchase a combination ticket that gives you entry to the Tromso Museum and also the Polar Museum and the historic ship MS Polstjerna.

Alternatively, you might like to try something a bit different and join a beer safari where you can sample Arctic tapas and 10 of the locally produced Arctic Craft Brewery beers. Perhaps you'd prefer to join a fjord tour by bus around Kvaloya to see more the surrounding scenery.



ACCOMMODATION:
Scandic Grand Hotel (or similar)



Grade: Standard Hotel



SINGLE ROOM AVAILABLE



DAY 16 - Trip ends in Tromso, Norway

The trip ends after breakfast at our hotel in Tromso.



MEALS PROVIDED: BREAKFAST

Trip information

Country information

Norway

Climate

Seasonal Climate Despite the northern latitudes the climate in Norway is not extreme, due to the affects of the North Atlantic Drift. Between May and September is the best time to visit this region, with summer temperatures reaching the high teens and rain a regular feature year round along the coast. North of the Arctic Circle the sun does not set between the middle of May and the end of July, so you can expect to encounter the midnight sun during this period.

| Time difference to GMT | Plugs | Religion | Language |
|------------------------|-------------|-------------|-----------|
| +1 | 2 Pin Round | Lutheranism | Norwegian |

Russia

Climate

In European Russia snows usually start in November and stay till late March/early April, when a great thaw occurs with temperatures ranging from about 5°C in October and April to -15°C in January.

| Time difference to GMT | Plugs | Religion |
|------------------------|-------------|--|
| +3 | 2 Pin Round | Orthodox Christianit, Islam, Buddhism, Judaism |

Language

Russian

Budgeting and packing

Optional activities

The following excursions and/or activities are usually available and may be arranged locally. Estimated costs are provided below for guidance only, are on a per person basis unless shown otherwise, and may depend on the number of participants. Prices quoted are correct as of the date these tour notes were originally issued but may change at any time due to currency fluctuations. Please note: These activities are booked and paid for direct with the supplier and do not form part of your Explore holiday contract.

Murmansk:

During your free afternoon on day eight you might like to visit the Northern Fleet Museum, Murmansk Regional Museum or Murmansk Ethnographic Museum. The entry price to each is 150 Russian Rubles (RUB).

Honningsvag:

For any passengers who choose not to walk to Knivskjellodden you can reach Honningsvag town centre by taxi, which costs around 240-290 Norwegian Kroner (NOK) per way or there is a shuttle bus that runs between Nordkapp and Honningsvag and stops at our hotel, but as our hotel is mid-way through the journey the bus may already be full. It costs 110 NOK per way.

Tromso:

On day 14 or 15 you may choose to go up Mount Storsteinen by cable car, which costs 240 NOK for a return ticket. To reach the cable car base from our hotel it is 45 minutes by public bus. A single bus ticket costs approximately 50 NOK or a day ticket (valid for 24 hours) for 110 NOK.

During the Midnight Sun period from 15th May to 15th August the cable car is open until past midnight.

During your free time on day 15 options include:

Tromso Beer safari, lasting for three hours. A minimum of two passengers is required and the maximum capacity is 15. It includes a guide, Arctic tapas and 10 Arctic Craft Brewery beers. Price from 600 NOK.

Tromso Museum entrance is 60 NOK or a combination ticket for the Tromso Museum, Polar Museum and MS Polstjerna is 160 NOK. The museum is open from 9am to 6pm.

Fjord tour by bus around Kvaløya departs at 10am from the Arctic Booking Office, Kaigata 3. It includes snacks, a hot drink, bonfire (if the weather allows it), photo stand, transport and guide. The trip lasts for five hours. A minimum of two passengers is required and the maximum capacity is 15. Price from 900 NOK.

Clothing

Although we will be travelling in spring or summer, the weather in the far north of Russia and Norway can still be unpredictable and chilly so layers are needed, including a warm sweater and windproof outer garment. Raingear is essential and other items that may prove useful are gloves, a scarf, a warm hat and lightweight thermals.

For our walk to Knivskjellodden it can be cold, windy and raining even in the summer months, and snow is possible as well, so you should have full body cover including a scarf, hat or a hooded top, warm jacket,

thermals, gloves, thick socks (and a spare pair in case your feet get wet) and full waterproofs (including waterproof trousers). You may find that ski trousers and a ski jacket are useful for this walk.

Ladies should also take a headscarf for entering churches.

Footwear

You should bring comfortable waterproof walking boots with excellent tread and ankle support (these will be needed for the uneven and boggy terrain at Knivskjellodden) and should be suitable for potentially wet or snowy conditions. You should also bring trainers for relaxing.

Luggage

20kg

Luggage: On tour

One main piece of baggage and a day pack. Remember you are expected to carry your own luggage so don't overload yourself.

This trip pace is graded as Full On and includes several train journeys with short walks and/or stairs between platforms, stations and accommodation, so for this reason please take care to make sure you can comfortably carry your own luggage throughout the trip.

Equipment

We recommend taking binoculars for bird and reindeer spotting, an umbrella, camera, water bottle, sun cream, sun hat and sunglasses. There may be a number of mosquitoes at some of the locations visited (especially at the lakes if there is little wind), so we recommend taking mosquito repellent. When travelling on the overnight trains you may also find a toilet roll, a head torch and hand sanitiser useful. For our walk to Knivskjellodden you may want to bring walking poles and for the visit to the Andersgrotta it's best to bring a torch with you.

Tipping

Explore leader

At your discretion you might also consider tipping your Explore Leader in appreciation of the efficiency and service you receive.

Local crew

Although entirely voluntary, tipping is a recognised part of life in this region of the world. Some local staff will look to members of the group for personal recognition of particular services provided. Accordingly you should allow approximately £35.00 for tips. In order to make things easier for you, the Explore Leaders may organise a group's tips kitty and if this is the case, they will account for it throughout the trip.

Norway

Food and drink

The costs for meals may vary depending upon location, type of restaurant and number of courses eaten and so the prices given are an average guide. Local restaurants located off the beaten track

may be less expensive, whereas an upmarket restaurant located in the centre of a major city may charge more.

| | | | |
|--------------------|---------------------|-------------------|--------------------|
| Lunch price | Dinner price | Beer price | Water price |
| £18.00 - 25.00 | £35.00 - 40.00 | £6.00 - 8.00 | £2.00 - 3.00 |

Foreign Exchange

| | |
|-----------------------|--|
| Local currency | Recommended Currency For Exchange |
| Norwegian Krona | Take Norwegian Krona with you |

Where To Exchange

Recommend you buy some Norwegian Krona before departing the UK (or whilst in transit in Oslo).

ATM Availability

ATMs are available in Myre and at Oslo and Evenes Airports.

Credit Card Acceptance

Credit cards are generally accepted at many hotels and optional excursions may be paid for by credit card.

Travellers Cheques

Not recommended.

Russia

Food and drink

The costs for meals may vary depending upon location, type of restaurant and number of courses eaten and so the prices given are an average guide. Local restaurants located off the beaten track may be less expensive, whereas an upmarket restaurant located in the centre of a major city may charge more.

| | | |
|---------------------|-------------------|--------------------|
| Dinner price | Beer price | Water price |
| £12.00 - 16.00 | £2.00 - 4.00 | £1 |

Foreign Exchange

Local currency

Rouble.

Recommended Currency For Exchange

We recommend that you take your money in Euros or US Dollars cash. For US Dollars notes should be in good condition (not torn or marked), issued after 1990 (pre-1990 are often refused) and ideally in small denominations. Euros and Dollars are easily transferable into the local currency, Roubles.

Where To Exchange

Most major towns - your Tour Leader will advise you on arrival.

ATM Availability

Cash can be withdrawn both in Moscow and St. Petersburg

Credit Card Acceptance

Local currency (Russian Roubles) can also be drawn on credit cards from ATM's in both Moscow and St Petersburg.

Travellers Cheques

Travellers cheques are accepted in Moscow and St Petersburg but are very time-consuming to change and attract unfavourable exchange rates

Transport, Accommodation & Meals

Transport Information

Bus, Boat, Ferry, Train

Accommodation notes

For the overnight train journeys we will use sleeper carriages with four bunk beds and bedding provided (two beds on floor level and two above) per compartment and with a shared toilet and wash basin in each carriage. There are no shower facilities on board. Luggage is stored under the bottom bunk beds and above the cabin door for the top bunks. There is the possibility that you will be sharing with both male and female occupants and with non-Explore clients in the same cabin. This is a great way of getting from place to place during the night, so you maximise on the amount of time you have in each during the day to explore. For the overnight train journeys we will use sleeper carriages with four bunk beds and bedding provided (two beds on floor level and two above) per compartment and with a shared toilet and wash basin in each carriage. There are no shower facilities on board. Luggage is stored under the bottom bunk beds and above the cabin door for the top bunks. There is the possibility that you will be sharing with both male and female occupants and with non-Explore clients in the same cabin. This is a great way of getting from place to place during the night, so you maximise on the amount of time you have in each location during the day to explore. Take snacks and drinks, a toilet roll, hand sanitiser and an open mind with you for maximum enjoyment.

On days 11 and 12 in Honningsvåg our booking with the Scandic Hotel group is confirmed but we could be accommodated in one of three hotels located in or near to the town: Scandic Nordkapp, Scandic Honningsvåg or Scandic Bryggen. The hotel will be confirmed by the hotel group to Explore four weeks prior to arrival.

Essential Information

FCO Advice

We strongly recommend that you check your government's travel advisory for up-to-date information and advice about your destination: safety and security, entry requirements, health, local laws and customs. For UK Foreign and Commonwealth Office advice [click here](#).

For more information from Explore about travel advice, [click here](#)

Under 18 immigration guidance

Please note that some countries require proof of parental consent when travelling overseas with under 18s. Please check requirements with the relevant embassy or consular office well in advance of travel if this applies to your party.

Price Guarantee

Once your booking has been confirmed we guarantee the price will not increase, whatever the circumstances. Before booking please ensure you have read our important tour pricing information. [Booking Conditions](#)

Visa and Passport Information

Norway: Visas are not required by UK, Australian, New Zealand, US and Canadian citizens. Other nationalities should consult their local embassy or consular office.

Russia: All nationalities require a single entry visa in order to enter Russia. As part of the visa requirements you will need to obtain a Russian Travel Voucher and Authorisation from the local Russian authorities. Explore will request this on your behalf approximately eight weeks prior to departure. Please allow a minimum of five working days for the travel voucher and authorisation to be processed. Due to the visa processing times, Explore are unable to accept bookings within one month of travel.

For British passport holders: All applicants must present themselves in person to the Russia Visa Processing Centre in London, Manchester or Edinburgh, on the day of application, to provide biometric information (fingerprints). There is currently no appointment system in place for this process, so applicants will be seen on a first come, first serve basis. This may mean lengthy queues and waiting times. The biometric process is not optional, and any applicant who refuses to provide their fingerprints will automatically be refused a visa. This information is not stored and applicants will therefore need to travel to the Processing Centre each time a visa is required. In the event an application is rejected due to inaccurate or incomplete information, fingerprints must be resubmitted as part of the revised application. For more information regarding this process - we recommend contacting the Russian Embassy direct, their website is <http://rusemb.org.uk/visa/>

It is essential that you provide Explore with the correct passport information at the time of booking, as this will be required in order to request the travel voucher and letter of invite, as well as pre-book any applicable train tickets. Corrections and amendments will incur additional charges, so please double check that the information we have for you is up-to-date and correct, this includes your passport number, full name as per passport (including middle names), date of birth and place of birth; if customers renew or reissue their passports from the details initially given to Explore, train tickets must be cancelled and purchased again, which involves extra costs and may result in customers being in differing train carriages to the rest of the group. If you intend to renew your passport please let Explore know at the point of booking and please ensure that you have the new passport no later than eight weeks prior to travel.

You will be required to enter a reference number and a confirmation number on your visa application. These can be found at the top of your authorisation letter under the heading 'Voucher Number'. The six digit long number is the reference and the four digit number is the confirmation number.

In order for Explore to provide the necessary documentation to support your visa application (i.e. your visa authorisation), all pre and post tour accommodation must be booked through Explore and not booked independently.

Please ensure that your passport has a minimum of six months validity from the date of return to your home country.

All visa information is subject to change, so please check with your local consulate for the most up to date advice for the countries you are visiting. All other nationalities should check with the Russian Embassy.

If you do require assistance in obtaining a visa then you may consider applying through Explore's recommended visa service in the UK, Travcour. See www.travcour.com to download the relevant visa application for your trip, if applicable (UK citizens only), along with details of how to apply for your visa through Travcour. The Team at Travcour will be happy to answer specific questions relating to visa applications, please call them directly on 0208 5431846.

It is your responsibility to ensure that you are in possession of a full passport, with the correct validity for your chosen destination.

Booking conditions

Before booking your Explore trip, please ensure that you read both our Essential Information and Booking Conditions.

Transfers

[Find out more about Trip Transfer Terms and Conditions before you book.](#)

Booking a land only package with Explore

Customers who have chosen to book on the 'Land Only' arrangements of our tour, please ensure that you have checked your tour specific 'Joining Instructions' prior to booking your own travel arrangements. Your joining instructions can be found below in the dates and prices information.

You may also be eligible for the Free Explore Transfer.

Joining Tour Abroad

Customers booked on the 'Land Only' arrangements will now receive a Free Transfer, provided you arrive and depart on the tour only itinerary start and end dates. The complimentary transfers will be arranged from the Explore designated airport or train station to your trips joining point, and then back from the ending point to the designated airport or train station. Generally the airport or station that Explore have selected will be the one that is closest to the town or city where the trip starts, or the one nearest to the joining point. It will be either an airport or train station but not both.

The exception to this rule is customers who are booked on a tour where the joining and ending point is at the designated airport or train station.

Free transfers are not available for Self-Guided, Polar, Tailormade or Tours for Churches customers. If you are not eligible for the Free Transfer then you will need to make your own way through to the joining and ending point. On a majority of our tours Explore will be able to provide a private transfer at an additional cost. Please ask for a quote at the time of booking.

For more information regarding the Explore Free Transfer [click here](#)

Insurance

It is a condition of booking with Explore that you have adequate valid travel insurance. It is your responsibility to arrange appropriate travel insurance and ensure you have read and understood the full terms and conditions of your travel insurance policy to ensure that you are covered for all activities you intend to undertake whilst on the tour, including all optional activities. Your Insurance Policy must fully cover you for medical expenses and emergency repatriation to your home country. Please ensure your policy includes medical emergency helicopter evacuation in the event of illness or injury and covers the entire duration of your holiday. If you are trekking at altitude please ensure that there is no upper altitude limit which may limit or exclude cover for your trip. The cost of many of our Polar Voyages will exceed the capped amount covered by standard insurance premiums and you will be required to pay an additional premium to cover the full value of your trip. Please ensure that you are covered for the full amount of your holiday cost, as insufficient cover could invalidate a claim under the policy. Medical and repatriation insurance cover is not mandatory for UK residents who are travelling on trips within the United Kingdom.

Read more information about what travel insurance is required.

Flight information

Explore offers a wide range of flexible flying options to make joining and leaving our trips easy. Read more about them [here](#).

Flight Information

You are able to book this tour on a 'land only' basis or as a 'flight inclusive' package. Your flight inclusive package will be fully protected by the Civil Aviation Authority (CAA) ATOL protection scheme.

Booking a flight inclusive package with Explore

We have a good selection of flights not only from London but from many regional airports around the UK allowing us to compare fares between scheduled carriers as well as low cost and charter airlines. Our dedicated flights team will match the best flight options to your arrival and departure airport. On our website we display a UK flight inclusive package guide price which is generally based on a London departure. To avoid paying supplements or to secure your preferred flight option, we recommend booking as early as possible, especially for peak travel dates.

Included activities

This trip is designed to introduce you to this region of Northern Europe in just 16 days; there's a lot of ground to cover, a couple of rail journeys and a considerable amount of walking, so please be prepared for the busy nature of this enthralling holiday. Please also pack light to ensure that you can lift your bag onto the trains.

For the included hike to Knivskjellodden you need to have a good level of fitness and have some prior walking experience. This walk is to the most northerly point in Europe so the weather can be unpredictable, so it's important to note that there is nowhere to shelter on the route and once you start the walk there isn't an opportunity to turn back. The terrain can be boggy, snowy and rocky underfoot. The rocks can be slimy and slippery, so you need to be steady on your feet and have good walking boots. There can be snow at anytime of year, but this is most likely in June when snow cover can still be thick.

We will take a long train journey on day four, so as well as enjoying the passing scenery we'd recommend

taking snacks and drinks for your journey (there won't always be food and drink facilities on board) and entertainment such as a book, audio book or an electronic book reader, games device or tablet, pack of cards or a quiz book.

Ability to swim

No

Norway

Vaccinations

Please check the latest requirements with your travel clinic or doctor prior to departure. The above is not an exhaustive list. Further information regarding vaccinations and travel health advice can be found by following the NHS and NaTHNaC links at Explore Travel Health and from your local healthcare provider. Visa and vaccination requirements are subject to change and should be confirmed by you before travelling.

Russia

Vaccinations

Nothing compulsory, but we recommend protection against tetanus, typhoid, hepatitis A, polio and diphtheria. Tick-borne encephalitis is recommended by some medical sources if travelling in certain areas of Eastern Europe, at specific times of the year. Please check the latest requirements with your travel clinic or doctor prior to departure. The above is not an exhaustive list. Further information regarding vaccinations and travel health advice can be found by following the NHS and NaTHNaC links at Explore Travel Health and from your local healthcare provider. Visa and vaccination requirements are subject to change and should be confirmed by you before travelling. The Russian government advises that certain medications must be declared upon entry into the country, and you may also be required to carry a prescription with you. You should consult your local consulate for up to date information prior to travel.



**AWARD WINNING
EXPLORE LEADERS**



**PRICE GUARANTEE
PROMISE**



**AIRPORT
TRANSFERS**