

EXPLORE!

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NEW

Winter Chernobyl - Photography Short break

UKRAINE - TRIP CODE KCB

DISCOVERY

Why book this trip?

Explore the Chernobyl Exclusion Zone in winter on this exciting short break accompanied by our expert photographer David Short (ARPS), who will offer advice to help you get the perfect photographs of this uniquely haunting location.

- **Kiev** - Visit the fascinating Chernobyl Museum, an ideal introduction before travelling in to the exclusion zone
- **Self Settlers** - Speak with people who lived through the event. Returning home after the initial evacuation they permanently reside in the exclusion zone
- **Chernobyl** - Discover the ghost town of Pripyat, the Red Forest, and the 'New Safe Confinement' structure around Reactor 4

**INCLUDED MEALS**Breakfast: 4
Lunch: 2
Dinner: 2**TRIP STAFF**Explore Tour
Leader
Driver(s)
Guest Lecturer
Local Guide(s)**TRANSPORT**

Bus

**ACCOMMODATION**2 nights
comfortable hotel
2 nights simple
hotel**TRIP PACE:**

Full on

**GROUP SIZE:**

8 - 14

Itinerary

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

DAY 1 - Join trip in Kiev

This exciting trip begins in Ukraine's capital city, Kiev, and your Leader will meet you in the hotel reception at 6pm for the welcome meeting. After introductions there is a chance to head out for dinner and perhaps a taste of some local horseradish vodka!

There are no other activities planned today, so you are free to arrive in Kyiv at any time. If you would like to receive a complimentary airport transfer today, you'll need to arrive into Kyiv Boryspil International Airport (KBP). Should you miss the welcome meeting, your Leader will inform you of any essential information as soon as you catch up.

**ACCOMMODATION:**

Hotel Rus (or similar)

**Grade: Comfortable Hotel****SINGLE ROOM AVAILABLE**

DAY 2 - Photograph Kiev's ornate metro stations and visit the Chernobyl museum before travelling in to the Exclusion Zone

Kiev is a fascinating city to explore and we'll start the morning by joining locals on the metro at rush hour. This is a fabulous chance to capture images of ornate metro stations, filled with bustling crowds of locals making their way to work. There are several stations that work particularly well for photography, conveniently en route to the Chernobyl Museum. Which ones we stop and how long we spend will depend on what there is to photograph on the day.

We'll then make our way to the Chernobyl Museum. The museum is packed full of exhibits detailing the scope of the disaster, how it was initially reported in the news and plenty of models showing the technology of the power plant. It's ideal preparation for our visit to the Exclusion Zone.

We'll stop for lunch in a local food court, popular with locals grabbing a bite to eat, and afterwards we'll leave the city and head towards Chernobyl.

The Exclusion Zone is about two hours' drive from the city and close to the Belarusian border. As we arrive at the first check point we will take a break as our passports and permits are checked, there is no unauthorised access to the zone and arrivals are carefully monitored.

Once inside we'll begin by meeting a self-settler. A year after the accident over one thousand people returned to their homes and despite efforts from the authorities they kept returning until eventually being allowed to stay and they have been living off grid ever since. This is a unique opportunity to hear their stories of what life was like before, during and after the explosion.

This evening we will have the unique experience of staying within the Exclusion Zone in a small hotel within the town of Chernobyl. The bedrooms are simply decorated and there are three bathrooms shared between every five bedrooms. There is a restaurant and bar where we will enjoy a traditional Ukrainian meal this evening.



ACCOMMODATION:
Desyatka Hotel (or similar)



Grade: Simple Hotel



SINGLE ROOM AVAILABLE



MEALS PROVIDED: BREAKFAST & DINNER

DAY 3 - Spend the day photographing the unique landscape of the Exclusion Zone

Our time in the Exclusion Zone will be kept very flexible. You'll see the key sights including the infamous reactor, covered in the new safe-confinement structure, as well as villages and buildings that were home

to families and have long been abandoned.

We'll be travelling with a Chernobyl guide and they will advise on where we can explore and local conditions, especially in the winter, can dictate our exact itinerary. David has explored Chernobyl numerous times and can offer great tips on angles, how to get the best from your camera and where to stand to get the best shot of the crumbling ferris wheel.

There are other tourists visiting the Exclusion Zone but only the hardy visit in Winter, so shots of desolate landscape with no one in sight will be easy to capture.

The weather in winter will be cold and snow is always a possibility. Bring plenty of warm layers with you, good waterproof shoes/boots will keep your feet warm and a waterproof coat, hat and gloves. Camera batteries can run down quickly in the cold so it's worth having a spare tucked away in a pocket just in case.



ACCOMMODATION:
Desyatka Hotel (or similar)



Grade: Simple Hotel



SINGLE ROOM AVAILABLE



MEALS PROVIDED: BREAKFAST, LUNCH & DINNER

DAY 4 - Another full day to photograph Chernobyl

We'll spend another full day today exploring the zone and aiming to take photos that capture it's unique atmosphere. Again the day will be flexible and we'll plan our visits according to the local conditions. We'll spend plenty of time in each spot, testing out a variety of angles, understanding what was there before the accident and taking in how environment has regenerated in the past 30 years.

Late this afternoon we drive back to Kiev for our final free evening in the city.



ACCOMMODATION:
Hotel Rus (or similar)



Grade: Comfortable Hotel



SINGLE ROOM AVAILABLE



MEALS PROVIDED: BREAKFAST & LUNCH

DAY 5 - Trip ends in Kiev

The trip ends after breakfast at our hotel in Kiev.

There are no activities planned today, so you are free to depart from Kyiv at any time. If your flight is departing later in the day, luggage storage facilities are available at our hotel. If you would like to receive a complimentary airport transfer today, you'll need to depart from Kyiv Boryspil International Airport (KBP).



MEALS PROVIDED: BREAKFAST

Trip information

Climate and country information

Ukraine

Climate

Ukraine has a temperate continental climate. Summers in are generally hot, sunny and less humid than in Central Europe, with temperatures normally between 18 to 25°C. In fact, the early autumn period is often compared with an Indian summer, dry and sunny. Winters are cold and snowy with temperatures averaging between -8 to -12°C. The wettest area in Ukraine is the Carpathian Mountains where it can rain at any time of year.

Time difference to GMT	Plugs	Religion	Language
+2	2 Pin Round	Orthodox Christian	Ukrainian

Budgeting and packing

Clothing

All visitors to the Chernobyl Exclusion Zone must wear full length trousers (not shorts or skirts) and long-sleeve shirts/jackets and please avoid clothing with lots of zips or metal poppers. It's advisable to wash your clothes and to shower after your visit. We also recommend that you take old clothes that can

be easily washed or even thrown away if necessary and a plastic bag to keep them separate from the rest of your clothing following the visit. Upon leaving the Exclusion Zone you will go through a monitor to check the radiation level on you, occasionally this reading may come back too high, and in which case, you may have to leave an item of clothing behind, as you won't be able to take anything that gives too higher reading outside of the zone.

Travelling in winter you should be prepared for snow and very cold temperatures, so it's advisable to dress in warm layers of breathable fabrics. You'll need waterproofs and plenty of warm clothing including a warm waterproof jacket, jumper, fleece, gaiters or waterproof trousers, thick socks (including spare pairs in case your feet get wet) and thermals.

Footwear

In the Chernobyl Exclusion Zone you must wear closed toed shoes (not sandals or flip flops). We recommend using older shoes that can be easily washed or thrown away if necessary. In the Exclusion Zone there is often broken glass on the floor, so it is important to have shoes with sturdy tread.

Luggage

20Kg

Luggage: On tour

We recommend one suitcase or holdall and a bag for items you'll want with you during the day. Travelling during the winter will mean extra layers are well worth having access to during the day, and plenty of room for carrying camera kit is needed.

It is possible to leave luggage at the hotel in Kiev and we suggest doing this to avoid having to take everything in to the Exclusion Zone.

Equipment

It is worth taking a thermos flask with you, these can be filled with tea or coffee in the morning to help keep warm during the day.

Tipping

Explore leader

Tipping isn't compulsory, and we work hard to ensure that our leaders all receive a fair wage. You may however, want to recognise a leader that has done a great job or really added to your trip by giving them a tip. We're often asked about the recommended amount. It is a tricky one, and down to personal preference, but we would recommend £15 to £20 per person as a guideline.

Local crew

Although 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 £10 of local currency for tipping.

In order to make things easier for you, the Explore Leader may organise a group's tips kitty and if this is

the case, they will account for it throughout the trip.

Ukraine

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
£5.5	£10-15	£1.3	£0.8

Foreign Exchange

Local currency

Hryvnia

Recommended Currency For Exchange

Pound Sterling, US Dollars (USD) and Euro cash can all be exchanged for the local currency. You can only leave Ukraine with a maximum of USD 10,000. Anything over this amount will be confiscated. If you are taking Pound Sterling, please note that currency exchange offices in Ukraine will only accept the new plastic notes. Banks will still accept the paper notes but typically provide a lower exchange rate.

Where To Exchange

Most major towns and cities - your Explore Leader will advise you on arrival. Only exchange money at reputable places like banks, ATM's and official Forex Offices.

ATM Availability

Major towns and cities have ATM's for cash withdrawal.

Credit Card Acceptance

In the main towns and cities credit cards are accepted in most restaurants, hotels and larger shops.

Travellers Cheques

Travellers cheques are very difficult to change in the Ukraine.

Transport, Accommodation & Meals

Transport Information

Bus

Accommodation notes

We spend two nights within the Chernobyl Exclusion Zone at a simple hotel with three bathrooms shared between every five bedrooms. Bathrooms are equipped with a sink, shower and toilet. Bedrooms are

simply decorated. The food served here will be traditional Ukrainian cuisine and there is a bar within the restaurant. In the evening the doors of the hotel will be locked at around 22.30 and we are not permitted to venture out into the Exclusion Zone without our guide being with us at all times.

Essential Information

Government Travel Safety 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, Commonwealth & Development 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

Ukraine: UK, Canadian and US citizens do not require a visa. Other nationalities should consult their local embassy or consular office. In addition you will be required to carry a photocopy of your passport with you at all times in Ukraine for ID purposes.

You should confirm all visa related questions with the relevant embassy prior to departure.

It is also 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 permissions needed to enter the Chernobyl Exclusion Zone. Corrections and amendments may incur additional charges or result in your permissions not being granted, 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) and date of birth. If you intend to renew your passport please let Explore know at the point of booking and ensure that you have your new passport no later than 10 weeks prior to travel.

If you do require assistance in obtaining a visa then you may be able to apply 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 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

Whilst in the Chernobyl Exclusion Zone there are a number of rules in place to ensure your safety and it's very important that you follow all instructions given to you by your local guide. Every visitor must have a valid passport with them at all times and in order to be permitted entry to the Exclusion Zone you must be at least 18 years old. This restriction is due to the fact that the human body is still growing below this age and it's therefore more vulnerable to the effects of radiation.

During the time spent in the Exclusion Zone you'll receive a dose of radiation comparable to a small dose from an X-ray scan or to several hours spent in an airplane at altitude. In numbers, you will receive 5-7 micro Sieverts of gamma radiation, which is a non-harmful dose of radiation. To put this into context most nuclear power plants around the world set a safety limit for their employees of 50-100 micro Sieverts per day.

Whilst in the Exclusion Zone all our meals will be included to ensure they're from a safe source. You are not allowed to smoke, eat or drink in open spaces whilst here. You are not allowed to eat any berries or drink water from open sources such as wells (tap water or bottled water is fine).

In the Exclusion Zone you are allowed to take photographs and videos of everything and can take tripods with you. The only exceptions are restrictions at the Chernobyl Nuclear Power Plant and the guarded checkpoints. You are allowed to take pictures and video in front of Reactor Number 4 from a safe distance. Your guide will advise us of any places where photos aren't permitted.

In the Exclusion Zone there may be rubble underfoot and not all stairs will have banisters, so you need to be steady on your feet. Please wear shoes with good grip and that support your ankles.

Ukraine

Vaccinations

Nothing compulsory, but we recommend protection against hepatitis A and diphtheria. Check that your polio and tetanus vaccinations are up-to-date before travel. The UK Foreign Office currently recommends that you should consider whether to immunise against tickborne encephalitis and rabies. Consult your travel clinic for further advice. 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 <http://www.explore.co.uk/Travelhealth/> and from your local healthcare provider.

Additional Information



Why book this trip

Have the unique experience of exploring the Chernobyl Exclusion Zone with David Short, our photography expert and one of Explore's most experienced and popular Leaders.

David is passionate about uncovering new and inspiring locations and combining this with his other great love, photography. This itinerary has been planned to make the most of the incredible photo opportunities available and to get under the skin of this unique destination. David is an excellent photographer, has worked for the BBC as a cameraman and is an Associate of the Royal Photographic Society.

Although this trip is not focussed on teaching people how to take photos, David will be on hand to pass over tips and advice on how to take great pictures, so it is perfect for both the keen amateur photographer and enthusiasts alike.

Reviews



**AWARD WINNING
EXPLORE LEADERS**



**PRICE GUARANTEE
PROMISE**



**AIRPORT
TRANSFERS**