

# Scandinavia: The Capitals & the Fjords

PRE-DEPARTURE INFORMATION FOR YOUR TOUR



## Passport & visa requirements

- This tour visits Norway, Sweden, Denmark, and Finland (plus Russia on the tour extension). In order to enter these countries, U.S. and Canadian citizens need a valid passport with an expiration date extending at least six months beyond the date of reentry.
- We recommend having at least two blank passport pages for entry stamps.
- There is no visa required for U.S. or Canadian citizens for the main tour.
- U.S. and Canadian passport holders must obtain a visa in advance in order to enter Russia on the tour extension. You may choose to obtain your individual visa by applying directly to the Russian consulate or by using a visa provider, such as our partner company, **VisaCentral**. If you opt to apply through the Russian consulate and require additional assistance and/or documentation from Go Ahead Tours, a special arrangements fee of \$95 per person may be charged.
- If you are not a U.S. or Canadian citizen, you must contact each country's consulate for your specific entry requirements.

## Tour pace

- You will walk for about 2 hours daily across mostly flat terrain, including cobblestone streets, paved roads, and dirt paths.
- Travelers should be healthy enough to participate in all included walks without assistance. Adding optional excursions may increase the total amount of walking on your tour.
- You should feel comfortable managing your own baggage at times (especially on ferries) as well as getting in and out of trains and boats.
- If you have any mobility concerns or physical restrictions, please contact our Customer Experience Team.

## Transportation & arrival information

- Round-trip flights booked through Go Ahead Tours arrive in Bergen and depart from Helsinki (or St. Petersburg on the tour extension). A representative from Go Ahead Tours will meet you at the airport and take you to your hotel. Please remain in the arrival lounge, as the representative might be

escorting one of your fellow travelers to the bus at the time of your arrival.

- Transfers to and from the airport at your destination are included for travelers who have purchased their flights through Go Ahead Tours. Travelers who purchase their own flights may request airport transfers with Go Ahead Tours for an additional cost.
- A flight from Bergen to Oslo, overnight ferries from Oslo to Copenhagen and Stockholm to Helsinki, as well as a flight from Copenhagen to Stockholm are included in the price of your tour. (The tour extension also includes a train ride from Helsinki to St. Petersburg.)
- All other included transportation on this tour is by private motor coach.

## Baggage allowance

- Airlines have varying weight restrictions on baggage. Some airlines may impose additional charges if you choose to check any baggage; be advised that you are responsible for any such costs.
- Contact your airline for baggage size and weight restrictions for your flight, but please note that our travelers are restricted to one checked bag per person due to storage limitations on motor coaches and other transfers, which may include train connections or flights.
- One carry-on bag of 45 total inches (length + width + height) is also permitted.
- Make sure you label your baggage and keep valuables, medication, and documents in your carry-on bag.

## Clothing & packing tips

- We recommend packing lightweight, loose-fitting clothing that can be easily layered to accommodate varying temperatures, as well as a light jacket or rainwear.
- A sturdy pair of walking shoes or sneakers is recommended for sightseeing.
- You may want to pack dressier attire if you plan to visit a high-end restaurant or attend a special performance.
- It is preferable not to visit churches or other religious sites with bare legs and shoulders (and entrance may be denied on this basis).

- Please note that there are often baggage restrictions during internal transfers including ferry rides and internal flights, and packing light is recommended.

## Health

- There are no major health risks associated with traveling to any of the countries on this tour.
- At least 60 days prior to departure, check with your doctor or healthcare provider for the latest updates and entry requirements, or visit the Center for Disease Control and Prevention website at **cdc.gov**.
- If you have medication that you take daily, be sure you have enough for each day of the tour as well as any possible delays encountered.
- If you have dietary restrictions and/or food allergies please notify Go Ahead Tours at least 30 days prior to departure by logging in to your account and updating your traveler info. To update this information closer to your departure date, please call our Customer Experience Team.

## Cuisine

- Norwegian cuisine is varied, offering something for every traveler. Lamb is the most traditional meat, but you'll also find everything from goose to deer being served in Norway. Seafood lovers will enjoy the country's array of smoked salmon, shellfish, pickled herring, and scrod. Typical meals often incorporate grains, locally-produced cheeses, fresh produce, and wild berries.
- Sweden's famous meatballs are typically served with a brown sauce and tart lingonberry jam. Smoked salmon and pickled herring are popular eats, especially atop a crisp bread. Snack on the country's many kinds of pastry and breads during fika, a social coffee hour that occurs mid-morning and mid-afternoon.
- When in Denmark, try the beloved open-faced sandwich called smørrebrød: a slice of rye bread topped with local favorites that could include smoked fish, prawns, mayonnaise, horseradish, or caviar. The country is also known for the popular Carlsberg and Tuborg beers.
- Fish, meat, potatoes, and bread are staples in Finnish cuisine. Some typical Finnish foods include *grillimakkara* (grilled sausages), *ruisleipä* (rye bread), *leipäjuusto* (mild cheese, often served with

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jam) and *korvapuusti* (cinnamon buns).

- On the tour extension, popular Russian foods include soups, meat casseroles, cabbage prepared many different ways, and the country's world-famous vodka. Try *pelmeny*, Russia's version of ravioli. *Bliny* (crepes) or *kasha* (porridge) are common for breakfast.

## Electricity & air conditioning

- All destinations visited on this tour operate on the European standard 220-240 volts and use Types C or F plugs with two small, round pins.
- We recommend packing a universal adapter, as well as a voltage converter if you plan on using your own hairdryer or other device without a built-in converter.
- The strength of the air conditioning in European hotels is often not as strong or as cool as what you might be used to in the U.S. or Canada. When air conditioning is available, it is usually regulated seasonally and controlled centrally by the hotel.
- Your hotels may provide hairdryers, irons, and other small appliances. However, these amenities cannot be guaranteed.

## Connectivity

- Wi-Fi is available in most hotels, though some charges may apply. In more remote locations, internet access may be limited and is not guaranteed.
- There is no Wi-Fi on any of the motor coaches.
- Please contact your mobile service provider for information on roaming charges.

## Time zones

- Norway, Sweden, and Denmark are one hour ahead of Greenwich Mean Time (GMT) and six hours ahead of Eastern Time (ET).
- Finland (and Russia on the tour extension) are two hours ahead of GMT and seven hours ahead of ET.
- When it's noon in New York, it's 6pm in Bergen, Copenhagen, and Stockholm and 7pm in Helsinki and St. Petersburg.

## Currency

- You will use the Norwegian krone in Norway, the

Swedish krona in Sweden, the Danish krone in Denmark, and the euro in Finland (plus the Russian ruble in Russia on the tour extension).

- Better rates of exchange are usually available overseas, although it's worth ordering some currency from your local bank to use when you first arrive.
- We strongly advise that you take debit/bank cards and credit cards, which can be used to withdraw cash at local banks as needed.
- You can use most debit/credit cards at ATMs on the international networks Cirrus and Plus, but make sure to check with your home bank about withdrawal fees.
- Inform your bank and credit card company of your travel plans so that they won't confuse your international purchases for fraudulent charges.
- International banks and businesses primarily accept debit and credit cards that work with the EMV chip system. If you do not already have at least one debit or credit card with a chip in it, we strongly recommend requesting one from your bank prior to your tour.

## Tipping

- At the conclusion of your tour, it's customary to offer your Tour Director and driver a gratuity in local currency. Please keep current exchange rates in mind.
- We recommend tipping the equivalent of \$7USD to \$10USD per person per day for your Tour Director and the equivalent of \$3USD per person per day for your driver.
- If applicable, we also recommend the equivalent of \$2USD per local guide.
- Tips can only be paid in cash.

## Purchasing excursions on tour

- Most optional excursions will be available for purchase while you are on your tour.
- Your Tour Director will only accept cash (in USD only), Visa, or MasterCard as payment for optional excursions.
- Please be advised that if you pay for an excursion by credit card while on tour, it may take up to three months for your card to be charged.
- Some optional excursions may only be purchased in

advance. See page four of your tour itinerary for more information. International travel is, by its very nature, unpredictable. We must therefore reserve the right to change this itinerary, without advance notice, to meet with local conditions at the time of travel. We appreciate your understanding. Please refer to our website for Terms & Conditions, dates, and prices.

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