

Northern Lights Small Group tour | Visit Norway and Finland

Reading List

The Northern Lights: The True Story of the Man Who Unlocked the Secrets of the Aurora Borealis

by Lucy Jago

Science, biography, and arctic exploration coverage in this extraordinary true story of the life and work of Norwegian scientist Kristian Birkeland, the troubled genius who solved the mysteries of one of nature's most spectacular displays.

Captivated by the otherworldly lights of the aurora borealis, Birkeland embarked on a lifelong quest to discover their cause. His pursuit took him to some of the most forbidding landscapes on earth, from the remote snowcapped mountains of Norway to the war-torn deserts of Africa. In the face of rebuke by the scientific establishment, sabotage by a jealous rival, and his own battles with depression and paranoia, Birkeland remained steadfast. Although ultimately vindicated, his theories were unheralded—and his hopes for the Nobel Prize scuttled—at the time of his suspicious death in 1917. The Northern Lights offers a brilliant account of the physics behind the aurora borealis and a rare look inside the mind of one of history's most visionary scientists.

Northern Lights: The Science, Myth, and Wonder of Aurora Borealis

by George Bryson (author), Calvin Hall (Photographer), Daryl Pederson (Photographer)

Electric green pierced by neon blue, shocking pink spinning into violent red, and shimmering purple sidled up against deep indigo: never before have you seen such high-octane colors in the sky, and never before has a book shown the northern lights-aurora borealis-in such vivid color. In Northern Lights, photographers Calvin Hall and Daryl Pederson bring to print nearly a hundred photographs of this amazing natural phenomenon, shot from remote locations all over Alaska and using no filters or digital enhancement. Just as fascinating are the legends, myths, and science surrounding this polar phenomenon, described by George Bryson. As 2002 marks the peak viewing time of the northern lights in an eleven-year cycle, this book brings the elusive magic of the northern lights to stargazers near and far.

Aurora : The Northern Lights in Mythology, History and Science

by Harald Falck-Ytter (Author), Robin Alexander (Author), Torbjorn Lovgren (Photographer)

The colorful light of the aurora borealis appears in the sparsely populated polar regions of the North during its long winter nights. Little is known about this ethereal occurrence, which provides dazzling displays of ghostly light and movement. The author has spent years studying the aurora, and in this book he reveals the mythology that surrounds the aurora in various northern cultures as well as the science behind the phenomenon as it has developed through history.

The author also records various responses to the aurora, from Aristotle to modern geophysicists, and from different cultures and traditions, thus charting the gradual understanding of this most awe-inspiring experience. Demonstrating the influence of the Sun in the creation of the aurora, Falck-Ytter also compares the northern lights with other light phenomena, such as lightning and rainbows.

Beautifully illustrated, this book offers a comprehensive understanding of a very mysterious dynamic that has fascinated and alarmed northern communities for millennia.

Finland, Cultural Lone Wolf

by Richard Lewis

Finland, Cultural Lone Wolf is the story of an accomplished nation and her extraordinary people. By pursuing a 'Lone Wolf' policy, Finland raised itself from a struggling, war-battered state to one of the most developed countries in the world over the course of only fifty years. The exponential rise of Nokia from tires and timbers to leading the world's telecommunication industry is indicative of the Finns and their business style. These remarkable people speak a language unique in its origins and have kept their cultural identity intact despite the influences of powerful neighbors, Sweden and Russia. Uniquely qualified to write about Finland, best-selling author Richard Lewis traces the fascinating Finnish origins, as well as her history, geography, values and culture. His extensive experience with Finnish business provides him with keen insight on leadership style, negotiation strategies and the uniquely Finnish suomi-kuva, or Finland image. Lewis shines when describing Finnish humor, complete with laugh-out-loud jokes and stories. Finland, Cultural Lone Wolf shows both nation and writer at their best.

The Almost Nearly Perfect People: Behind the Myth of the Scandinavian Utopia

by Michael Booth

The Danes are the happiest people in the world, and pay the highest taxes.

'Neutral' Sweden is one of the biggest arms manufacturers in the world.

Finns have the largest per capita gun ownership after the US and Yemen.

54 per cent of Icelanders believe in elves.

Norway is the richest country on earth.

Michael Booth has lived among the Scandinavians, on and off, for over ten years, perplexed by their many strange paradoxes and character traits and equally bemused by the unquestioning enthusiasm for all things Nordic and *hygge* that has engulfed the rest of the world.

He leaves his adopted home of Denmark and embarks on a journey through all five of the Nordic countries to discover who these curious tribes are, the secrets of their success and, most intriguing of all, what they think of each other. Along the way a more nuanced, often darker picture emerges of a region plagued by taboos, characterised by suffocating parochialism and populated by extremists of various shades.

The Vikings

by Else Roesdahl

Far from being just 'wild, barbaric, axe-wielding pirates', the Vikings created complex social institutions, oversaw the coming of Christianity to Scandinavia and made a major impact on European history through trade, travel and far-flung consolidation. This encyclopedic study brings together the latest research on Viking art, burial customs, class divisions, jewelry, kingship, poetry and family life. The result is a rich and compelling picture of an extraordinary civilization.

Miss Smilla's Feeling for Snow

by Peter Høeg

She thinks more highly of snow and ice than she does of love. She lives in a world of numbers, science and memories--a dark, exotic stranger in a strange land. And now Smilla Jaspersen is convinced she has uncovered a shattering crime...

It happened in the Copenhagen snow. A six-year-old boy, a Greenlander like Smilla, fell to his death from the top of his apartment building. While the boy's body is still warm, the police pronounce his death an accident. But Smilla knows her young neighbor didn't fall from the roof on his own. Soon she is following a path of clues as clear to her as footsteps in the snow. For her dead neighbor, and for herself, she must embark on a harrowing journey of lies, revelation and violence that will take her back to the world of ice and snow from which she comes, where an explosive secret waits beneath the ice....

Gustav Vigeland: His Art and Sculpture Park

by Tone Wikborg and Ruth Waaler

Vigeland's work belongs within the humanistic tradition in art. He has been preoccupied with man at all stages of life. Oslo's Vigeland Park, is the largest sculpture park in the world by a single artist, boasting over 200 pieces by Norwegian sculptor Gustav Vigeland. The collection, dubbed "The Weirdest Statues in the World" by The Daily Mail, includes everything from a woman embracing a giant lizard to a naked man fighting flying babies, and everything in between.

Letters written in Sweden, Norway, and Denmark (Oxford World's Classics)

by Mary Wollstonecraft

This engaging volume was pioneering feminist Mary Wollstonecraft's most popular book during her lifetime. Difficult to categorize, it is both an arresting travel book and a moving exploration of her personal and political selves. Wollstonecraft set out for Scandinavia just two weeks after her first suicide attempt, on a mission from the lover whose affections she doubted, to recover his silver on a ship that had gone missing. With her baby daughter and a nursemaid, she traveled across the dramatic landscape and wrote sublime descriptions of the natural world, and the events and people she encountered. Fascinating appendices include Imlay's commission to recover his lost silver, Wollstonecraft's recently discovered letter to the Danish Prime Minister asking for assistance, the private letters she wrote to Imlay during her travels in Scandinavia, a chapter from Godwin's memoir of Wollstonecraft, and a selection of contemporary reviews.
