

Topdeck

REINDEER AND RUSSIANS



TRIP CODE:
EERSOM-9

TOPDECKER, meet Europe

It's time for reindeer and Russia! Where classic European capitals meet stunning natural landscapes, this lineup is pretty special. You'll tick off the likes of the Arctic Circle (aka the Land of the Midnight Sun), Moscow, St Petersburg and loads more. Are you ready for this?

WORTH NOTING...

A Sector trip is part of a larger journey, meaning your new friends might continue on or after you leave, or you might be joining a trip already in progress.

WHAT YOU NEED TO KNOW



Hostel Plus



Nights



Android/iPhone
app download
info



This is a sector
trip.

Hi, and thanks for choosing to holiday with Topdeck

You can rest assured that we'll pull out all the stops to make your trip unforgettable.

Now it's time to get excited about your holiday...

ABOUT YOUR TRIP NOTES

These Trip Notes contain everything you need to know before your trip departs – including where to meet and what to bring. We recommend that you read these notes thoroughly so you know what to expect on your trip of a lifetime. Also, you can easily download and print this document off so you can bring it with you when you travel.

Please bear in mind that some points should be taken as a guide only – after all, everyone's different! For example, daily spending money and clothing lists can vary from one person to the next, so don't be alarmed if you don't expect to spend (or even wear) so much!

PLEASE NOTE: We strongly urge you to refresh this document as close to the time of your departure as possible to ensure you have the most up-to-date accommodation list and information available.

ON THE BUCKET LIST (INCLUDED)

- + Enjoy a Polar plunge & wood-fired sauna in Skibotn
- + Visit the Arctic Circle
- + Visit The State Hermitage Museum
- + Cruise the majestic Geirangerfjord
- + Russian guide travelling with the group for 8 days through Russia
- + Guided tour of the Moscow Kremlin
- + Guided tour of the Moscow Metro

MORE INCLUSIONS

- + Driving tour of Oslo
- + Visit the Ringebu Stave Church
- + Drive the famous Trolls' Path Crossing
- + Cruise the majestic Geirangerfjord
- + Visit Trondheim and the town of Hell
- + Visit the Arctic Circle
- + Warm up in a wood-fired sauna
- + Do a 'polar plunge' in an Arctic river
- + Visit Santa's Village
- + Driving tour of Helsinki
- + Walking tour of Tallinn
- + Driving tour of St Petersburg with a local guide
- + Visit the State Hermitage Museum
- + Walking tour of Novgorod with a local guide
- + Driving tour of Moscow with a local guide
- + Guided tour of the Kremlin
- + Guided tour of Moscow's Metro
- + Visit to Lenin's tomb

YOUR TRIP WILL START

PICK UP:

Oslo
Norway

YOUR TRIP WILL FINISH

DROP OFF:

Moscow
Russia

TRIP CURRENCIES

- + Norway - NOK
- + Finland - EUR
- + Estonia - EUR
- + Russia - RUB

YOUR ITINERARY



AWESOME
TRIP
LEADER

DAY 1 | OSLO, NORWAY

Meet the group and get ready for an incredible adventure. Settle in Oslo for dinner in the land of the midnight sun. Let's do this.



MEALS:

+ Dinner

DAY 2 | OSLO

There's just enough time to wake up and take a stroll through Gustav Vigeland's bizarre and eccentric sculpture park this morning. Then: a comprehensive driving tour and an optional visit to the Viking Ship Museum, Kon-Tiki Museum and Fram Polar Ship. Take the rest of the day off to soak up Oslo's funky 60s vibe.



MEALS:

+ Breakfast
+ Lunch



INCLUDED TODAY:

+ Driving tour of Oslo



OPTIONAL ACTIVITIES:

+ Visit The Viking Ship
Museum
+ Visit The Kon-Tiki Museum
+ Visit The Fram Polar Ship
Museum

DAY 3 | OSLO TO ÅNDALSNES, VIA LILLEHAMMER

On to Lillehammer, home of the 1994 Winter Olympics. Do an optional run down the bobsled track before we move on to Åndalsnes for a full day on the Geiranger Fjord. To call the scenery epic would be an understatement (check out Google Images for proof). Also today: a visit to the distinctive Ringeby Stave Church.



MEALS:

+ Breakfast
+ Lunch
+ Dinner



INCLUDED TODAY:

+ Visit the Ringeby Stave
Church



OPTIONAL ACTIVITIES:

+ Ride the Lillehammer
Olympic Bobsleigh

DAY 4 | ÅNDALSNES

Grab yourself a window seat as we wind our way around some of Europe's most scenic roads en route to the famous Trolls' Path Crossing. Sit back and drink in the sheer scale of the breathtaking fjords - long recognised as some of the world's greatest natural attractions. Later, we'll get up close and personal with the impossibly beautiful Geirangerfjord on a sightseeing cruise. One word: wow.



MEALS:

- + Breakfast
- + Lunch
- + Dinner



INCLUDED TODAY:

- + Drive the famous Trolls' Path Crossing
- + Cruise the majestic Geirangerfjord

DAY 5 | ÅNDALSNES TO STEINKJER, VIA TRONDHEIM/HELL

Today we chase the sun to Trondheim, the religious capital of Norway. Repent your sins - the next stop is Hell. Yes, really (only this one is usually frozen over). Temperatures can dip down as low as -25°C. After snapping up some photographic proof of our visit, we're off to Steinkjer for the night.



MEALS:

- + Breakfast
- + Lunch
- + Dinner



INCLUDED TODAY:

- + Visit Trondheim and the town of Hell

DAY 6 | STEINKJER TO BJERKA

Today we embark on a coastal drive to Bjerka, an inland village surrounded by mountains. Look forward to some peace and quiet - not to mention more greenery than you can poke a pine tree at.



MEALS:

- + Breakfast
- + Lunch
- + Dinner

DAY 7 | BJERKA TO TYSFJORD, VIA SVARTISEN GLACIER

On to Tysfjord for the night to experience the narrowest point in Norway. Look forward to the chance to check out Svartisen, Norway's second largest glacier. Covering a full 370 square kilometres and at just 20 m above sea level, it's the lowest glacier in mainland Europe - making it easily accessible for hikes and nature-based experiences. Top tip: wear your comfy shoes.



MEALS:

- + Breakfast
- + Lunch
- + Dinner
- + Optional activity:
- + Visit Svartisen (weather dependent)



INCLUDED TODAY:

- + Visit the Arctic Circle

DAY 8 | TYSFJORD TO SKIBOTN

Today, we're headed for Skibotn - where polar ice baths and wood-fired saunas await your arrival (lifelong bragging rights are awarded to those who take the plunge).



MEALS:

- + Breakfast
- + Lunch
- + Dinner



INCLUDED TODAY:

- + Warm up in a wood-fired sauna
- + Do a 'polar plunge' in an Arctic river

DAY 9 | SKIBOTN TO OLDERFJORD

Onwards and upwards, we're heading north for the last time to witness the height of the midnight sun (so named as it doesn't set between May and June). If you're lucky with the weather, you can expect to see nature at its absolute best.



MEALS:

- + Breakfast
- + Lunch
- + Dinner



OPTIONAL ACTIVITIES:

- + Midnight sun Nordkapp experience (weather dependent)

DAY 10 | OLDERFJORD

Fuel up with a late breakfast. Then: a hike through the rugged countryside. After an included dinner with the crew, you'll go to bed counting reindeer and dreaming of fjords.



MEALS:

- + Breakfast
- + Lunch
- + Dinner

DAY 11 | OLDERFJORD TO ROVANIEMI, FINLAND

Cross back over the Arctic Circle and practise your best 'Jingle Bells' as we make our way to Rovaniemi for a trip to Santa's Village. Excitement level: 100/10. Keep your eyes peeled for Santa's reindeer from your window seat.



MEALS:

- + Breakfast
- + Lunch
- + Dinner



INCLUDED TODAY:

- + Visit Santa's Village

DAY 12 | ROVANIEMI TO JYVASKYLA

Next up: the university town of Jyväskylä. This Finnish city boasts a party scene to rival some of the best, so this is your chance to let your hair down and rub shoulders with the locals.



MEALS:

- + Breakfast
- + Lunch
- + Dinner

DAY 13 | JYVASKYLA TO HELSINKI

A short trip south to the quirky Finnish capital, Helsinki. Kick back and let us show you the highlights of this funky town on a driving tour. Think: art-nouveau buildings and oh-so-fancy cafés.



MEALS:

- + Breakfast
- + Lunch



INCLUDED TODAY:

- + Driving tour of Helsinki

DAY 14 | HELSINKI TO TALLINN, ESTONIA

More fairytale magic as we hop across to Tallinn with its old city walls and medieval buildings. A walking tour will show you the highlights before we hand you over to the city.



MEALS:

- + Breakfast
- + Dinner



INCLUDED TODAY:

- + Walking tour of Tallinn

DAY 15 | TALLINN

It's all about whatever tickles your fancy today. See the Alexander Nevsky Cathedral or check out the KGB museum for a history lesson on the antics of the Soviet Union's former security agency. Pro tip: Old Town is where you'll get the best kind of Estonian #throwback vibes.



MEALS:

- + Breakfast

DAY 16 | TALLINN TO ST. PETERSBURG, RUSSIA

Cross the border to Russia for a tour of the country's former capital. Later, scoff some blini and caviar (yes, caviar) - and wash it down with a shot of vodka, if you wish. When in Rome...



MEALS:

- + Breakfast
- + Lunch
- + Dinner

DAY 17 | ST. PETERSBURG

Today: a St Petersburg driving tour with a super knowledgeable local guide. Learn all the juicy insider info as you check out oh-so-many bucket list items. Anything called the Church of the Saviour on Spilled Blood has got to be worth a look (and it really is). You won't be bored in St Petersburg, for sure.



MEALS:

+ Breakfast



INCLUDED TODAY:

+ Driving tour of St Petersburg
with a local guide

DAY 18 | ST. PETERSBURG

Dig into breakfast, then we're off on a guided tour of the Hermitage Museum. This place spans six palatial buildings, including the epic Winter Palace. Ah-maze! You won't want to miss this. Next: (window) shopping your way down Nevsky Prospect, the capital's main street.



MEALS:

+ Breakfast



INCLUDED TODAY:

+ Visit the State Hermitage
Museum

DAY 19 | ST. PETERSBURG TO NOVGOROD

Through the Russian countryside to the World Heritage-listed city Novgorod. Try: Medovukha, the Russian version of mead.



MEALS:

+ Breakfast
+ Dinner



INCLUDED TODAY:

+ Walking tour of Novgorod
with a local guide

DAY 20 | NOVGOROD TO MOSCOW

Roll into Moscow today, where the city is alive in rain, hail or shine. Believe it or not, Moscow sparkles - so be prepared for an incredible few days ahead. As you move through the city, spot the tangible reminders of Russia's involvement in modern history.



MEALS:

+ Breakfast
+ Dinner

DAY 21 | MOSCOW

Swing by the greats on today's driving tour, including Moscow University, Red Square and St Basil's Cathedral (aka the capital's technicolor sandcastle). Explore the Kremlin with our local guide before setting off to roam the streets. Tonight: get fancy with an optional evening at the Russian ballet. Clink that champagne and get those binoculars at the ready.



MEALS:

- + Breakfast



INCLUDED TODAY:

- + Driving tour of Moscow with a local guide
- + Guided tour of the Kremlin



OPTIONAL ACTIVITIES:

- + Tickets to a famous Russian ballet

DAY 22 | MOSCOW

Down we go for a guided tour of the not-so-mundane Moscow Metro. If you're picturing the Piccadilly or Central Line in London, think again. Not even close! We're talking chandelier-lined stations, each one more decadent than the last. Next: visit Lenin's tomb. Keep the history lesson going with an optional guided tour of the Kremlin Armoury.



MEALS:

- + Breakfast
- + Optional activity:
- + Guided tour of the Kremlin Armoury



INCLUDED TODAY:

- + Guided tour of Moscow's Metro
- + Visit to Lenin's tomb

DAY 23 | MOSCOW

Today, it's time to say goodbye. Check out and swap numbers. But, it's never too soon to start planning the next adventure. So, what are you waiting for?



MEALS:

- + Breakfast

MEALS

Your included meals are detailed in the 'Included Essentials' section of this document.

Breakfasts (usually continental breakfasts) are included every day, except on the first morning of your trip. A typical continental breakfast may consist of cereals with milk or yogurt, bread, croissants, cold meats, and cheese – with fruit juice, tea or coffee to drink. It is rare to get a hot breakfast in continental Europe, though on some occasions some hot food may be available.

Included meals will be provided at local restaurants and the accommodations in which we stay. In most cases, table water is provided with meals. If you wish to purchase additional drinks, you can do so at your own expense.

If you have any dietary requirements, we'll make every effort to cater to your needs – as long as you advise your travel agent or Customer Service Consultant when you book. You can also make a note of dietary requirements in the Topdeck app when you check-in.

PLEASE NOTE: Although we'll do everything in our power to cater to your needs, we cannot guarantee this will be possible in every restaurant we visit. We also cannot cater to tastes or dislikes, as most of our included evening meals feature a set menu.

TIPPING

Your Topdeck Trip Leaders and Drivers never expect tips, and they won't ask for any either. We also know how much tipping can cost you. So go ahead – spoil yourself with the money you save travelling with us (just don't forget Mum's souvenir).

TOPDECK TRAVEL APP

Our app is available to download before you travel. With a range of cool features including a currency converter, budget planner, check-in tool and group chat, it'll help you plan your trip like a pro. Think of it as your very own Topdeck Trip Leader in the palm of your hand.

TRIP GROUP CHAT

Connect with your fellow Topdeckers before you depart and begin your magical friendship in the flash of a winking face emoji.

ITINERARY VIEWER

Get the lowdown on where you'll be going and what activities you'll be doing on each day of your trip with this handy little tool.

CHECK-IN

Plug in all your vital deets and we'll keep them safe for when you really need them. Making your life easier, one swipe at a time.

BUDGET TRACKER

Keep an eye on your holiday spending, leaving you with more FUN-ds to play with. Think: elaborate Spanish feasts (not questionable supermarket sandwiches).

MAPS

Navigate your way to meeting points and lesser-known local gems using pins dropped by your Trip Leader, seek out your own bucket list sites and take to the streets like a pro.

Once the trip is over, you'll need the app to give us feedback about your trip experience. We love to hear what you thought about your trip, as it helps to give us an idea of the things we're doing well and the things we could be doing better.

PLEASE NOTE: The Topdeck Travel App should only be downloaded once you have booked your trip. You will not be able to log in unless you have a Topdeck booking reference number.

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PASSENGER SAFETY

NIGHTS OUT

One of the best parts of travelling is experiencing the nightlife and entertainment each city has to offer. However, amidst the fun and excitement, it's important to be aware of your surroundings and personal safety as well. Before you hit the road with us, be sure to familiarise yourself with the following safety information.

When you're on a night out, remember to avoid walking alone, particularly through deserted areas like beaches and back streets. Always stick together, take a registered taxi where possible, and keep a note of your accommodation details so you can find your way back to your fellow Topdeckers if you become separated. It's also a good idea to get your Topdeck trip mates' mobile numbers in case you need to get hold of them while out and about.

In some countries, alcoholic measures can be considerably larger than what you may be used to. Try to keep track of what you're drinking, and if you see one of your trip mates looking a little worse for wear, take them back to your accommodation. Never leave your drink unattended.

It's also important to be aware that what you might consider harmless flirting may be interpreted differently in some countries. Be yourself and have fun, but stay savvy – you don't want to find yourself in an uncomfortable situation.

RESPECTING FELLOW PASSENGERS

Here at Topdeck, we're all about inclusivity. We want to make sure that everyone has a great time on our trips, and that everyone feels like they're part of one happy Topdeck family.

What we're not about is excluding people or making them feel like they don't belong – that's just not what families do. That's why we always encourage Topdeckers to be kind and courteous to their fellow passengers. The golden rules? Always remember to respect each other's space, be mindful of causing excessive noise in shared accommodation and treat others how you'd wish to be treated yourself. Easy!

DRUG USE

Topdeck has a strict zero-tolerance drug policy. Passengers should not bring any illegal substances onto the Topdeck coach or into any of the accommodation we stay in on our trips. This includes marijuana, even if it is legal in some of the states your trip passes through. If you are found in possession of drugs, you will be removed from the trip. All instances of drug possession will be reported to Topdeck Head Office, who may consider alerting the relevant authorities.

REMEMBER – if you are found in possession of drugs, not only could you risk getting in trouble with the local police, but our Driver will also be held responsible if drugs are found on the Topdeck coach. Trust us, you wouldn't want that to happen to any of our Drivers – they're awesome.

MENTAL HEALTH AND WELLBEING

Culture shock, homesickness, random periods of feeling down – these things happen and are totally normal. You can rest assured that if you're feeling low, your Topdeck crew will do their utmost to cheer you up again.

Measures you can take to look after your mental health and wellbeing while on the road with us are:

- + Call home. Sometimes it's nice to hear a familiar voice and have a good old-fashioned catch up with your loved ones
- + Eat well. Never underestimate the power of a good, wholesome meal. Nobody feels at their best when they're hungry!
- + Drink responsibly. Not only will you swerve the dreaded hangover, but by keeping an eye on what you drink, you could also avoid getting into any potentially uncomfortable situations
- + Talk to your Trip Leader. Don't forget, they're probably far from home, too – so they're sure to know of some tried-and-tested ways to beat the blues
- + Integrate with your fellow Topdeckers. This one is key! The more fun you're having on your trip, the less likely you are to feel homesick (trust us).

HOW TO BE A RESPONSIBLE TRAVELLER

Responsible travel isn't difficult to achieve. With a little conscious thought and preparation, you can have an awesome holiday AND have a positive impact on the places you visit. Sweet!

Here are five things you can do to ensure you're travelling responsibly:

- + Conserve water. You know the drill – reuse your hotel towels, take short showers and remember to turn off the tap when you're brushing your teeth
- + Reduce your waste. Ditch the plastic bag, refuse unnecessary packaging, dispose of your waste responsibly and recycle as much as possible
- + Go local. Hunt down locally owned and operated restaurants and bars, shop in local markets and book tours and activities run by local guides
- + Consider the wildlife. Avoid any attractions that involve closely engaging with wild animals
- + Respect local people and culture. Obeying local laws is a given – but also remember to dress and behave in a manner appropriate to the community. Be polite and keep an open mind!

OTHER INFORMATION

INSURANCE

Before your trip departs, it's compulsory for all passengers to take out comprehensive travel insurance covering cancellation, medical expenses (including repatriation), loss or damage to baggage and personal belongings, money and personal liability.

World Nomads provides comprehensive travel insurance for people from over 140 countries. For more information, visit www.topdeck.travel/travel-insurance.

PASSPORTS AND VISAS

Please make sure your passport is valid for at least six months after the last day of your trip. Some countries will refuse entry if you do not have at least six months validity remaining on your passport after your departure date. Depending on your nationality, you may require a visa to enter certain countries.

It is your responsibility to obtain visas prior to your trip departure. To determine which visas you'll need, you can consult either your own government's website or the government websites of the countries in which you will be travelling.

PLEASE NOTE: Some visas can take up to six weeks to acquire, so don't leave it until the last minute. Also, bear in mind that the validity of a visa often runs from its date of issue rather than the date of entry into the country. Please check with the appropriate embassy/embassies prior to departure, as requirements do change periodically.

WHAT TO BRING

Based on our experience, these items are key. Everyone's different though – so if you want to bring more or less, go for it! (As long as you don't exceed your 20kg allowance, that is.)

1 pair of comfortable walking shoes
1 pair of smart casual shoes
1 pair of thongs/jandals/flip-flops
2 pairs of jeans/trousers
2 pairs of shorts/skirts
4 shirts/T-shirts
2 sweaters/jumpers
Smart casual evening wear
1 rainproof jacket
1 warm jacket
Underwear and socks
Swimwear
Snow gear
Towel
Toiletries
Hat and sunscreen
Basic medical kit (including plasters, aspirin etc)
Insect repellent
Conversion plug
Reusable water bottle



THAT'S IT!