



ARCTIC MAGNIFICENCE

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University of Illinois Alumni Association

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March 28 – April 5, 2026

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Dear EXPLORERS and Friends,

Join us for an exhilarating, seven-night journey that captures the natural grandeur, vibrant culture and Nordic cool of Finland! Begin with three nights at a first-class hotel in lively Helsinki, getting acquainted with this cosmopolitan capital and indulging in a Finnish sauna. Then, fly to northern Lapland and stay for four nights in a comfy, glass-domed cabin, perfect for watching the spectacular Northern Lights overhead.

Breathe in Lapland's crisp, fresh air on unforgettable, active adventures. You'll strap on snowshoes for a nighttime trek to view the Northern Lights and choose from thrilling rides across the fjells by dogsled or snowmobile. Other engaging excursions introduce you to Finland's Sámi cultures and life on a traditional reindeer farm.

As you explore with your small group, look to experienced guides and lecturers for illuminating details about Finland's history, cultural traditions and the unique character of its people. This well-rounded itinerary also includes a day trip to admire the beautiful old town of Tallinn, Estonia, and a round-trip flight between Helsinki and Lapland.

Space on this remarkable Finnish experience is limited to 24 travelers and in demand, so guarantee your place by reserving today!

Sincerely,



David Bambrey
President

The EXPLORERS program is open to alumni of the University of Illinois, their families, and friends.

UNESCO World Heritage

Historic Center (Old Town) of Tallinn,
Estonia





Discovery begins here



From the dazzling Northern Lights to a rejuvenating sauna, bask in outdoor fun and cool Finnish traditions in the world's happiest country! The Finnish people savor the simple pleasures of life and find joy in their close bond with nature. On this marvelous, seven-night adventure, appreciate what Finnish happiness is all about as you embrace the country's majestic beauty and Nordic charm. Take in hip Helsinki's urban vibes and explore the sparkling, snowy landscapes of Lapland!

*Top: Glass-domed cabin, Lapland | Above: Sámi man
Cover: Northern Lights Village | Mail panel: Sámi man and reindeer | Snowshoeing*

Inspiring Moments



- Watch the ethereal **Northern Lights** dance overhead from your **glass-domed cabin** in northern Lapland.
- **Drive a team of energetic huskies** on a thrilling ride across the glistening fjells.
- Revel in a **snowshoe trek** through a tranquil, moonlit forest to take in the Northern Lights and the starry sky.
- Discover intriguing facets of **Finland's three Sámi cultures**.
- Soak up the soothing steam of a **sauna** and learn why it's an essential, beloved experience for Finns.
- Travel to Estonia and delight in Tallinn's beautiful old town, a **UNESCO World Heritage site**.
- Admire the stunning mix of historic and contemporary architecture in **Helsinki**.
- See reindeer in the wild and meet a Sámi herder at a traditional **reindeer farm**.



Day 1 | In Transit

Depart your gateway city for Helsinki, Finland. ✈

Day 2 | Helsinki, Finland

Upon arrival, transfer 🚗 to Hotel U14.

Join your Travel Director for a brief stroll around the neighborhood this afternoon. Later, meet for a Welcome Reception and Dinner in the hotel.

Day 3 | Helsinki

Helsinki Tour. On a scenic tour, discover the eye-catching architecture of this dynamic city founded in 1550. See splendid gems along your route, including Tuomiokirkko, the neoclassical, green-domed cathedral built in 1852, and check out the sleek, light-filled Oodi Library, popular with Finns since its opening in 2018.

Free Time: Make your own plans for lunch.

Enrichment: Finnish Sauna Culture. Relaxing in a sauna is an integral part of Finnish life, a ritual enjoyed alone or with family and friends. A local expert discusses the traditions behind this quintessentially Finnish experience.

Löyly Sauna Experience. It's time to do as the Finns do! Try different styles of saunas at Löyly Sauna, and if you're game, cool off with a bracing dip in the Baltic Sea!

Free Time: Get a wonderful taste of Helsinki's inventive dining scene tonight.

Day 4 | Tallinn, Estonia | Helsinki, Finland

After breakfast, ferry across the Gulf of Finland on a two-hour journey to Tallinn, Estonia. Enjoy lunch on your own aboard the ship.

Tallinn Walking Tour. Founded in the 12th century, Tallinn boasts an enchanting, medieval old town that's one of the most impressively preserved in northern Europe. Its delightful Gothic and baroque churches, elegant spires and red-tile roofed buildings imbue this Baltic gem with a special romance. On a guided walk in this UNESCO World Heritage site, see the highlights and learn about its intriguing history while exploring the picturesque, winding lanes. After some free time, return by ferry to Helsinki. Dinner will be served on the ship.

Day 5 | Lapland | Saariselkä

This morning, check out of the hotel and depart for the Helsinki airport. Fly to the airport in Lapland and transfer to Saariselkä. Check in to the Northern Lights Village.

Spend time getting settled in your cozy cabin and checking out the Village's lovely environs. Savor a tasty dinner in the Village's dining room.

Löyly Sauna, Helsinki





Dogsledding

Aurora Expedition. Set off on an invigorating snowshoe hike tonight under a moonlit sky amid the stillness of the pristine forest and fjells. Follow your guide over gentle slopes to special vantage points for the chance to witness the awe-inspiring Aurora Borealis, or Northern Lights. During the springtime, an optimal time of year for viewing, this amazing natural phenomenon can be seen approximately every second night in northern Lapland (weather permitting). Take a break by a fire, where you'll enjoy toasty beverages and tales about the Northern Lights.

Day 6 | Saariselkä

PYJ | Choose one of these excursions:

- **Husky Safari.** Drive a team of eager huskies on a fast-paced journey across the fjells. You'll receive training from the guide who will lead the group. *(Very active. Requires strong balance over a one-hour period.)*
- **Snowmobile Safari.** Zip across powdery snow on a breathtaking ride. Your guide will

offer safety training and lead the ride. Stop for photos and a warm drink. *(Very active.)*

AHI Connects | Happiest People in the World. Finland consistently ranks as one of the happiest nations. Discover the reasons behind the Finns' strong sense of well-being from an expert, and relish a sampling of local snacks, wild herb tea and chaga coffee.

Join your group for dinner in the dining room.

Day 7 | Inari | Saariselkä

Sámi Museum Siida. In Inari, view exhibits about the traditional livelihoods, customs and handicrafts of Finland's Sámi cultures at this fascinating museum, recently named the European Museum of the Year by the European Museum Forum. Explore an interesting outdoor area with dugouts, turf buildings and traps (weather permitting). Relish a delicious, authentic Finnish lunch.

AHI Connects | Finnish Reindeer Farm. Reindeer husbandry has been an intrinsic part of Sámi culture since the Middle Ages.

Reindeer farm visit





At a farm owned by a Sámi family, spot wild reindeer as you ride through the forest and chat with the reindeer herder about daily life. Gather in the Village dining room for dinner.

Day 8 | Saariselkä

Free Time: Pursue your own passions in the great outdoors of Lapland! The Village offers cross-country ski and snowshoe rentals at a nominal fee for guests as well as many optional experiences (at an additional cost.) Celebrate your time in Finland with your fellow travelers at a Farewell Reception and Dinner.

Day 9 | Lapland | Helsinki | In Transit

After breakfast, depart for the airport in Lapland and fly to Helsinki. Connect in Helsinki to your international flight home.

Note: Itinerary may change due to local conditions.
✈Flights and 🔄transfers included for AHI FlexAir participants.
🌐PYJ experiences are included.

Active Travel

This Active Program is designed for people who are in good health and can comfortably participate in a demanding daily schedule of physical activities. For more details, please call or visit our website.

Excursions on this program require:

- standing and walking for up to 2 hours during dogsled ride and snowshoe hike
- walking on cobblestones, unpaved paths and/or uneven surfaces
- getting on/off motor coaches and boats
- tolerating colder temperatures during outdoor activities in the snow

Included Features



Accommodations {with baggage handling}

- **3 nights** in Helsinki, Finland, at the first-class Hotel U14.
- **4 nights** in Saariselkä at the first-class Northern Lights Village.

Transfers {with baggage handling}

- All transfers in the Land Program: flights, ferry and deluxe motor coaches.

Extensive Meal Program

- 7 breakfasts, 1 lunch and 6 dinners, including Welcome and Farewell Dinners; tea or coffee with all meals, plus wine with dinner.

Your One-of-a-Kind Journey

- **Small group:** Sized just right at 24 guests.
- **Enrichment by expert speakers** enhances your insight into the region.
- **Engaging excursions** showcase the local culture, heritage and history.
- **Personalize Your Journey | PYJ |** A choice of excursions in selected locales.
- **AHI Connects:** Local immersion.
- Welcome and Farewell Receptions to mingle with fellow travelers.
- A personal VOX headset to hear your English-speaking guide clearly.
- Tipping of guides and drivers.
- Complimentary travel mementos.
- **AHI Sustainability Promise:** We strive to make a positive impact wherever we travel.



Feeding reindeer



Great Grey Owl, Lapland



Cross-country skiing



Snowmobile safari

2026 | Departure Details

Program Dates

Travel dates✈	March 28 – April 5, 2026
✈ Travel dates include any overnights required for international travel. These dates may vary depending on air schedules.	
Tour dates*	March 29 – April 5, 2026
* Tour dates begin on the scheduled arrival date at your destination and end on the scheduled departure date from your destination.	

Land Program

Full Price	\$5,745
Special Savings	\$750
Special Savings Price*	\$4,995
*This Special Savings Price includes our \$250 Early Booking and \$500 Pay-in-Full discounts and is valid if you book by the date on the address panel and pay in full at booking.	
Deposit amount is \$750 per person.	
Final Payment is due at least 120 days prior to departure.	
Price includes applicable program taxes (such as VAT and port charges).	
All prices quoted are in USD, per person, based on double occupancy and do not include air transportation costs (unless otherwise stated).	
Special offers, promotions and discounts cannot be combined.	
Single accommodations are an additional \$1,295 (limited availability).	
Please note: Program-specific terms and conditions are available at https://il.ahitravel.com/destinations/1926A?schooldId=69 .	

AHI FlexAir

Let us arrange your flights

Our experts are ready to assist you in booking flights. Our personalized air program offers the following advantages:

- **price guarantee** to protect you from fuel surcharge increases after ticket purchase
- arrival and departure **transfers** on group dates
- **flexibility** to change or cancel your reservation before departure on most flights (Fees may apply.)
- **assistance** in the event of schedule changes or delays

AHI Travel Expertise

Travel Consultants assist with the reservation process.

Travel & Air Coordinators offer their personalized assistance with flights, electives and special requests.

Travel Information provides pre-departure details and enrichment about your destination.

Your Travel Director, a seasoned, multilingual professional, manages daily logistics so you enjoy a seamless experience.

Handpicked Expert Guides and Knowledgeable Lecturers deepen your appreciation for the region and its history, culture and current events.

Accommodations



Hotel U14 | Helsinki



Northern Lights Village | Saariselkä



Book your journey today!

844-414-0369

<https://uiaa.org/explorers/>

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Nordic charm, the Northern Lights and outdoor fun!

Committed to connecting travelers
to the people, places and cultures
of the world for more than 62 years.



**Please call or refer to
our website for the
most current program
information, discounts
and pricing.**

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