



THE YUKON'S NORTHERN LIGHTS #2

November 12, 2020 - 5 Days

The Northern Lights, otherwise known as the Aurora Borealis, are magical, mystical and always mesmerising. We have four nighttime sessions of Northern Lights viewing with a local guide each evening who will share his/her Yukon experiences and knowledge. Viewing activities take place outside the city in a heated, cozy cabin or wall tent. The facility is located near some trees for shelter from the wind, yet the northern exposure is over an open field for perfect viewing conditions. Other highlights include a locally-guided tour of Whitehorse, a swim in Takhini Hot Springs, visits to the Beringia Center, Yukon Museum of Transportation, MacBride Museum and the option to go dog sledding!

Activity Level: 2



TOUR
25

6 Meals Included:

4 breakfasts, 2 dinners

Fares:

\$2,175 pp double, \$2,430 pp single, \$2,145 pp triple
Please add 5% GST

Experience Points:

Earn 47 points on this tour

Redeem 47 points if you book by September 10



ITINERARY

Day 1: Thursday, November 12

We fly from Vancouver to Whitehorse on Air Canada, arriving about 4 pm. We stay four nights in downtown Whitehorse at the Gold Rush Inn. A Welcome Dinner is planned. At 10 pm, we drive out of Whitehorse to the Northern Lights Viewing Facility and settle in for a hopefully awesome spectacle.

Meals included: Dinner

Accommodation: Gold Rush Inn

Day 2: Friday, November 13

A local guide meets us for a drive around Whitehorse, including Main Street, the historic train depot of the White Pass & Yukon Railway, the log skyscraper, log church, sternwheeler SS Klondike, fish ladder, and Schwatka Lake. Next, we go to the **Yukon Museum of Transportation** which brings to life tales of bush pilots, Chilkoot Trail travellers, Klondike stamperders, and Alaska Highway builders. Later, we explore the **MacBride Museum** which has a large collection of relics and photographs from the gold-rush days, including the log cabin belonging to Sam McGee about whom Robert Service, "Bard of the Yukon", wrote a famous ballad. Another Northern Lights viewing is planned tonight.

Meals included: Breakfast

Accommodation: Gold Rush Inn

Day 3: Saturday, November 14

During the morning, we relax in the soothing waters of **Takhini Hot Springs** with temperatures of up to 42°C. Afterwards, learn about the native animals at the **Yukon Wildlife Preserve**, a unique 350 acre viewing facility featuring 12 major species of northern mammals such as Moose, Muskox, Mountain Goat, Wood Bison, Woodland Caribou, Elk, Lynx, Dall's sheep and Stone's sheep, presented in their natural environments. Tonight is our third night of Northern Lights viewing.

Meals included: Breakfast

Accommodation: Gold Rush Inn

Day 4: Sunday, November 15

There is an option today for a dog sled excursion. Tonight is our last night of Northern Lights viewing.

Meals included: Breakfast, Dinner

Accommodation: Gold Rush Inn

Day 5: Monday, November 16

We visit the amazing Beringia Centre which tells the story of native people and animals that lived in a prehistoric land between Alaska and Siberia known as the Bering Land Bridge. Our flight to Vancouver leaves in late afternoon

Meals included: Breakfast

OPTION

Husky dog excursion. Take a ride behind these friendly huskies pulling a limo sled (on snow or bare ground). Visit a race checkpoint and learn about dog sled history and life as a musher. Step back in time at a prospector's cabin, weigh your own "gold nugget" and find out if you hit pay dirt! Includes transportation from hotel, smores, bison smokies, and hot beverages served by the fire at the cabin.

Cost is \$155 per person plus GST. Please choose this option by final payment.

THE NORTHERN LIGHTS OR AURORA BOREALIS

The Northern Lights, otherwise known as the Aurora Borealis, are magical, mystical and always mesmerising. The scientific explanation lies with the sun and the output of energy particles from sun spots. These energy particles, which take the form of free electrons and protons, leave the sun's

atmosphere as plasma and create solar wind. When this wind reaches the earth's atmosphere, the contact with atmospheric gases causes the particles to become excited, and this gained energy is emitted in the form of light. The magnetic poles cause the particles to become unstable and concentrated, thereby becoming visible on earth as dancing lights.

Folklore has always surrounded the aurora phenomenon. In Scandinavia, the lights were called 'herring flash', caused by the reflections cast by large swarms of herring onto the sky. Norse legend refers to "the fires that surround the North and South edges of the world", and this has been put forward as evidence that the Norse ventured as far as Antarctica. In Inuit folklore, Northern Lights were the spirits of the dead demonstrating that they don't feel pain anymore, appropriately named Pathway to Heaven. Many prospectors during the Klondike Gold Rush believed that the Northern Lights were the reflection of the mother lode of all gold. Since we are heading to the Yukon, maybe this is the folklore we will adopt as our own!

Whatever the explanation, the sight of the Northern Lights fills one with awe and childlike wonder, like we are witnessing a magical event as curtains of ever changing light dance across the sky. The best time of year to view the northern lights is in mid winter when the nights are longest and darkest.

Although it is not possible to predict auroral activity very far in advance, chances of viewing increase dramatically when observation takes place three nights in a row. The most active region of the auroral oval typically becomes visible around local midnight, and the Yukon is also the widest part of the oval in the north-south direction. Our evenings of viewing begin at 10 pm and last 3-4 hours to catch the darkest hours of the night. However, please be aware that the Northern Lights are unpredictable. We have increased odds in every way possible, but there is no guarantee if we will see a spectacular show or not.

Northern Lights Viewing Facility — Local tour operator Northern Tales is our host during our time in Whitehorse. Northern Lights viewing activities take place outside the city in a heated, cozy cabin or wall tent. The facility is located near some trees for shelter from the wind, yet the northern exposure is over an open field for perfect viewing conditions. An outhouse is adjacent. A local guide is with us each evening who will share his/her Yukon experiences and knowledge. Hot drinks and snacks are provided.

WHAT'S INCLUDED

- Return flight from Vancouver to Whitehorse
- Current air transport taxes and fees
- 4 nights of hotel accommodation and taxes
- 5 days of bus transportation in Yukon
- 4 nighttime sessions of Northern Lights viewing
- Locally-guided tour of Whitehorse
- Yukon Museum of Transportation
- MacBride Museum
- Takhini Hot Springs swim
- Yukon Wildlife Preserve
- Beringia Centre
- Gratuities for local guides
- Knowledgeable tour director
- Luggage handling at hotel
- **6 meals:** 4 breakfasts, 2 dinners

TOUR NOTES

Flexible Itinerary: Much of this itinerary is dependent on the weather for the most enjoyment of activities. Therefore, treat this tour as an adventure in travel and allow maximum flexibility for changing conditions. If an activity is cancelled one day due to inclement weather, we will try to reschedule during

our stay. We plan to be at the Northern Lights Viewing Facility all four evenings, starting at 10 pm, but cloudy skies could interfere with one or more of these viewings. There is no guarantee that the Northern Lights will be active any night or every night. You can opt out of any of the planned viewings.

Clothing: Dress warmly, no matter what weather forecast you see for Whitehorse. You will be outside at night watching the Northern Lights and it is easy to get chilled, even if there is a warm cabin to retreat to. Bring a winter coat, winter pants, warm sweatshirt, heavy sweater, warm underwear, toque, and warm gloves. More details will be provided in the Important Tour Information document at final payment.

 **Activity Level 2:** Moderate activity including short distances to walk and some stairs. Be prepared for standing in cool night temperatures while viewing the Northern Lights. There can be longer walks in the airports while travelling to and from Whitehorse; request a cart or wheelchair in advance or at check-in if this could be an issue for you. The buses cannot carry a scooter. If you are not able to participate in Activity Level 2, Wells Gray Tours recommends that you bring a companion to assist you. The tour director, local guides, and drivers have many responsibilities, so please do not expect them, or your fellow travellers, to provide ongoing assistance. If you are not capable of keeping up with the group or require frequent assistance, the tour director may stop you from participating in some activities or some days of the tour. In extreme situations, you may be asked to leave the tour and travel home at your own expense; travel insurance will probably not cover you.

TOUR POLICIES

Payments: deposit of \$300 per person is requested at the time of booking and the balance is due September 10, 2020. By paying the deposit, you agree to the Terms & Conditions, Activity Level and Cancellation Policy outlined.

Cancellation Policy: Up to August 10, your tour payments will be refunded less an administrative charge of \$50 per person. From August 11 to September 10, the cancellation charge is \$200 per person. From September 11 to October 9, the cancellation charge is 70% of tour fare. After October 9, there is no refund.

Fare Changes: Changes to taxes and surcharges from the airline and other tour suppliers can occur at any time and are beyond the control of Wells Gray Tours, therefore, Wells Gray reserves the right to increase fares due to such changes until departure.

Travel Insurance: A Comprehensive Insurance policy is available through Wells Gray Tours and coverage is provided by Travel Guard. Policies purchased at deposit include a waiver of the pre-existing condition clause for medical and cancellation claims, otherwise policies can be purchased no later than at final payment. Please contact us for details.

Home pickups: are available within Greater Vancouver for an additional charge of \$40 per person round trip. Please request no later than at final payment.

Tour 25: This is a Tour 25 departure, meaning capacity of tour is limited to 25 participants or less, a more intimate travel experience.

Photo Credits: All images provided by pixabay.com

Experience Points: This tour earns 47 e-points. Each time you travel on a Wells Gray tour, you earn Experience Points, or e-points. One e-point equals \$1. Redeem your points on select tours or accumulate enough points to earn a free tour! Redemptions offered until September 10.

Consumer Protection BC Licences: Kamloops 178, Vernon 655, Kelowna 588, Penticton 924, Victoria 65842

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