



Northern Lights

February 2019



All of our study vacations are amazing, but our adventure to see the Northern Lights in 2019 was spectacular! And in daily seminar sessions our keynote speaker, Prof Paul Hodges, updated delegates on the latest pain neuroscience and its integration into clinical practice.

We began our Northern Lights adventure in Oslo, flying from there to Svolvær in the Lofoten Islands. Svolvær is surrounded by striking mountain peaks, with traditional fishermen's cabins at the water's edge and cod racks full of drying fish. Living in Svolvær is a colourful and pungent experience! We seminared in the mornings, and had abundant time to explore this beautiful region in the afternoons. Organised outings included snow-shoeing and a RIB boat excursion to the Trollfjord. But the highlight was seeing the breath taking Northern Lights for the first time. Watching green lights dance and move across the sky was a mesmerising experience. It was almost possible to forget how cold it was!

Our search for the lights continued when we flew to Tromsø in Norway. Flight preparation was intriguing as we watched de-icing of the plane and snow ploughs regularly clearing the runway. Tromsø is renowned for being one of the best locations from which to view the lights. And it certainly lived up to the reputation, treating us to two more spectacular nights of lights!!



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Then we made an amazing drive across the top of Norway into Finland. As we drove in the comfort of a luxury bus we listened to our speakers, Paul Hodges and Diane Lee answer delegate questions. This valuable question time was supplemented by the incredible changing scenery of snowy mountains, giving way to icy lakes and snow covered fields. It was a long drive, and we were rewarded with a night in glass igloos. And the Northern Lights put on yet another display, and this time we viewed it from the comfort of our warm beds. Just as well; it was -23 degrees outside!!!

Then it was onwards to Levi, a Finnish ski resort. Lots of tourist adventures available - husky sledding, cross country and downhill skiing, more snow-shoeing, a visit to a reindeer farm, and self driving (!) snow mobiles at night to see the lights, AGAIN!!

From Levi we flew to Helsinki to wrap up a seminar that was brilliantly informative, clinically applicable, with lots of discussion amongst our knowledgeable and enthusiastic delegates. And finally we squeezed in a short ferry trip across the Baltic Sea to Tallinn, a wonderful, picturesque old town, blanketed in snow. A fitting way to end such an amazing adventure.

