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★★★★★ 4,7 out of 5

# Siberian Spring: Baikal Awakening – 2021

## 8d/7n: 2-9 May 2021

The package is available as small group tour or private tour  
Irkutsk– Olkhon - Ust-Orda - Listvyanka – Ulan-Ude







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## What our travelers say





## Siberian Spring: Baikal Awakening

End of April - beginning of May is the unique spring time when Baikal is getting rid off the ice cover. Spring is a period of change, ice begins to move, greens break through melted snow and the air is completely unusual, but so pleasant. Tubular ice crumbles like glass from any movement, and the noise of the awakening aikal does not stop for a minute. The spring on Lake Baikal is filled with Olkhon's yellow fields, beautiful clouds and white ice floes migrating through blue waters, becoming part of them. Travel to Baikal in May to see and listen the Baikal Awakening.



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### Trip highlights:

- Discover Olkhon Island
- Explore Buryat culture at eastern and western shores of Lake Baikal, visit local village
- ATV safari at Tazheran Steppe
- Imitation diving to the bottom of a reservoir on a bathyscaph in the Baikal Museum
- Visit Taltsy, open air museum of Siberian culture
- Lake cruise through breaking ice
- Old Believers of Buryatia
- Hot mineral springs
- World's largest Lenin's largest head
- Taste Siberian and Buryat cuisine



## Day 1. Arrival to Baikal

Arrive Irkutsk in the morning. Departure to Olkhon Island. The road will take about 5 hours. Crossing to the island by ferry.

Check-in in a comfy local guest-house and time for lunch.

The beginning of May is the moment when spring at last comes to Baikal, and the ice on the lake is actively melting.

In the evening we'll admire the views on the spring ice breakup from the top photo spots and meet Sunset and Cape Burkhan with its mysterious "Sarge", ritual wooden pillars of Buryat and Yakut people.

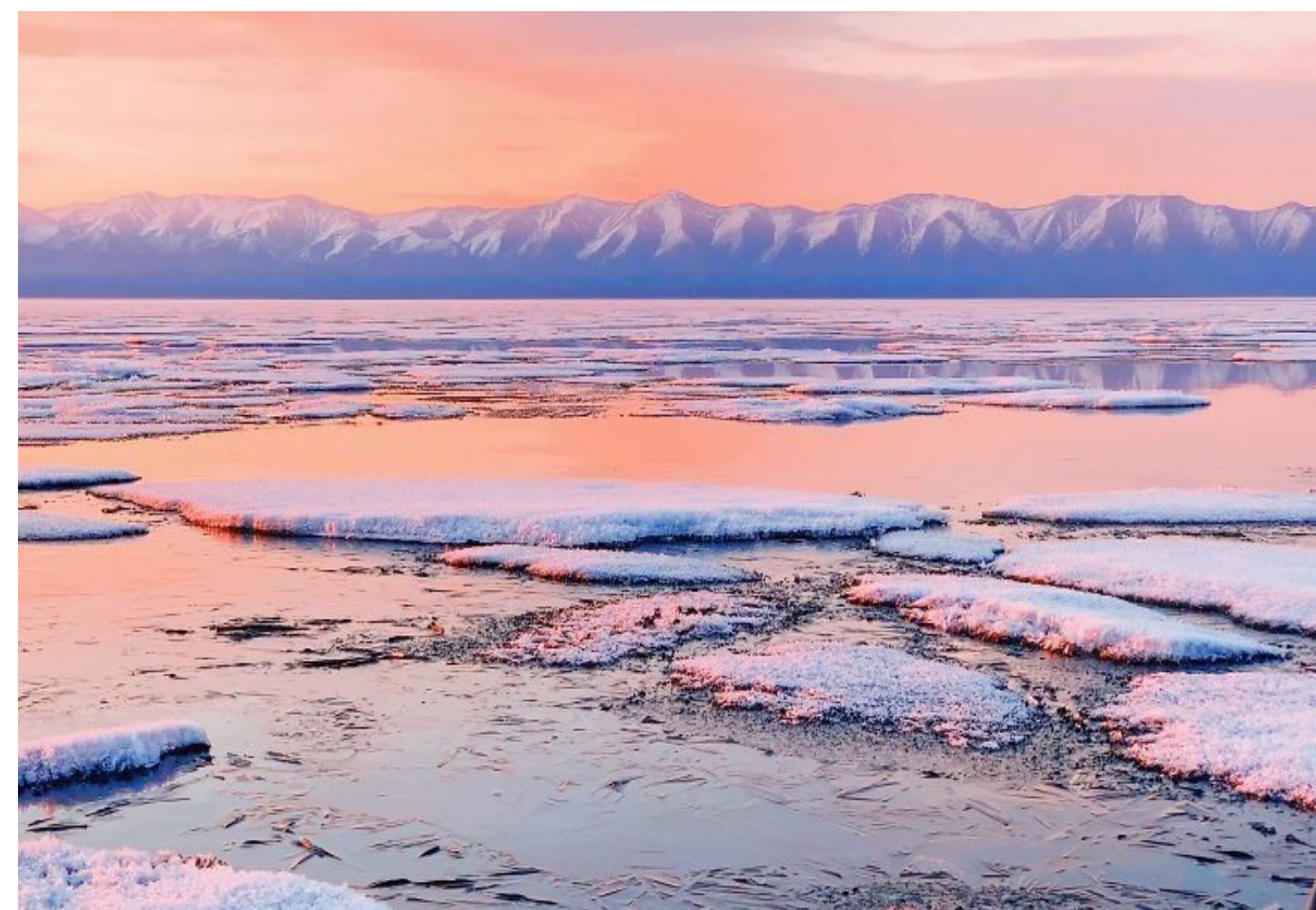
They symbolize the "tree of life," the roots in the lower worlds of demons and branches in the heavens where the Noyons live. Sarge are bound with multicolored patches of fabrics.

 Lunch, dinner

 Tour

 Olkhon island guest house

 Van





## Day 2. Olkhon Island

Today, we'll explore the sights of Olkhon Island taking ride in UAZ van. During the way you will make numerous panoramic photo stops. Olkhon is a place of power in Buryats beliefs, and the Island is literally overflowing with objects of shamanism, like sacred pillars with tied ribbons.

On the way, we'll also make stops at such expressive landscapes like the double rock of Love, the white-rock Cape Sagan-Khushun on the North of the island and Cape Mare's Head on the South of Olkhon, plus we'll go down to several sandy beaches. Picnic in nature with a view of Lake Baikal is also a must!

We'll meet sunset at Shamanka Rock, Cape Burkhan, where the Baikal ruler lives according to local beliefs.

Optional Banya in the evening.

 **Breakfast, packed lunch, dinner**

 **Olkhon lodge**

 **Tour**

 **UAZ**





## Day 3. Tazheran Steppe

Today we'll return to the mainland. After taking a ferry from Olkhon Island we'll move to our cozy eco-lodge accommodation located on the shore of the Maloye More (Small Sea) Strait that separates Olkhon from the mainland.

After check into comfortable wooden houses with en-suite facilities just a few meters away from the lake shores we'll have a 3 hours ATV ride along the coast of the strait end vast expanses of Tazheran steppe.

Drive up to the mountains for a sunset photo session at the observation point with the best views over Maloye More Strait and Baikal. The location itself is famous for being the old shamanism center and we will even see a few artefacts.

During dinner we'll have the opportunity to taste traditional Siberian cuisine, optional Banya in the evening.



Breakfast, lunch,  
dinner



Tour



Altan guest  
house



Van





## Day 4. Culture Mix

Today, we will take a closer look at the cultural heritage of the people living on Lake Baikal - Russians and Buryats.

First, we'll move go to the Buryat settlement Ust-Ordynsky, where you'll have a chance to come into the real yurt and be greeted by ancient traditions. Buryats will introduce you to national folklore - songs and dances, throat singing. Meet the Buryat shaman. The landlady will teach you to cook the Buryat national dish - buuza. Have Buryat breakfast.

Then, we'll make a stop at Taltsy Open Air Siberian Culture Museum. The exposition features wooden buildings brought from all over Siberia! Right now, 40 landmarked buildings and 8000 artifacts dated by XVII-XIX centuries are presented as part of the exhibition. Here you will see the traditional folk-show and have a lunch.

Evening arrival to the village of Listvyanka, located on the shore of Lake Baikal. Check into local hotel for overnight stay/



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**Buryat breakfast,  
lunch, dinner**



**Tour**



**Baikal hotel**



**Van**





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## Day 5. Listvyanka

Visit Baikal Museum, Shaman Rock, St. Nicholas church and a Fish Market.

Baikal Museum is a splendid museum where information about lake Baikal wildlife is kept, studied and exhibited: including the origins of the lake, the endemic flora and fauna from the surface of the lake to its maximum depth, an excellent model of the lake, etc.

Shaman Rock is a natural boundary between the deepest lake in the world and the only river that flows out of the lake—the Angara river.

In the evening, enjoy Lake Baikal boat cruise (option for group tours). During the cruise, you will enjoy the vastness of the lake and magnificent landscapes, feel the power and energy of the Siberian land awakening after a long winter.

Optional Russian banya.



**Breakfast, Lunch &  
Dinner.**



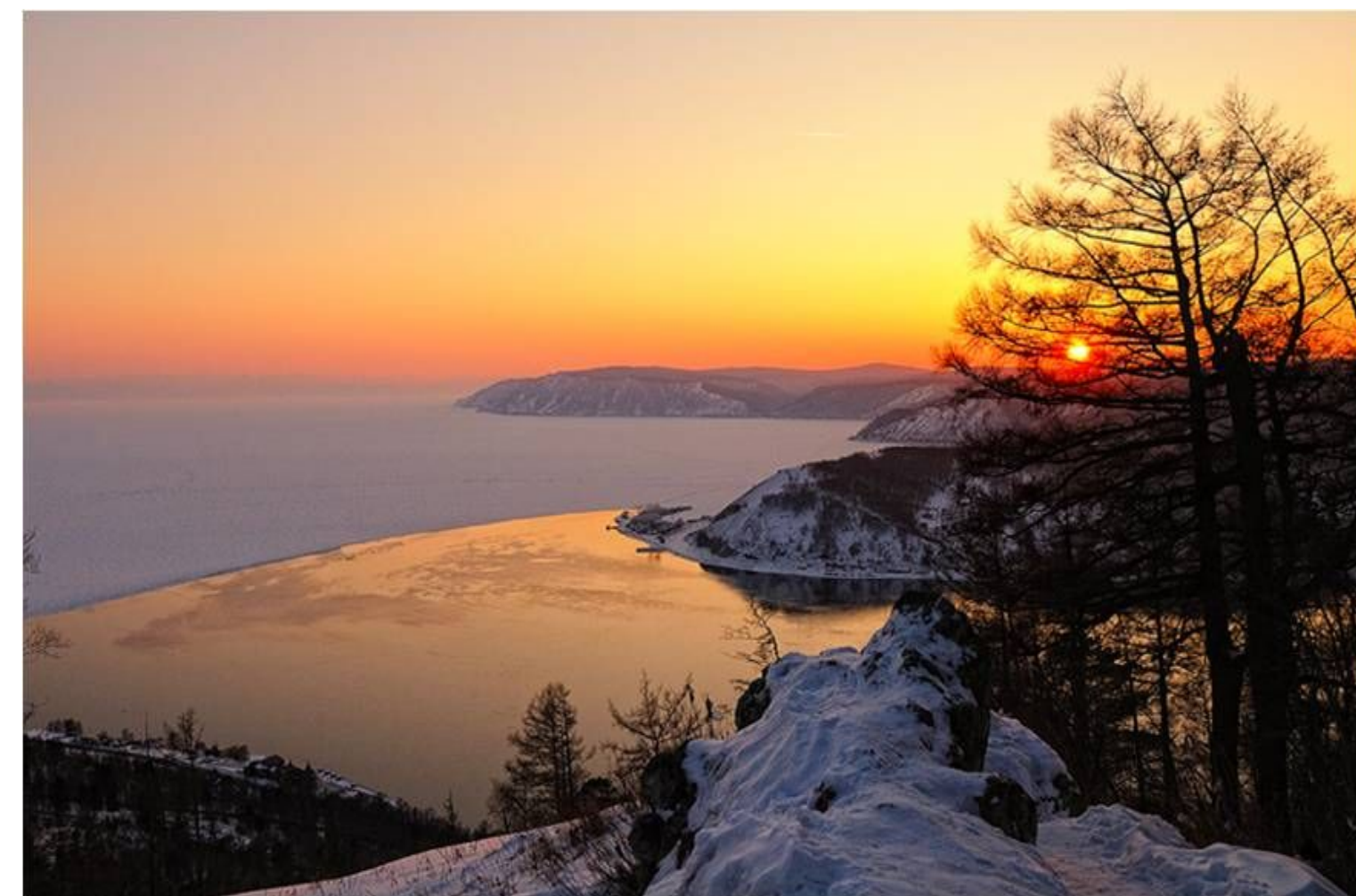
**Tour**



**Baikal hotel**



**Van**





## Day 6. Flight to Ulan-Ude, Old Believers village

Transfer to Irkutsk for the departure flight to Ulan-Ude, the capital of Buryatia.

Your driver will be waiting at the Ulan-Ude airport to take you to the cosy hotel in downtown upon your arrival.

Today we'll visit the Old Believers village. The Old Believers are Orthodox Christians, who maintain traditional religious way of life and follow very old religious rules. They separated from the official Russian Orthodox Church as a protest against church reforms introduced between 1652 and 1666. Saving their lives, Old Believers had to run away to Siberia and the Far East.

Another name of these people — Semeyskie or Family People — was given because they moved to Siberia with their big families. These special people keep the traditions of their ancestors, many do not recognize modern technologies, medicine and internet.

Transfer back to Ulan-Ude for the overnight stay.



**Breakfast**



**Ulan-Ude hotel**



**Tour**



**Flight Irkutsk -  
Ulan-Ude, Van**





## Day 7. Ulan-Ude Tour, Buryatia

After breakfast, start the guided city tour. Today you visit Atsagatski Datsan, famous Lenin's head monument, and Old town.

The main sight of Ulan-Ude town is, in fact, Lenin's head monument. Every tourist who is interested in unusual monuments and amazing architecture should see this 7,7 meters-high bronze head of Vladimir Lenin. This monument is the largest head sculpture in the world.

Unique samples of old Buryat art, as thangkas, sculptures, ritual objects are gathered and preserved at the Ivolginsky datsan. Among the monastery's treasures, there is a collection of old Buddhist manuscripts written in the Tibetan language on natural silk, and a greenhouse with a sacred Bodhi tree.

Transfer to the banks of Selenga river and bathing in hot mineral springs





## Day 8. Farewell

Enjoy a private transfer to the airport at the time of your choosing.

Be sure to stay in touch with Discovery Russia once you're back home! We love seeing your holiday pictures and hearing your reflections on the trip.



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**Breakfast**



**Transfer**

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## Dates & Rates per person in twin/double room

	★★★ Irkutsk city Hotel 3*+ Baikal hotel Olkhon guesthouse	★★★★ Irkutsk city hotel 3*+ Baikal hotel Olkhon premium guesthouse
<b>Group package 2-9 May 2021</b>	118 100	133 500
<b>Single supplement</b>	27 000	42 000
<b>Private tour* Flexible travel dates</b>	On request	On request



## Tour Inclusions

### ACCOMMODATION

Hand-picked centrally located hotels:

- 2 nights Olkhon
- 1 night Baikal shore eco lodge
- 2 nights Listvyanka (Baikal)
- 2 nights hotel in Ulan-Ude

### ENTRANCE TICKETS, VISAS & MISC.

- Entrance tickets to all listed attractions (except optional)
- 24/7 English-speaking support line in Russia

### TRANSPORTATION

- All land transfers as per program
- Ferry transfer to/or from Olkhon
- Flight Irkutsk - Ulan-Ude (economy)
- Return airport transfers

### MEALS

- 7 breakfasts
- 5 lunches or packed lunches
- 5 dinners

### SIGHTSEEING & ACTIVITIES

**Please take note that due to logistic issues we might occasionally amend the sequence of the tours.**

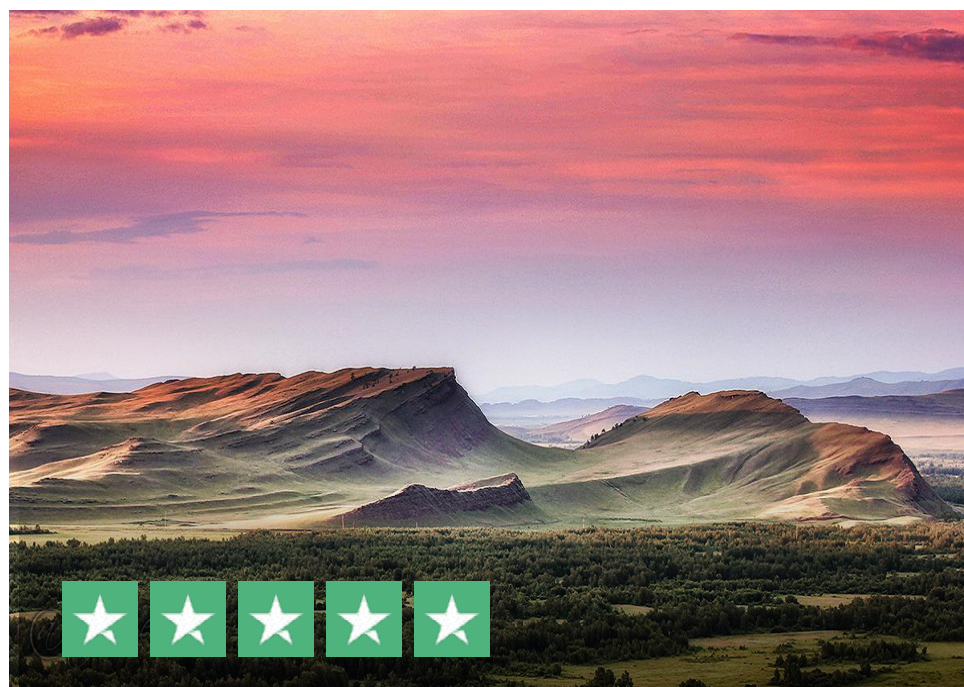
- Ust-Orda Buryat village with tour, cultural performance, cooking class and late breakfast
- Guided tour to Taltsy Open Air Siberian Museum
- Lake Baikal (Listvyanka) full day tour, Listvyanka evening cruise (for group tours only)
- ATV ride
- Full day touring around Olkhon Island
- Ulan-Ude city touring
- Old-believers village & Ivolginsky Datsan touring

### NOT INCLUDED

- Flights
- Porters
- Extras of personal nature
- Lunches and dinners not mentioned
- Travel insurance



## Check out our best 2021 tours



**Siberian mystery: Tuva and Khakassia**

[View trip](#)



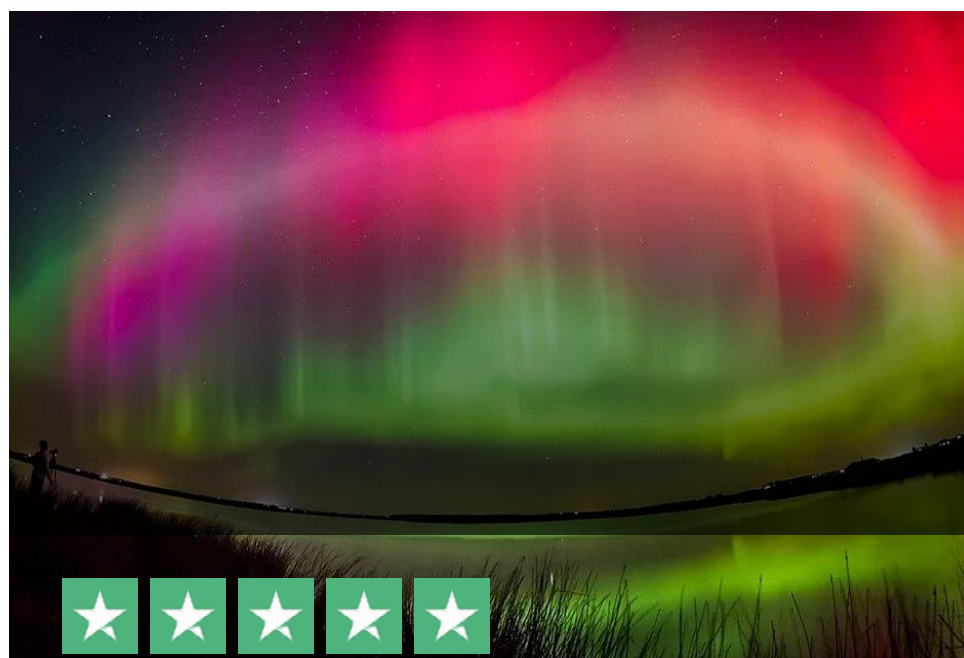
**Poonezhie. Russian North**

[View trip](#)



**Trans-Siberian Eastbound Moscow To Vladivostok**

[View trip](#)



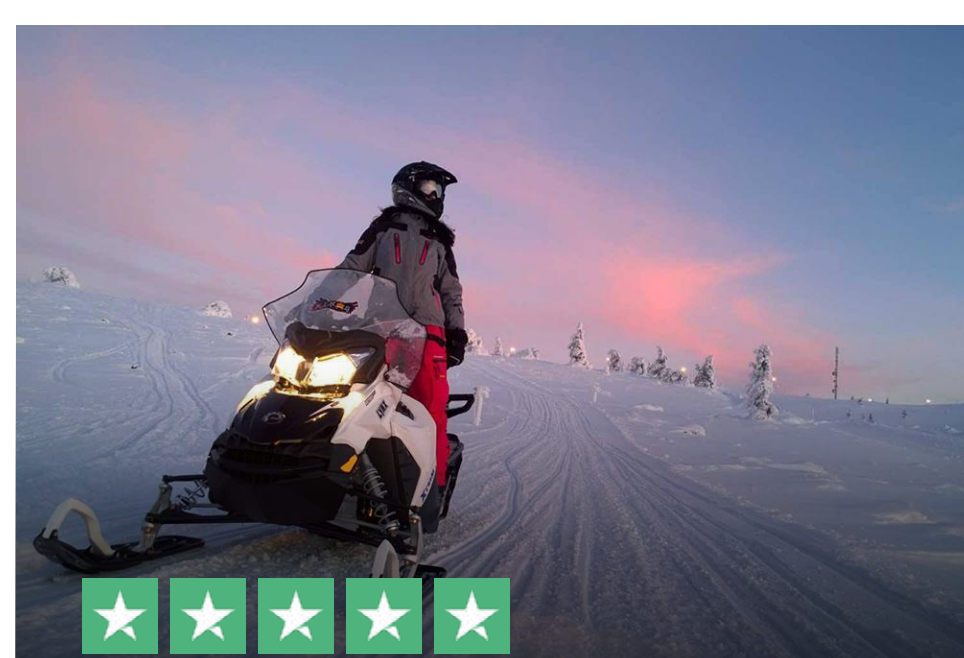
**Hunting The Northern Lights**

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**Winter Golden Ring Express**

[View trip](#)



**North Timan Snowmobile**

[View trip](#)