



Natural Wonders Cruise



HOLIDAY TYPE: Small Group
VISITING: Iceland, Greenland

BROCHURE CODE: 5309
DURATION: 13 nights

In Brief

Discover the immense variety of the world's biggest island and the beauty of the 'land of the fire and ice' during this thirteen-night tour of Greenland and Iceland. Enjoy the awe-inspiring south with its fascinating Viking history, see Ilulissat, the town of icebergs and a UNESCO World Heritage site before finishing in Reykjavik, the coastal capital of Iceland.

Our Opinion

“ *This eleven-day cruise is a unique way to experience the stunning scenery and natural wonders of Greenland and Iceland. Your mode of transport will not only allow you to make the most of all that the Arctic summer has to offer but it will also allow you to travel in comfort as the MS Ocean Diamond is equipped with many modern facilities to help you to feel at home. As well as the opportunity to witness natural marvels such as fjords, glaciers and icebergs, you are also in with the chance of spotting some beautiful wildlife. Whales, walrus and seals have all been spotted on this route!* ”

Amy Hope



What's included?

- **Flights:** Charter flight from Keflavik to Kangerlussuaq
- **Transfers:** all transfers in Iceland and transfer from the airport to the ship in Greenland
- **Accommodation:** 2 nights in a hotel in Reykjavik and 11 nights en-suite cabins in cabin category P (outside cabin with porthole). Upgrades are available
- **The following destinations are included in the holiday:** Reykjavik, Kangerlussuaq, Sisimiut, Ilulissat, Uummannaq, Qeqertarsuaq, Nuuk, Narsarsuaq, Quassiarsuk and Vestmannaeyjar
- **Meals:** 2 breakfasts in Reykjavik; 11 breakfasts, 10 lunches, 11 dinners
- Cruise itinerary as per agenda (subject to change)
- Juice, water, tea and coffee are all included
- Wind jacket
- Onboard entertainment programme including lectures on Icelandic culture, history and wildlife from local experts
- Zodiac excursions (weather dependent)
- Use of gym facilities on board the ship
- Fully qualified wilderness guides and instructors during activities
- **A note on flights:** flights to and from Iceland are not included in the holiday price so that the best available fares and most appropriate schedules can be found for you at the time of booking. This route is served by both low cost and scheduled airlines and our Travel Experts will happily provide you with a quote and arrange flights on your behalf.

Trip Overview

During this unforgettable thirteen night holiday, you will enjoy the long days of the Arctic summer whilst also making the most of the captivating and wild beauty of Greenland and the magnificent natural wonders of Iceland. You will also have time to explore Reykjavik, one of the smallest capitals in the world.

Boarding the boat in Greenland, you will explore the rugged and remote west coast, a region that reflects and promotes the traditional way of life which is widely embraced on the island. The landscape throughout is dominated by steep fjords, floating icebergs and immense glaciers and there is some staggering scenery to enjoy.

In Iceland, you will visit the Westman Islands and witness the power of the natural world as you see the destruction and beauty which has been caused by volcanic eruptions over thousands of years.

Throughout this arctic cruise, you can add in shore excursions to further explore or simply enjoy the views and the presentations from the expedition team on board. The MS Ocean Diamond is a delightful cruise ship; large enough to offer guests great facilities and comfort but, with a maximum of 224 passengers, the vessel is small enough to ensure the best possible experiences for all on board.

The expert team on board will make your stay as comfortable as possible and your meals are included from the night you board until the morning you disembark; so you really can relax and focus on your holiday.

This is an unforgettable arctic adventure which takes in two wild countries and a vast number of natural wonders.

Image credits: Iceland Pro Travel, Visit Greenland, Fotografie.Opzolder.Co, Victor Romera De La Fuente and Alison Freeman

Agenda

Please note the order of activities is subject to change

DAY
1

ARRIVAL AND TRANSFER

Having touched down at Keflavik Airport, you will be greeted and transferred to your hotel in Reykjavik. Depending on your arrival time, you can either relax in your hotel room or stroll around the city.

Included Meals: None

DAY
2

DAY IN REYKJAVIK AND FLIGHT TO KANGERLUSSUAQ

Today, you can explore this fascinating city before your flight to Greenland this evening. There is a lot to see and our Travel Experts will be happy to suggest some suitable itineraries for you.

Your flight from Iceland will land around 8 pm in the remote town of Kangerlussuaq and as you descend towards the airport you may begin to understand the sheer scale of the wilderness here.

The MS Ocean Diamond will be awaiting your arrival, anchored off the coast of Kangerlussuaq, and you will embark via Zodiac boats ahead of your departure.

You can check into your cabin and get acquainted with the facilities on board before a welcome drink and dinner. You can really relax, knowing that all of your meals are catered for from here on and that

the expert team on board is there to ensure you have the most wonderful experience.

Included Meals: Dinner

DAY
3

SISIMIUT

Today you will visit Sisimiut, the second largest town in Greenland with approximately 5,600 inhabitants. As you walk around, you'll see a modern settlement with ancient traditions still playing a role here. Known as an adventure travel hub, it's easy to see why with the surrounding mountains providing grounds for exploration. You'll also learn all about the country and the people during a presentation provided by knowledgeable guides.

Included Meals: Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner

DAY
4

EQIP GLACIER/ ILULISSAT

In the morning you will see the beautiful Eqip Glacier. The Eqip Glacier is an awe-inspiring sight to see and the face of the ice stretches for around five kilometres. It calves into the sea on a fairly regular basis and the sound and sight of these vast chunks of ancient ice crashing into the water is remarkable. There is no colour quite like that of the blue of glacial ice.

Your next stop is Ilulissat, which means 'iceberg' in Greenlandic and the reasoning behind its naming will become wholly clear upon arrival.

The Ilulissat Ice Fjord is filled with vast icebergs which have been formed by gigantic sections of glacial ice breaking off into the surrounding seas. The sight of these icebergs is sure to be breathtaking and you will certainly understand why it has been designated as a UNESCO World Heritage site.

The Sermeq Kujalleq Glacier is one of the most productive glaciers in the Northern Hemisphere and calves over 13 square miles of ice per year. With luck, you may get to witness such an event during your stay.

Included Meals: Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner

DAY
5

UUMMANNAQ

Today sees you hit the most northerly point on your travels as you visit Uummannaq which is situated around 300 miles north of the Arctic Circle. This is one of the most picturesque villages in Greenland, residing at the foot of a heart-shaped mountain and home to around 1500 residents. The multi-coloured homes are dotted around a rocky coast and look out across the vast Ocean. It is fascinating to see how people live and thrive in such an utterly remote location. A visit to the Uummannaq Museum, which tells brilliant stories from the region, is included. Very interesting is an exhibition of

Alfred Wegener's expedition on a propeller-driven sled.

Included Meals: Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner

DAY
6

QEQERTARSUAQ

Qeqertarsuaq is a small settlement located on the south coast of Disko Island. Founded in 1773, there are many stunning natural features here and also the Arctic Station, the oldest continuously manned station in the Arctic. Upon arrival, you can't help but notice the flat-top mountains that are locally known as the Grand Canyon. As you make your way in and out, keep an eye on the water for the different whale species found here.

Included Meals: Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner

DAY
7

NUUK

The city of Nuuk is the capital of Greenland and visitors can witness the charming combination of long-held Arctic traditions and modern life in a bustling town. Dating back to 1728, the city is the oldest on the island and was founded in 1728 by a Danish-Norwegian missionary.

Nuuk is a relative metropolis with around 16,000 residents and your time here can be spent enjoying the culture and heritage of the town.

Included Meals: Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner

DAY
8

IKKA FJORD

Today, you will visit the breathtaking Ikka Fjord, and admire this unique land formation. Below the azure water, a forest of remarkable mineral columns grows on the seabed. These rare Ikait columns were formed over 10,000 years ago make for a distinctive and remarkable sight.

Included Meals: Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner

DAY
9

NARSASUAQ/QUASSIARSUK

In the evening of day 8, the ship will drop anchor in Narsarsuaq. A visit to the Narsarsuaq Museum is included for all guests. It was established in 1991 and has a big collection of photographs from the American base 'Blue West One'."

You will also have the chance to visit both Quassiarsuk and Narsarsuaq during the shore excursions.

Quassiarsuk was founded by famed Viking rebel Erik the Red. Erik gave this country the name 'Greenland' due to the surrounding landscape of mossy fjords and fertile green valleys.

Included Meals: Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner

DAY
10

DAY AT SEA ON PRINCE CHRISTIAN SOUND

If conditions are suitable, today you will enter the ethereally beautiful, 70 miles long, Prince Christian Sound which connects the Labrador and Irminger Seas. Prince Christian Sound is filled with remarkable scenery – steep mountains often more than 1200m high border the narrow, often ice-choked channel and you will come so close to floating icebergs that you can almost reach out and touch them.

The floating ice is caused by Greenland's massive inland icecap (the second largest in the world) which pushes the glaciers towards the sea where large chunks break off and become the icebergs that you witness here.

Included Meals: Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner

DAY
11

DAY AT SEA ACROSS THE DENMARK STRAIT

Today you cross the Denmark Strait as you set sail for Iceland, following a maritime route that was first used by Norse settlers over 900 years ago.

While you are cruising you can relax and enjoy the beauty of the open sea, keeping watch for whales, dolphins, and seabirds from the deck or from your cabin.

Included Meals: Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner

DAY
12

VESTMANNAEYJAR (WESTMAN ISLANDS)

Located off the South Coast of Iceland, the island group Vestmannaeyjar was formed by submarine volcanic eruptions around 10,000 years ago. Surtsey Island is the youngest on the planet and emerged in only 1963 to form part of this island chain. You will head ashore on Heimaey, which is the only inhabited island. The island offers a real sense of the power of nature and its fury as you witness the half-buried homes which have been coated in volcanic ash from an eruption in 1973. On the small Zodiac boats, you will navigate around this fascinating place, exploring caves and looking out for the abundant wildlife and birdlife which is on offer.

Included Meals: Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner

DAY
13

REYKJAVIK

In the morning, your journey ends as you dock in Reykjavik at approximately 9 am. Breakfast will be enjoyed on board prior to disembarkation.

Whilst this is the end of your cruise, you will still have the rest of the day to explore Reykjavik. We can arrange an array of land-based experiences in order for you to make the most of your time here in Iceland.

Included Meals: Breakfast

DAY
14

DEPARTURE

After breakfast, it is time to say goodbye to Iceland. You will be transferred to the airport for your journey home.

Included Meals: None

Personalise this tour

Our pick



Ilulissat: City walk

On this tour, you will learn about life 200 miles above the Arctic Circle. Ilulissat was an important Danish trading post in the past and this tour will take you to the harbour and the 18th-century Zion Church. Ability to walk on uneven terrain is required.

Following the tour, you can stay in town and perhaps visit the city museum, or walk back to the pier.

Approximate duration: 1.5hrs

Min/Max participants: 10/30

Available: Day 6

Price: 20 USD per person

Please note: clients pay for the excursion on board in the USD

Image credit: VisitGreenland.com - Aningaaq Rosing Carlsen

Other options

ACTIVITIES



Ilulissat: Cruise to the Ice Fjord

Small sturdy local boats will take you to the mouth of the Ilulissat Ice Fjord, where an underwater moraine catches many of the big icebergs. The only way to get over the moraine is pressure from behind – therefore you always find a multitude of huge icebergs just in front of Ilulissat. As the boat sails around the icebergs, the captain cuts the engines at a suitable place where you can enjoy the panorama.

Warm clothing is recommended!

Approximate duration: 2 hrs

Min/Max participants: 12/-

Available: Day 6

Price: 170 USD per person

Please note: clients pay for the excursion on board in USD. Excursion boat has mostly outdoor space and limited seats.

Image credit: Visit Greenland.com - Samuel Letecheur



Ilulissat: flight above the Ice Fjord

On this exciting tour, you will hop aboard a plane for a low-altitude flight to the very end of the world-famous Ilulissat Ice Fjord, a UNESCO World Heritage Site. You will cruise above the glacier edge, where you can enjoy a breathtaking view of huge icebergs dotted with sky-blue glacial lakes. A window seat is guaranteed for the best photo opportunities.

Weather permitted!

Approximate duration: 30 minutes

Min/Max participants: 4/5

Available: Day 6

Price: 530 USD per person

Please note: clients pay for the excursion on board in USD

Image credit: Visit Greenland.com - Mads Pihl



Nuuk: Hiking around Lille Malene Mountain

This demanding hike will last around 5 hours (including transfers) but will lead you into the spectacular wilderness around Nuuk. You will need to be reasonably fit and have appropriate hiking footwear and clothes for this 6-mile hike in mountain terrain.

At the foot of the Lille Malene Mountain, you will set off with your guide to explore this arctic mountain terrain on foot, hearing fascinating stories and facts about the landscape from your expert as you go. The views on offer

are exceptional and you will certainly be rewarded for your efforts.

A packed lunch is included.

Approximate duration: 5 hrs

Min/Max participants: 15/30

Available: Day 7

Price: 60 USD per person

Please note: clients pay for the excursion on board in USD

Image credits: Visit Greenland.com - Rosing Carlsen



Nuuk: Helicopter flight over Nuuk

On this 30-minute helicopter flight, you will enjoy the sights of Nuuk and its surroundings from a different perspective. During a ground stop, you will have stunning views of the large fjord system and the capital of Greenland, Nuuk.

Approximate duration: 1.5 hrs in total incl. transfers, helicopter flight approx. 30 minutes

Min/Max participants: 4/5

Available: Day 7

Price: 675 USD per person

Please note: clients pay for the excursion on board in USD

Image credits: Visit Greenland.com - Elia Locardi



Narsarsuaq: Helicopter to Eqaq Glacier

On this tour, you will travel by helicopter to the nearby Eqaq Glacier. The helicopter flies at low altitude over the coastal mountains before landing in front of the glacier. On this 30-minute stop, you will have the chance to inspect and photograph the amazing glacier face before the return flight.

Weather permitted!

Approximate duration: 1.5 hr in total (incl. transfers);

helicopter flight approx. 30 minutes

Min/Max participants: 5/5

Available: Day 9

Price: 665 USD per person

Please note: clients pay for the excursion on board in USD

Image credit: Visit Greenland.com - Aningaaq Rosing Carlsen



Narsarsuaq: Hike to Tasiussaq

This guided 8.5-mile hike takes you to a remote former sheep breeding farm in Tasiussaq; you'll travel along unpaved roads and will need to have good hiking shoes at your disposal. This is a fascinating location but its real charm lies in its views of the Fjord system and the stunning Arctic landscape.

A packed lunch is included.

Approximate duration: 6-7 hrs

Min/Max participants: 10/25

Available: Day 9

Price: 50 USD per person

Please note: clients pay for the excursion on board in USD

Image credit: Visit Greenland.com - Mads Pihl



Narsarsuaq: Quassiarsuk Viking Ruins

The small settlement of Qassiarsuk boasts some of the most interesting ruins from the Norse period of Greenland history. Erik the Red settled here after he had been outlawed from Iceland and named the new land 'green land' because the region around Qassiarsuk is characterised by inviting fjord landscapes and green, fertile valleys. On this trip, you can see the ruins of the first Christian Church in Greenland and visit the reconstruction of a Viking longhouse.

Involves about 2hrs of walking on a gravel road

Approximate duration: 2hrs

Min/Max participants: 5/-

Available: Day 9

Price: 40 USD per person

Please note: clients pay for the excursion on board in USD

Image credits: Credit Visit Greenland.com - Mads Pihl



Narsarsuaq: Qoroq Ice Fjord

The Greenland icecap produces 250 million tons of icebergs each summer and their last journey begins when they break off into glaciers at the top of fjords.

One of these is Qoroq Glacier near Narsarsuaq which can be reached via a 30-minute boat ride.

You will board the smaller boats from the ship and cruise into the fjord for a wonderful view of the glacier. Cruising into the fjord, the boats sail a zigzag route through the icebergs and Qoroq in the distance.

Approximate duration: 1.5hrs

Min/Max participants: 12/-

Available: Day 9

Price: 110 USD per person

Please note: clients pay for the excursion on board in USD

Image credit: Alison Freeman



Vestmannaeyjar: Lava Tour (Pompeii of the North)

In the Westman Islands, you can enjoy a guided tour of Heimaey by bus. This excursion will highlight the power of nature as you witness the semi-buried homes and the volcanic crater which have been caused by recent eruptions. A museum visit gives an insight into the geology of the island and an account of both the 1973 eruption, which damaged the homes and the 1963 eruption which created the island of Surtsey (entrance to the museum is included).

Approximate duration: 3 hours

Min/Max participants: 10/45

Available: Day 12

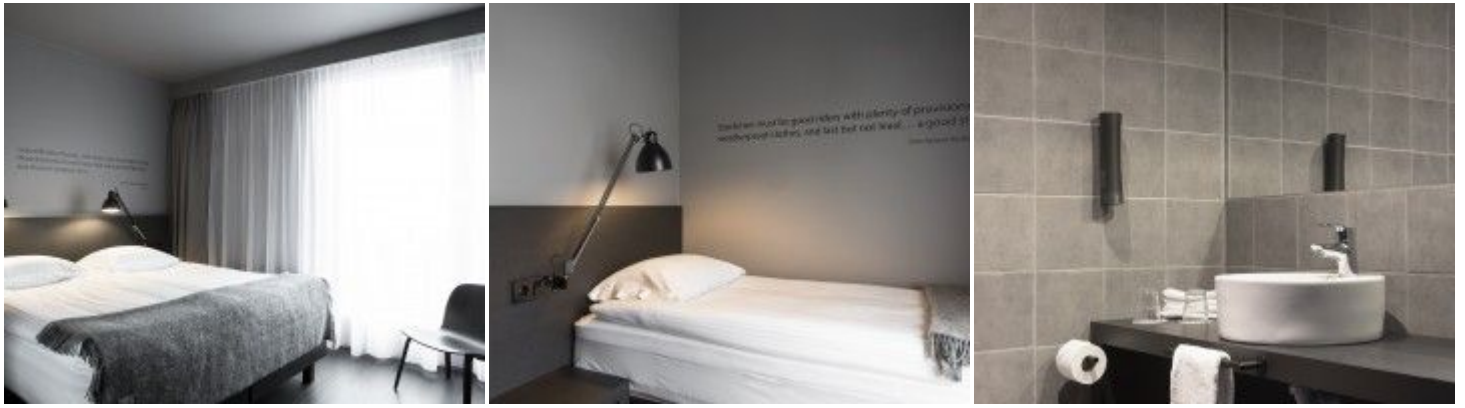
Price: 110 USD per person

Please note: clients pay for the excursion on board in USD.

Image credit: Iceland ProTravel

Included Accommodation

Skuggi Hotel (Nights: 1,13)



This hotel is located in Reykjavik's city centre, close to Laugavegur (which is the main shopping street), and an array of restaurants and bars. 'Skuggi' is the Icelandic word for 'shade', and the hotel has a fitting interior design of cool greys and calming white. The Skuggi Hotel has 100 rooms, designed with inspiration from the sublime black-and-white nature photography of Icelandic Ragnar Axelsson.

Hotel facilities

- Pick up a drink from the hotel's stylish on-site bar
- Free Wi-Fi means you can keep friends and family up to date
- Wake up to a spread of hot and cold options at the breakfast buffet

Hotel Rooms

The hotel offers both double (with king size bed) and twin rooms. All have an en-suite bathroom with a shower, toilet, hairdryer, and toiletries, free Wi-Fi, a satellite television, a telephone, a tea and coffee set, clothes rack, a desk and chair.

Please note: the inclusion of this hotel is dependent on availability. If changes become necessary for any reason, a substitute hotel may be required.

Image credits: Skuggi Hotel

MS Ocean Diamond (Nights: 2-12)



MS Ocean Diamond is a wonderful and modern vessel that has been specially equipped for Arctic voyages with ice-strengthened hull and stabilisers that help to reduce roll. She is an ideal expedition vessel but that does not mean that there is any need to compromise on comfort as the facilities on board are excellent. The experienced and expert crew works with the expedition team to ensure that guests have the best possible experience whilst on board.

She is compact and carries a maximum of 224 passengers, meaning that she can explore further than larger ships. This means that her passengers can take in highlights which may elude larger vessels.

Her average cruising speed is around 15.5 knots and she is the first ever polar passenger ship to be carbon neutral, with all emissions offset.

On board facilities

The ship has some fantastic facilities that make it both welcoming and comfortable.

- All meals as listed are included in your stay and they are prepared by the ship's team of chefs. You are sure to experience a wealth of delicious specialities during your voyage. The restaurant offers panoramic views of your surroundings. Breakfast and lunch are a buffet and your evening meal will be à la carte. The dress code is casual and so you can leave your black tie at home and simply come equipped for the variable weather
- Coffee, tea, water, apple and orange juice are included throughout and the lounge on deck 4 serves a late evening snack
- The various deck and observation areas provide ideal viewpoints from which passengers can enjoy the surrounding scenery
- The on board shop is a great place to pick up some souvenirs
- Passengers can browse the books and DVDs in the well-stocked Polar library, sit back in the panorama salon or take advantage of the wellness programmes that are offered, such as yoga classes, massage therapy and aromatherapy treatments
- There will be a range of talks held in the auditorium by local experts on the heritage and wildlife of the regions you are visiting and the ship's Zodiac boats are on hand (when conditions are favourable) to give guests the chance to explore further afield
- Wi-Fi is available on board for an extra charge

Cabin Types

There are many types of cabin to choose from during your stay. Our holidays are based on Category P but we can arrange for guests to upgrade or downgrade to any of the other options subject to availability. Simply contact our Travel Experts for a quotation.

Cabin Type P - Outside Cabin with porthole: These cabins are 19m² and contain double/twin beds, en-suite shower room, TV with DVD, safe, wardrobe, refrigerator, individual temperature control, satellite telephone access, hairdryer and two portholes. Please note that some views can be restricted by lifeboats, etc on deck.

Additional Cabin Options

Cabin Type O – Outside cabin with obstructed view: These cabins are 19m² and contain double/twin beds, en-suite shower room, TV with DVD, safe, wardrobe, refrigerator, individual temperature control, satellite telephone access, hairdryer and picture window. Please note that the view will be restricted by lifeboats or similar.

Cabin Type D – Outside cabin with picture window: These cabins are between 17-19m² and contain double/twin beds, en-suite shower room, TV with DVD, safe, wardrobe, refrigerator, individual temperature control, satellite telephone access, hairdryer and picture window.

Cabin Type A - Balcony suite: These cabins are 30m² and contain a double bed, en-suite bathroom with bath and shower, sitting area, TV with DVD, wardrobe, safe, refrigerator, individual temperature control, satellite telephone access, hairdryer, full-size window with sliding glass door and a balcony.

Cabin Type B – Suite: The suites are spacious at 37m² and feature either two twins or a double bed as well as an additional two twin beds, two private bathrooms with shower or bathtub, sitting area, TV with DVD-player, wardrobe, safe, refrigerator, individual temperature controls, satellite telephone access, hairdryer and picture window.

Cabin Type T – Triple cabin with porthole: These cabins are 19m² and contain two twin beds and one upper bed. They are en-suite with shower room, TV with DVD, safe, wardrobe, refrigerator, individual temperature control, satellite telephone access, hairdryer and two portholes. Please note that the view may be obstructed.

Image Credits: MS Ocean Diamond

The Specifics

Holiday group size (approximate)

Approximately 150 - 220 on board the ship but for activities the group size will be much smaller.

Group Size

We always try to provide an approximation of the group size you can expect to be with for the duration of each of our holidays. It may be that you are joined by others for parts of your holiday (such as transfers and particular activities) but the above number reflects those you can normally expect to be with from beginning to end. If group size is something which is particularly important to you, please speak to our Travel Experts and they can suggest the best holidays for you.

Tailor-made holiday group sizes will vary for all activities as will the group size for any additional activities you book.

Minimum and maximum age

If a specific minimum age applies to this holiday, it can be found in the Key Facts box on the holiday Overview page.

Unless otherwise stated in the in the Key Facts box on the holiday Overview page, the minimum age for participation in an Artisan holiday is typically 8 years old (there may be younger children in some destinations who have booked with other companies). If an adult-only environment is important to you, then please contact our Travel Experts and they will advise on the best dates and destinations for you. If you are looking for a holiday designed specifically for families then please see our sister company www.activitiesabroad.com

Itinerary amendments

The order of activities listed in this agenda is provided for guidance only, your final and detailed itinerary will be provided either with your final travel documents (which are uploaded into your online account around a week prior to departure) or upon arrival.

Terms and Conditions

Our full booking terms and conditions can be found on our website: <https://www.artisantravel.co.uk/booking-conditions>