I am interested in seeing the Northern Lights!

Call the Gondwana Ecotours’ team at 1 877 587 8479 for reservations!
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“How Likely Is It to See the Northern Lights?”

Many people ask me how likely it is that they will see the Northern Lights in Alaska and I wish I had an exact answer. I usually tell people that if you go far north to a place like Fairbanks in the winter, you have a great chance of seeing them. To put it in context I’ll share a few stories about some of our experiences with Aurora Borealis to better contextualize their presence.

It was a cold, dark night in Fairbanks when I was sitting outside with my friend and trusty Gondwana guide Bruce on look-out duty for the Northern Lights. I remember it was hard not to stare at the stars and get lost in my own thoughts. If you think you’ve seen bright stars, wait until you go to a place near the top of the world where city lights don’t wash out their brilliance. Suddenly, the skies came alive. Green, purple and yellow streams of light danced in the sky, blending together and creating bursts of neon colors, caused by a full-blown solar storm.

I quickly ran to the lodge and woke up the guests who wanted to experience the Aurora during the night. Some guests were content with the sights they saw earlier on the trip—faint hints of color lighting up the sky in a heavenly way. However, this event far exceeded what anyone had imagined...even myself: I had never seen a solar storm of this caliber before. As our guests hurried out of the lodge, everyone’s eyes fixated on the sky. We were all so excited and I felt so fortunate to share this special experience with each and every one.

Another story about the Northern Lights I enjoy is that of my friend Scott. He is a professional photographer that joined a trip last year to take photos. All of his photos of the activities, food, lodges are incredible and really capture the fun spirit of the trip. Oh... and his pictures of the Northern Lights are nothing but perfect.

One night when the group was in Fairbanks, Scott wanted to explore the town. We noticed a pale green haze over the city, which we knew came from the Aurora, but it didn’t entice the rest of us to stay outside and watch for them. They next day, Scott told me he captured some amazing photos of the Aurora Borealis. I was confused at first, because I did not see any
I recently heard from Jane, one of my favorite people in Fairbanks. She runs a small business where she lets people mingle with her herd of reindeer. You get to know them for a little and she’ll even take you on a nice walk through the forest with her caribou. She told me about her new night walks with the reindeer. In small group settings this is quite the enchanting experience, especially if there is a full moon.

One story she told me that really struck me, happened on one of the first night walks. The guests made their way down the forest trail with the small herd of reindeer as if they were walking their dogs without a leash. The reindeer would sometimes knock snow off the tree limbs with their antlers or bump into one another from time to time, garnering a chuckle or two. Suddenly, the Northern Lights materialized out of nowhere. Jane told me it was a perfect experience: the reindeer frolicking against the backdrop of the dancing Northern Lights.

The Aurora Borealis are a sensational reminder of how wild and spectacular our world can be. They, along with many other of the world’s natural wonders, are one of the reasons why I founded Gondwana Ecotours. You cannot predict nature, nor bet on it. When I encounter something as incredible as the Northern Lights, I feel very fortunate that I can witness the profound events of this world—and even luckier that I can now share them with you.

More of my trip questions can be answered by calling 1 877 587 8479
9 Things You Didn’t Know about the Northern Lights

1. **Aurora Borealis is a natural phenomenon named after a Greek god and a Roman goddess.**

   The 17th century astronomer, physicist and philosopher, Pierre Gassendi, saw the Northern Lights on a trip in the North and named them the Aurora Borealis. Aurora was the Roman goddess of dawn who woke up the world with her torch. She was trailed by maidens who threw flower petals onto the world to ensure the start of a bright new day. The second word, Borealis, Gassendi derived from the Greek god of the north wind—Boreas.

2. **Different combinations of elements determine the colors of the Aurora.**

   When a solar storm (or a magnetic storm on the sun) occurs, electrically charged particles, or ions, are rapidly drawn to the Earth by its magnetic field. The ions then collide with the earth’s different gases in the upper atmosphere emitting various colors of light. The color of light depends on the type of ion (charged or not) and gas colliding together, and the altitude. Charged ions and nitrogen at a high altitude create a brilliant blue and charged ions that crash into oxygen at a lower altitude become a yellowish-green color, which is the most common color.

3. **Did you know that the Northern Lights Clap?**

   Many folktale and legends tell of crackling noises coming from the Northern Lights. Researchers from Aalto University in Finland published a study in 2012 and referred to recorded “clapping” sounds that they correlated to the visual presence of the Northern Lights. According to the study, these sounds were produced approximately 70 meters (230 ft) above ground and originated from solar particles creating geomagnetic disturbances.

4. **Sometimes the Northern Lights can affect the modern world.**

   Since the Northern Lights are created by solar activity, the same events from the Sun that causes the aurora often creates more than just a stunning display. During solar storms people have noted radio interference, satellites and other electronic equipment being affected. In extreme cases, a couple of major power blackouts have been blamed on severe solar storms.
5. The Aurora Borealis has a sister

In Antarctica, there is also an aurora named the Aurora Australis, australis meaning southern. There is no difference in the two light shows—solar storms interfere with their magnetic poles, just on two opposite ends of the planet.

6. Earth is not the only place with auroras.

Jupiter and Saturn—the gas giants of our galaxy—inhibit strong magnetic fields due to their gaseous, unsolid consistency, and during solar storms these fields create massive aurora ovals. Aurora ovals have also been seen on other planets such as Mars, Neptune and Uranus.

7. Ancients depicted this source of wonder in cave drawings in France.

Cro-magnon paintings in southern France most likely depict the Northern Lights.

8. The Aurora works in cycles.

Everything has its own rhythm and cycle, and the solar activity that causes the stunning displays of the northern lights occur roughly every 11 years (10.66 to be exact). Since its discovery in 1849 by a German astronomer, scientists have compiled observations throughout the centuries and have dated solar cycles back to 1699. Since then, there have been 29.5 cycles. The next strongest peak of the cycle is 2015-2016!

9. Never Miss the Northern Lights!

Several agencies, such as NASA and the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, monitor solar activity and issue aurora alerts when they are expected to put on a particularly impressive show.
Tales of the Aurora

The previous chapter inspired me to research other mythologies about the Northern Lights because the fact why it is called Aurora borealis: it was named after the Roman goddess of dawn, Aurora, and the Greek god of the north wind, Boreas. This lead me to ask the question, before science how did people make sense of the mysterious lights? Well, to satisfy my curiosity and celebrate Halloween, here are a few short folktales about the Northern Lights.

The Sami people (also known as Lapps or Lapplanders) live North of the Arctic Circle in Norway, Sweden and Finland. Archaeologists have documented these peoples’ existence since 10,000 B.C. Having occupied those Northern lands for that long, I wasn’t surprised to come across an entertaining story about the Aurora Borealis.

The Samis believed energy from souls departed created the Northern Lights. According to certain stories, only the energy from those who died a violent death would be part of the colorful spectacle. Another common belief was that the souls held torches to help guide other souls entering the afterlife through a small portal in the sky. Anytime the fires of the skies were ablaze people behaved solemnly. Those who failed to respectfully observe the fires were subject to bad fortune. The spirits apparently were having a good time, though. They were supposedly seen every now and then feasting and playing soccer games with a walrus skull.

We’ll take our journey a little further south to northern England. James Radcliffe, the Earl of Derwentwater, played a prominent role in the 1715 rebellion in an attempt to restore the Stuarts back on the English throne When the rebellion failed he surrendered and was beheaded in the Tower of London. Legend has it the Northern Lights appeared that same day in all of northern England in a particularly red display. Since then, the rare times the Aurora emerge in this region, locals refer to the Aurora as “Lord Derwentwater’s Lights.”

At the other end of the world, the indigenous peoples of Stewart Island, the Maori, have their own interesting myth about the Aurora—the Aurora Australis. Stewart Island is the third largest island of the New Zealand archipelago and known for its stunning red sunsets and Southern Lights displays. The first Maori settlers named the island Rakitu after the Maori chief, Te Rakitamau. Te Rakitamau left his home to ask another chief for the hand of the eldest daughter of his two daughters. When she turned him down, embarrassed, he asked for the youngest daughter’s hand in marriage. Betrothed to another, the youngest daughter could not accept his offer. Te Rakitamau left defeated and red from blushing. Many Maori attribute the blushing of Te Rakitamau because of his failed marriage proposals to the sunsets and the southern aurora you can see from the Island. That is why is the island was first named Rakuira.
One story she told me that really struck me, happened on one of the first night walks. The guests made their way down the forest trail with the small herd of reindeer as if they were walking their dogs without a leash. The reindeer would sometimes knock snow off the tree limbs with their antlers or bump into one another from time to time, garnering a chuckle or two. Suddenly, the Northern Lights materialized out of nowhere. Jane told me it was a perfect experience: the reindeer frolicking against the backdrop of the dancing Northern Lights.

The Aurora Borealis are a sensational reminder of how wild and spectacular our world can be. They, along with many other of the world’s natural wonders, are one of the reasons why I founded Gondwana Ecotours. You cannot predict nature, nor bet on it. When I encounter something as incredible as the Northern Lights, I feel very fortunate that I can witness the profound events of this world—and even luckier that I can now share them with you.

North America is home to dozens of tales about the Northern Lights, mainly due to the numerous Native American cultures that stretched across the continent. The Algonquins believed their creator moved North after he finished his creation and lit great bonfires that reflected in the skies. The Menominee Indians in Wisconsin believed that friendly giants lived in the North and lit great torches while spearfishing. Native American tribes in Alaska held the same belief as the Samis that the Northern Lights were also the energy of departed souls. During the dancing lights of the night sky, it was not advised to venture out unless you had a weapon. Many in Alaska also believed that making noise, such as clapping or whistling, would attract the spirits, and they would take you away into the night. However, some Alaskan natives began whistling so the spirits would come closer. They would then attempt to give messages to the spirits to bring to their beloved deceased friends and family.

Stories like these fascinate me because of how they became culturally mainstream to these peoples. It shows the common human desire to understand and to know. That is why people venture so far north. Now that our science explains the natural phenomenon of the Auroras, some might think the mystery disappears, but I disagree. I will look into the science behind the Northern Lights in my next blog post and I have found that finding the answer to one question only leads another.

Watching the Northern Lights in person is amazing, almost otherworldly, and learning the old myths makes me appreciate the human experience of encountering earth’s natural wonders even more. In a sense, this sums up why I founded Gondwana: to bring wonder and understanding through the best experiences the world has to offer.
Predicting Nature: When is the Best Time to See the Northern Lights?

There really is no way to predict the Northern Lights or nature for that matter. Because of our understanding through scientific observation we are now capable of forecasting nature to a degree. Like storms here on earth, the Northern Lights do not really run like clockwork, but there is a natural rhythm to their presence. In order to give you some insight on what to consider when forecasting the Northern Lights, I have compiled some scientific information. This will better explain the conditions you need to see the Aurora Borealis.

Let’s start with space. From the sun, there is constant solar wind that flows throughout the galaxy reaching everything in orbit. When the sun’s activity intensifies due to solar flares (explosions on the sun’s surface) or from enormous explosions on the sun’s surface known as mass coronal ejections, the sun thrusts charged particles into space. These particles are then picked up by the solar wind and carried rapidly to earth where they interact with the earth’s magnetic fields located in the upper atmosphere.

FAST FACT: At the peak of the cycle, several solar flares may occur each day, with an average lifetime of 10 minutes.

In 1859, the sun ejected such a large burst of charged plasma (most likely a coronal mass ejection) that reached the earth. This ejection was so strong, that when the particles collided with our atmosphere, many telegraphs were fried. This solar event, which became known as the Carrington Event (named after one of the English astronomers who observed it), was so huge that the accounts say the Northern Lights were seen as far as Cuba.

When intense space weather happens such as this, the magnetic force from the Earth’s Northern and Southern poles pulls the solar wind and all it contains towards earth—gravity does the rest.

Seeing solar activity far away from the North Pole, such as the Carrington Event of 1859, is very rare. Your best chance to see solar activity colliding with earth is to travel to the eye of the geomagnetic storm—either the North Pole or the South Pole.

FAST FACT: Telegraphs in Philadelphia were spitting out “fantastical and unreadable messages,” one paper reported, with some systems unusable for hours after the Carrington Event in 1859.
Northern Lights, light pollution, or lack thereof, also plays a significant role. When on the lookout for the Northern Lights you want few illuminated distractions. The farther away you are from man-made light sources the better your chances are for seeing the Northern Lights.

FAST FACT: According to many universities including the University of Hong Kong, Hong Kong’s light pollution is the worst in the world. If you want to stargaze, scratch this place off your list.

The last element for a perfect viewing of the Northern Lights is the local weather. Auroras happen at high altitudes in the earth’s upper atmosphere and in the case of a thick cloud cover in a lower atmosphere, there’s not much to see on the ground.

On my first trip to Alaska I constantly updated myself on all of the forecasting systems to guarantee I saw the Northern Lights, yet I still missed out, sleeping while others chanced upon them. From that experience I learned that I cannot just depend on scientific knowledge and technology. You could be inside next to a cozy fire or in your comfortable warm bed when the Northern Lights appear out of nowhere. In the first beginning of this series, I told the story about the group on a night-time reindeer walk who were surprised by an unexpected light show. That is why whenever I go to Alaska on a Gondwana ecotour I am actively scouting for the Northern Lights every night. As soon as I see them dance across the sky I run inside the lodge and tell my fellow travelers to wake up and come outside to experience the world’s best light show.

Accounts of the Carrington event and the cave paintings found in southern France that depict the aurora amaze me. Solar activity of that caliber, most likely an enormous coronal mass ejection, is the only explanation for the Northern Lights to reach places that far south. However, as I mentioned in 9 Things You Didn’t Know about the
8 Things You Need to Know About Photographing the Northern Lights

1. **What time of year to do it:** Autumn and Winter are the best times for viewing the aurora, while March and October are regarded as the two months with the most impressive light shows. However, visibility fluctuates on a daily basis relative to periods of high pressure, which increase your chances of catching the lights, as well as with changes in geomagnetic activity, which spikes during the solar storms that produce the brightest auroras. For this reason, it’s a good idea to consult aurora forecasting resources like the NASA-run Space Weather Bureau (www.space-weather.com), the University of Alaska (www.gi.alaska.edu/AuroraForecast), or, for European locales, the Aurora Service (www.aurora-service.eu/aurora-forecast/).

2. **What time of day to do it:** Photos of the aurora taken at dusk or late in the day give you the chance to set the lights against a background palette of beautiful sky colors or foreground landmarks. However, in general, the aurora is most active and photos will be clearest at times when the sky is darkest, from late night to early morning (approximately 9:00pm to 4:00am). The lights often evolve through a variety of stages over the course of the night, so set up early and come well-rested if you want to take advantage of the full range of photo opportunities!

3. **Where to do it:** The lights are visible for much of the year in the latitudinal band known as the auroral zone, which corresponds roughly to the Arctic Circle. The closer you are to these Northern latitudes – about 68 to 74 degrees – the better your odds are for catching the light show, but latitudes above 55 degrees offer plenty of good opportunities as well. During periods of higher geomagnetic activity the aurora expands towards the equator, when it can be seen at much lower latitudes.

4. **How to get the best view:** Once you’ve checked to make sure that the sun storms are raging, what’s the ideal photographic nest for snapping the borealis? First of all, unless you want to include terrestrial foreground elements (trees, buildings, cityscapes or skylines, mountains and so forth) in your photos of the aurora, it’s best to get as far away from the light pollution of towns and cities as possible. The darker the sky, the clearer and brighter your photos will turn out. This means that it’s ideal to synchronize your aurora expedition with a new moon unless you specifically want the moon in your shots, or a foreground landscape illuminated by moonlight. Find a spot with an unobstructed view to the north, where the aurora will be brightest. The full spectrum of the lights often expands well in the lower sky, so a clear, flat horizon is ideal so that you can see as much of the aurora as possible.
5. Which camera and lens to use: The long exposure times necessary for taking good shots of the aurora mean that a digital SLR will do a much better job than a point and shoot camera. The perfect DSLR for the job is capable of manual focus, long exposures with relatively low noise, high ISO, and has a RAW mode. A full frame sensor and a wide-angle or prime lens are preferable since you’re likely want to get as much of the sky as possible into your photos; with a full-frame sensor, a 20-35mm lens will get the job done, while smaller sensor require shorter lenses, around 10-25mm. No zoom or autofocus is necessary. The perfect lens will be sharp and fast, with an ideal maximum aperture of f/2.8 or lower (the lower the f-stop number, the larger the aperture) to keep exposure times reasonable. Don’t forget to remove any lens filters before capturing the aurora to avoid rings in your photos caused by spectral emissions.

6. What other equipment to bring: Since you’re need long exposure times to capture the Northern Lights at the brightest, it’s important to stabilize the camera. For this, you’re going to need a tall, sturdy tripod to mount your camera. A wireless remote or cable release helps avoid the motion caused by pressing buttons on the camera’s body, although at temperatures below 0 cables may freeze or break. An alternative solution is to set the camera’s trigger delay timer to a second or more after the button is pushed so that the shutter won’t open until the camera is still. A lens shade helps prevent flare and keeps frost and condensation off of your lens. Headlamps are useful for adjusting settings on the camera while keeping your hands free. You’ll want to bring multiple batteries and memory cards so that you’ll be prepared for whatever challenges or opportunities come up: remember that cold temperatures will make your batteries drain more quickly, and the last thing you want is to run out of battery just as you perfect your set-up. Keeping them somewhere warm like a pocket or lined bag will help preserve their charge. A 2-gallon Ziploc bag is a great asset for getting condensation out of your camera when you bring it inside. Put your camera in the bag and zip it up when you come in from out of the cold, and much of the moisture will evaporate out of the camera body onto the inside of the bag.

7. What camera settings to use: Photographers of the Northern Lights have to perform a balancing act between the long exposure times necessary in order to capture the low light levels of the aurora and the need to limit exposure times to avoid blur or distortion from the aurora’s movement. The most effective solution is shooting at the highest ISO that produces photographs of acceptable quality, which will typically range from around 400 all the way to 3200, depending on your camera. This value can be calibrated by starting low and reviewing the results as you increase the ISO, as higher ISO’s produce grainier images. If your camera has a High ISO Noise Reduction or Long Exposure Noise Reduction setting, turn it on (the latter isn’t necessary if shooting RAW). The higher the ISO, the shorter the shutter time necessary; likewise, the lower the f-stop, the shorter the shutter time will need to be. Thus, a camera with f/2.8 shooting at 400 ISO may require a 30 second shutter speed, whereas at 1600 ISO, closer to 5 seconds is necessary. Once again, the perfect exposure time can only be calibrated through trial and error, starting at shorter durations and adding additional time if the results are too dim or unimpressive, although, as a general rule, it’s rare to get good shots with a shutter speed below 4 seconds. The f-stop should be set to the widest aperture possible, while focus should be set to infinity. If, as with some newer lenses, the infinity setting seems to focus beyond the aurora, you may need to manually set the focus to a distant point on the horizon. Finally, shooting in the RAW format takes a great deal of memory card space, but also affords you the maximum opportunity for editing and refinement after your Northern Lights shoot is complete.

8. What to wear: Clothes are last but not least on the list! You are likely to be standing still in extreme cold for a long time, so it’s necessary to plan ahead for your own comfort. High-quality, comfortable boots with wool socks or insoles and enough heel to insulate you from the cold ground are the first consideration, since you may be on your feet for hours waiting for the perfect shot. Since you’ll be standing still, it’s important to have heavy layers rather than many layers since the cold-fighting advantages of layering are associated with physical activity. This means you’re going to need a very warm, thick jacket as your outer layer. Finally, lest all your preparation be in vain due to frozen, fumbling fingers at the crucial moment, you’ll want to bring heavy, lined gloves and hand-warming packets to keep your fingers and hands ready to snap the perfect photos of the Northern Lights!
What to Pack for the Northern Lights Alaskan Adventure

Going to Alaska is quite an adventure, especially if you are out having fun in the snow and searching for the Northern Lights. To give you an idea of what an arctic experience is like, here are a few things you should pack:

**A Winter Hat**
This hat should protect the top of your head, back of your head, ears and even cheeks and neck if you want to be bundled up in the snow-covered interior of Alaska. Common styles of hats worn during cold weather are Watcher’s Cap, Chullo, Trapper’s Hat, Aviator’s Hat, Felt Dress Hats.

**Hand Wear**
Typically, insulated mittens keep fingers warmer than gloves. If mittens still are not enough warmth, you can always layer a thinner pair of gloves under your mittens, like some ski gloves. Ski-gloves that come with removable, built-in liners are always an option as well.

**Balaclava or Face Mask**
During our dog-sledding adventure, you will race through a forest filled with snow-covered trees and then rush into vast, open snowy plains. When on the sled, the dogs will make your fast-paced excursion nothing short of exciting. The rush of the wind against your face is an exhilarating feeling, however, it is important to protect your face from the cold wind as well. A balaclava is an essential item while dogsledding. Scarves can also offer the same effect of protecting your face from the winter wind as well.

**Footwear**
When you are hiking down an icy trail or snowshoeing, you are going to want to stay warm. That is why we suggest you bring warm, waterproof boots with an insulated inner lining. Some even come with a removable insulated liner, so you can take them out and let them dry between uses. Many winter boots have a “comfort rating,” such as “comfort-rated to -15 degrees Fahrenheit.” However, there is no industry standard for these ratings, and these numbers are basically estimates that the manufacturer has created. When purchasing your boots, we suggest the low temperatures such as -30 or -40 degrees Fahrenheit. Be sure to note whether the comfort rating is listed in Fahrenheit or Celsius, although some brands list both.

When you are not out searching for the Northern Lights and bundled up in the cozy lodge by the fireplace, you are going to want some nice lodge shoes to walk around in. Light insulated shoes or regular shoes are fine—anything that makes you feel comfortable and at-home during your stay.

**Moisture wicking shirt**
When dressing for winter weather, there is a hierarchy. This shirt is going to be your base layer. When you’re outside having fun in the snow, you are all wrapped up and might sweat a little. That can bring your body temperature down, making you cold. It’s important to layer in extremely cold conditions, but the order of the layer is just as important. You want moisture wicking material, such as synthetic fibers like Windstopper® polyester and acrylic, which pulls moisture away from your skin (wicking) and after dries quickly, to be your base layer.

This is your second layer in your Northern Lights ensemble. It is also your insulating layer
and should be a fleece, pile or wool shirt and pants. When you put this over your moisture-wicking base layer, it creates a nice insulating effect that will keep you warm throughout your journey north.

**Parka**
The parka is your third layer. It is worn over your moisture-wicking shirt and insulating layer. We recommend that it be filled with either down or synthetic material to offer you the ultimate warmth during your hunt for the Northern Lights.

**Snow and Wind Protection Jacket**
When you are out looking for the Northern Lights, this jacket protects you against the snow and the wind. Typically Gore-Tex is the material that we recommend because of its durable, waterproof, and breathable qualities. However, if Parkas are out of the budget, many of times, manufacturers combine the insulating layer and the snow and wind proof protecting layer (the outer-most) into one jacket.

**Socks**
When you are out trekking around in your winter wonderland, your feet need protection—regular socks and shoes just won’t do. Two types of socks will protect your feet for the winter snow. The first layer of socks you need is the Lightweight synthetic liner socks. The second layer is the heavy wool or fleece socks (smartwool recommended).

**Swimsuit**
Not all of this trip is about the cold outdoors. We go to hot springs to relax and revitalize in mineral-rich water. Bring a bathing suit, so you can indulge in this natural outdoor spa!

**Lipbalm, Vitamin E Oil and Sunscreen**
We’ve protected pretty much every part of our body, but we should pay extra attention to our face. The cold, the wind, and the snow could all cause our faces to become dry. That is why it is important to not only protect it but restore it. With your lips, make sure you moisturize your lips with lip balm regularly or you can bring pure vitamin E oil, which you can moisturize both your lips and your face. The beautiful snow’s pristine white color reflects the rays of the sun. This is an amazing sight to see, but it is important to remember that when the sun’s rays bounce off the snow you’re getting an extra dose of sunlight, so protecting yourself with a little sunscreen everyday is important.

So here you have it, your basics for traveling far north.

Experiencing the Northern Lights is one of the most spectacular sights you can see. It is my prerogative to bring people to experience earth’s greatest events while they are prepared, safe and secure. I could not imagine a job more fulfilling than sharing the beauty and drama of our world.

Let’s go search for the Northern Lights!

**Protective Eye-Wear**
While out having fun and/or snowshoeing, the snow reflects much of the sun’s UV rays. That is why it is a good idea to have goggles or sunglasses with UV protection.
A Message from the President and Founder

The outstanding feedback we receive from our Northern Lights Alaskan Adventure continues to motivate me to create hand-crafted travel experiences that benefit both the traveler and the destination. When I first began Gondwana Ecotours, that is how I imagined success.

We have plenty of thrilling, hand-crafted ecotours to the world’s most unusual and captivating places; of all of these adventures, the Northern Lights Alaskan Adventure exemplifies the essence of our company: inspiration.

Seeing the Northern Lights dance in the night skies above fills anyone with marvel. We also find guests have such great experiences on this trip because of our dedication to design, which is true of all of our trips. We inspire travelers through our promise to create special travel experiences to never stop being amazed by our world. That’s what makes us different. We also have a few reasons I’d like to share about why you should travel with us:

- **Wonder**: We offer adventures that amaze, enlighten and deeply connect you to the region.
- **Flexibility**: There are many opportunities throughout the tour for you to customize your vacation with a variety of day excursions.
- **Local Guides**: We offer the unsurpassable experience of local guides who share their country, culture and customs with you.
- **Trip Leader**: A Gondwana Trip Leader is always sent to take care of the details of groups of more than six, leaving you to fully relax and enjoy the experience.
- **Donations**: A portion of the proceeds from each trip goes to a local not-for-profit of the destination.
- **Carbon Offset**: We carbon off-set your airfare—good for your conscience and good for our planet.
- **Low Impact**: Our trips leave a small impression on the environment because of the small group size of 14 and activities.
- **Unique Lodging**: Feel the heart of the destination by staying at a boutique hotel that is whenever possible locally-owned and eco-friendly.

I founded Gondwana Ecotours, because I find it rewarding to travel to beautiful places in the world in socially responsible and environmentally sound ways, and I am certain others do too. The act of turning that concept into a business model has been, and continues to be, a satisfying journey. I hope to see you on one of trips sometime in the near future.

Sincerely,

Jared Sternberg

But wait...I want to see the Northern Lights!

Call the Gondwana Ecotours’ team at:

1 877 587 8479