

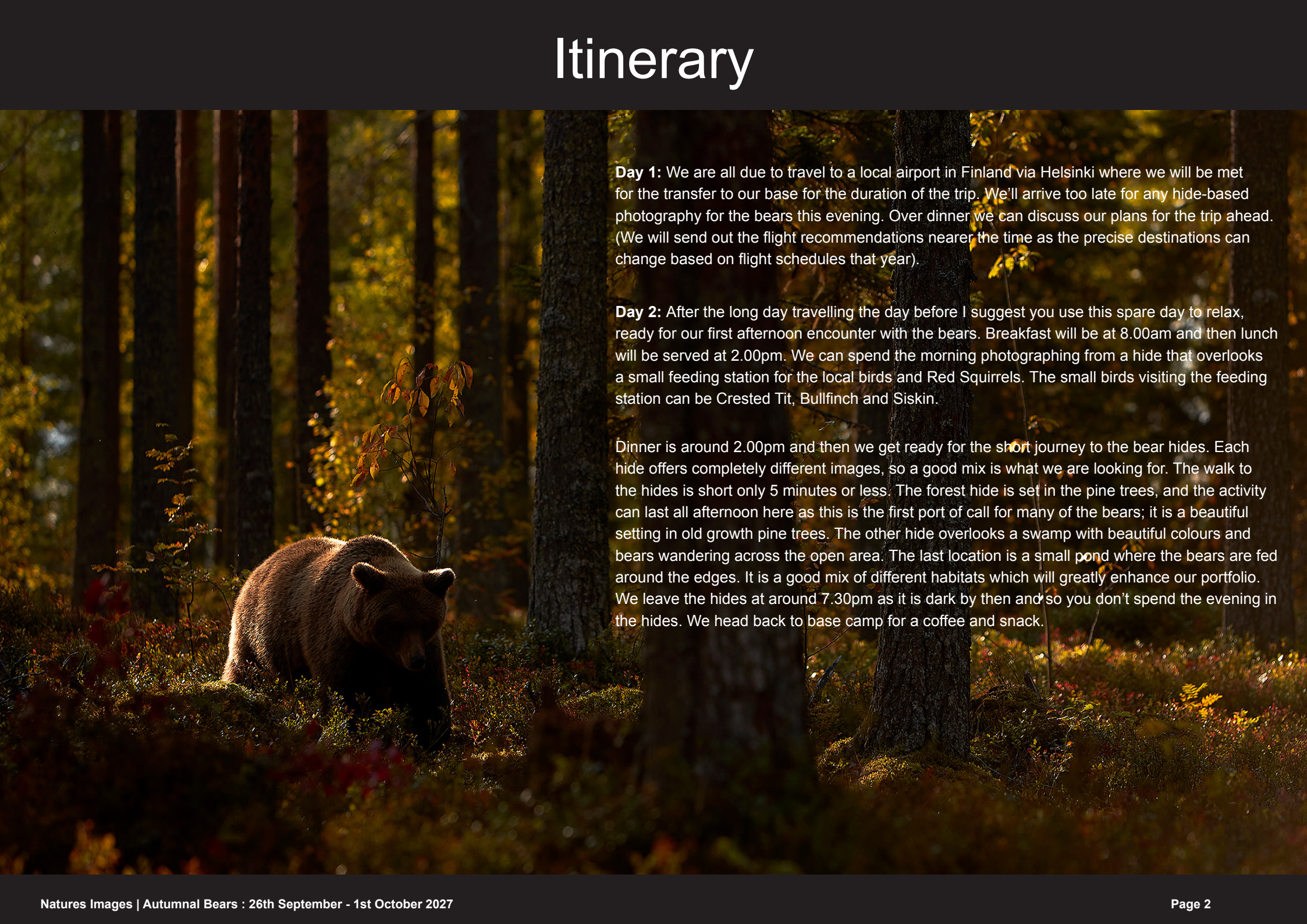


Autumnal Bears

Photographic tour with tour leader Ellie Rothnie

26th September - 1st October 2027

Itinerary

A brown bear is walking through a forest with autumn foliage. The bear is in the lower left foreground, facing right. The forest floor is covered in low-lying plants and fallen leaves in shades of green, yellow, and red. Tall, thin tree trunks are visible in the background, and sunlight filters through the canopy, creating a warm, golden glow. The text is overlaid on the right side of the image.

Day 1: We are all due to travel to a local airport in Finland via Helsinki where we will be met for the transfer to our base for the duration of the trip. We'll arrive too late for any hide-based photography for the bears this evening. Over dinner we can discuss our plans for the trip ahead. (We will send out the flight recommendations nearer the time as the precise destinations can change based on flight schedules that year).

Day 2: After the long day travelling the day before I suggest you use this spare day to relax, ready for our first afternoon encounter with the bears. Breakfast will be at 8.00am and then lunch will be served at 2.00pm. We can spend the morning photographing from a hide that overlooks a small feeding station for the local birds and Red Squirrels. The small birds visiting the feeding station can be Crested Tit, Bullfinch and Siskin.

Dinner is around 2.00pm and then we get ready for the short journey to the bear hides. Each hide offers completely different images, so a good mix is what we are looking for. The walk to the hides is short only 5 minutes or less. The forest hide is set in the pine trees, and the activity can last all afternoon here as this is the first port of call for many of the bears; it is a beautiful setting in old growth pine trees. The other hide overlooks a swamp with beautiful colours and bears wandering across the open area. The last location is a small pond where the bears are fed around the edges. It is a good mix of different habitats which will greatly enhance our portfolio. We leave the hides at around 7.30pm as it is dark by then and so you don't spend the evening in the hides. We head back to base camp for a coffee and snack.

Itinerary



Days 3 – 5: Each afternoon follows the same routine and after lunch we transfer to our chosen hide for the Bear photography session. We must be in the hides by 3.00pm so by now we will be well into our routine. You will spend 4 afternoons in each of the hides so giving you a varied portfolio. You can have a couple of hours with the bird feeding station if you want it is your choice in the mornings after breakfast. We can also have an image review during the day so we can see what we are taking as we go along. If the weather is in our favour, then we could have the chance to visit an Autumn Black Grouse lek, this is an amazing experience and one that we will look to do if the conditions are right.

Day 6: After breakfast we will be returning to the local airport for our flights home.

Things to bring



Our accommodation is clean and comfortable with all bedding and towels provided so you simply need to bring yourself. Please let me know if you have any special dietary requirements. In terms of clothing, you'll obviously need plenty of warm and weatherproof clothing. Most of your time will be in the hides, but the weather is unpredictable in Northern Finland at this time of the year, and it could be cold. You won't need serious arctic gear for this trip, but the following are very much recommended - a good pair of strong waterproof boots or even better a pair of wellington boots as it can be boggy walking to the hides, especially the pond hides and the Black Grouse hide. A good pair of waterproof over-trousers. For the top half it's very much a question of having several layers – like a thermal type of vest, t-shirt, thin jumper, fleece and then a waterproof coat with a spare jumper or 2 at hand as well, you'll know your own cold thresholds, but it really is a question of building it up in layers. A good hat and some fingerless mittens/ gloves are ideal. Bring a Thermos flask with you as we can make coffee or tea before we leave, and you may want to take chocolate bars or biscuits to nibble on whilst in the hides. Once you are in the hides there is no going out to the toilet so be prepared to use a small chemical toilet. The weather is difficult to predict at this time of the year it could be cold, or it could be still warm, if the latter then there will still be a few mosquitos around and so you must investigate into buying some good mosquito repellent; most good camping stores sell good stuff nowadays and the mosquito nets/hats can be very useful as well. It is also worth bringing with you some antihistamine tablets and cream in case you get bitten by the mozzies. We might be lucky and escape the mozzies, but you are in a northern boreal forest, and they can be a bit of a pest at times even during the Autumn!

Camera equipment



In terms of camera kit, you'll need the longest lens you have (300mm or 500mm + convertor would be my recommendation/choice) and then some supplementary lenses for other opportunities such as a 24-70mm for landscapes and an intermediate zoom (70-200 or 100-400) so that you don't miss anything. You'll get the chance to decide what you want/need each evening, so you won't be burdening yourself with it all the time either but the distances to the hides are not far. Regarding camera support tripods are not ideal in the hides because of the space they take up but there are superb base plates to attach your tripod head to, so make sure you can detach your tripod head if you want to use these. Tripods though do come in handy because at this time of the year you can see the northern lights. Bring plenty of compact flash cards with you as well because if you get a good evening, you will take a lot of images.

Useful Contact Information

My contact number for the build up to and for the duration of the trip is:

Ellie: +44 (0)7879 480143



Please don't hesitate to contact me even if you think it is a minor question, I am here to help.



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