



SUMMARY

BASIC SETTINGS FOR ALL DIGITAL CAMERAS

- **Switch off the flash.** If it cannot be switched off then put black tape over it.
- **Set the camera sensibility to ISO 800, 1600 or 3200.** The darker the sky, the higher the ISO setting should be. Low ISO is always better to avoid grainy pictures, but you can not have all. To keep the shutter speed low it might be necessary to bump the ISO a bit.
- **White balance: choose the 'Daylight' setting.** If you shoot RAW this is easy to change in editing.
- **Exposure time/shutter speed: typically 1-20 sec.** On a moving ship, or if the Northern Lights are changing rapidly, use shorter exposure times, but expect some blurring of your pictures. With 'fast' lenses (low aperture e.g f1.4 - f2.8) and high ISO settings exposure times may be reduced.
- **Focus the camera manually.** Use autofocus to get focus from the moon, a streetlight or have a friend walk 20m away with a phone. Switch off 'Autofocus' if you have it. The usual error when the camera won't do photos is that autofocus is still on - there is nothing to get focus on in a black sky.
- **If you have a delayed action timer, set it to 2 sec.** It will reduce camera shake.
- **Reduce the brightness of the camera display** to avoid ruining your night vision. In general use some time to get night vision, and be careful not to look into any bright lights while out.

ADDITIONAL SETTINGS FOR DIGITAL SINGLE LENS REFLEX (DSLR) CAMERAS

- **Recording mode: Manual (M).**
- **Aperture: Use the widest aperture possible, i.e. the smallest f/ number.** – usually f/1.4, f/2.8 or f/3.5, depending on the lens you have.
- **Lens type: wide-angle,** ideally less than 35 mm focal length, preferably 14-24 mm.
- **Remove any UV or polarizing filters** - they steal light.

TIPS FOR GETTING THE BEST NORTHERN LIGHTS PICTURES

- **Be well prepared.** Make sure your camera batteries are fully charged, that you have plenty of space on your memory card, and that you have warm comfortable clothing.
- **Steady your camera,** preferably by using a tripod, or by resting it on a rail.
- **Be considerate to others.** Do not obstruct the view of people around you.
- **Be patient.** The Northern Lights are a natural phenomenon. By their very nature they are unpredictable and they may vary in form, brightness and colour quite rapidly.

