



Spitsbergen Explorer

This expedition cruise covers all the best of Spitsbergen, by exploring the western edge of the island and venturing to some northern outlying areas home to polar bears, walrus and whales, as well as thousands of seabirds. Packed with options for snowshoeing and sea-kayaking, this is the perfect expedition for exploring the “wildlife capital of the Arctic”.



YOUR
ADVENTURE
AWAITS

12 days/11 nights

ITINERARY

Day 1: Embarkation Day in Longyearbyen

Your Spitsbergen adventure begins when you board your ship in Longyearbyen, the island's largest settlement. With almost 24 hours of daylight at this time of the year, we enjoy the views from the outer decks of the ship as we sail through Adventfjorden and into Isfjorden. Entering the vast expanse of the Greenland Sea, our ship heads south, hugging the main island of Spitsbergen.

Day 2: Bourbonhamna

We arrive at the southerly Bourbonhamna – well known for the beluga whales that transit the narrow sound. It is estimated there are approximately five to ten thousand belugas in the Svalbard population. We search for belugas from the ship and the zodiacs and plan our first shore excursion at Bourbonhamna. An old hunting cabin and other artefacts are points of interest during our hike to Ingebrigstenbukta. While wandering amongst these relics we hope to catch a glimpse of dozens of reindeer that inhabit the area.

Day 3: Storfjorden

Coming around the most southerly point of Spitsbergen, we push into the broad expanse of Storfjorden. Exploring Dolerittneset near Kapp Lee, the lush vegetation of this region is remarkable given we are at 70° North in latitude. This area has a large scattering of reindeer antlers; however, it is the plethora of ancient whalebones that makes the excursion so memorable. Time and the elements have altered their original shape and sculpted them into works of art that make fascinating photographic subjects.

Day 4: Hornsund

Returning to the west coast, glacier-filled bays surround us as we sail into Hornsund. With good ice conditions, we are able to navigate close to the glaciers that are a feature of the area. The entire archipelago of Svalbard is a lesson in glaciology and our onboard guides will use our hikes and zodiac cruises to explain the formation of this fantastic landscape.

Day 5-6: Lillie Hock Glacier, Krossfjorden, Smeerenburgfjorden

The rocky shores of Krossfjorden are home to numerous bird colonies and a range of species. We anchor the ship in a protected harbour, launch the zodiacs and cruise along the bird cliffs near the 14th of July Glacier. We watch out for bearded and ringed seals in the dark waters of the fjord. Lilliehook Glacier, at the northwestern head of Krossfjorden, is an incredible sight. The glacier face stretches almost seven kilometres and is around 80 meters high. Viewed from the ship or on a zodiac cruise you come to appreciate the enormous scale of our surroundings. Sailing out of Krossfjorden and Kongsfjorden, you may be fortunate enough to see the historic airship anchor pylon near the scientific community of Ny Ålesund. This remote outpost earned its place in aviation pioneering history as a starting point for North Pole aviation exploration. Nearby, Smeerenburgfjorden has a four hundred year history of whaling and is a favorite spot as we round the northwestern tip of Spitsbergen.



Day 7-8: Phippsøya

We continue north and east up into the ice, hoping to cross the 80° north parallel. As we approach the ice edge the ship slows down and all hands are either on the bridge or out on the outer decks as we start scanning for wildlife. Bearded seals, ringed seals, walrus, and polar bear may be found hauled out on the edges of the ice. Our ship is perfectly designed for near silent approach and our Captain takes great pride in bringing us in close enough to experience the wildlife without disturbing it. At 81° degrees north latitude, Phippsøya is only 540 nautical miles from the North Pole. Because of its proximity to the permanent pack ice, Phippsøya offers the potential for great polar bear viewing. We have enjoyed excellent encounters with them in recent seasons in this area.

Day 9: Hinlopen Strait

From the ice edge we turn south into the main strait separating Svalbard's two main islands: Spitsbergen and Nordaustlandet. In Hinlopen Strait, the bird cliffs at Alkefjellet are home to more than a hundred thousand breeding Brunnich's guillemots, as well as thousands of kittiwakes and black guillemots. It is a spectacular site and a challenging one for our zodiacs as the tidal currents roar through Hinlopen Strait. Nearby Murchison Fjord is a wonderful place to kayak or cruise as we navigate the waterways between the islands. There are some excellent hiking routes here which take us up to high points affording staggering views and further opportunities to encounter Arctic wildlife.

Day 10: Liefdefjorden, Monaco Glacier

Entering Liefdefjorden we slowly cruise towards the Monaco Glacier. This vast sweep of ice more than seven kilometers wide provides a fabulous backdrop for a zodiac cruise. Miles of ice face broken up by ice caves and tumbling seracs are a sight to behold as are the thousands of black-legged kittiwakes feeding on the upwelling of rich nutrients found near the sub-glacial outflow. A morning of cruising in the ice is best followed by a hike on the tundra.

Day 11: Alkehornet

Alkehornet, at the mouth of Isfjord, offers breathtaking views and an incredible tundra walk as we near the end of our adventure in Svalbard. Arctic fox can often be seen here, as well as reindeer. Towering above the site is a horn-shaped mount covered in guillemots and kittiwakes. Only as we approach and stop to listen will we hear the chorus of thousands of birds, all singing at the same time.

Day 12: Disembarkation Day in Longyearbyen

Arriving back into Longyearbyen this morning, we disembark after breakfast and say farewell to our expedition team and fellow passengers. A transfer into town is provided for those choosing to stay a few days. If you are departing today, we have a few hours this morning to explore the town, before transferring to the airport for your onward flight to Tromsø or Oslo.

Details

2020 Departures

July: 07

We can offer shorter or longer Spitsbergen cruises on alternate dates, if this itinerary is not quite what you're looking for. Please inquire for details.

2020 Pricing from:

US\$8,195 – triple share
US\$11,895 – twin, private
US\$13,695 – superior
US\$14,095 – Superior Plus
US\$14,195 – Shackleton Suite
US\$17,795 – One Ocean Suite

Prices are listed in US\$, per person, based on two people sharing a twin cabin or suite, three people sharing a triple cabin. For single occupancy, 1.5X per person twin price for cabins or 2X for suites. Rates are subject to change without notice by the cruise operator and may vary somewhat depending on the departure date. We will confirm the current price at the time of request.

Trip Code:

003903 - W20



INCLUDED

- 12 day/11 night voyage as outlined
- Meals throughout the voyage
- Shore excursions and activities by Zodiac
- Lectures by naturalists and leadership by experienced expedition staff
- Free use of rubber boots and snow shoes
- AECO fees and governmental taxes
- All miscellaneous service taxes and port charges throughout the programme
- Comprehensive pre-departure material
- Transfers and baggage handling between the airport, hotels and ship only for those passengers on the group flight to/from Longyearbyen

NOT INCLUDED

- Return airfare to/from Longyearbyen
- Fuel surcharge (if applicable)
- Gratuities to ship personnel, items of a personal nature
- Travel insurance (emergency evacuation coverage mandatory)

TOUR NOTES

Daily ice conditions will determine the exact sailing plan.

Important Reminder: Embracing the unexpected is part of the legacy— and excitement—of expedition travel. When traveling in extremely remote regions, your expedition staff must allow the sea, the ice and the weather to guide route and itinerary details. This itinerary is a tentative outline of what you'll experience on this voyage; please be aware that no specific itinerary can be guaranteed.

Disclaimer: We do our utmost to ensure that information posted on our website is correct at the time of publication, however trip details are subject to change without notice by the suppliers and operators involved. We update the information as soon as possible when changes are advised to us, however, we cannot assume responsibility for such changes made by the suppliers and operators.

ROUTE MAP



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Actual itinerary may vary based on weather conditions.

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