



Arctic Haven - Caribou, Wolves and Northern Lights



One of the best northern wildlife photography programs around. Witness the colours of the changing seasons, experience the caribou migration as they head south to their winter home, watch for wolves and the Northern Lights above.



7 days/6 nights

ITINERARY

Day 1: Yellowknife - Arctic Haven

Meet your Arctic Haven group at the Air Tindi hangar at Yellowknife airport for a 2:00pm departure. The charter plane will fly you the 500 miles to Arctic Haven Wilderness Lodge. The baggage allowance for the charter flight from Yellowknife to Arctic Haven is 44 lbs (20 kg) per person which includes a carry-on. Please let us know if you will have additional gear, such as photographic equipment.

The plane is a modern and comfortable aircraft, either a Dash-8 38-passenger turbo-prop, a Dash-7, 40 passenger aircraft or a Dornier 228, 19 passenger turbo-prop. You will pass from trees, across the tree line and over the Barren Lands; it's time to sit back and relax. Flying to Arctic Haven, you'll see the Barrens from the air; the endless lakes and caribou paths forged into tundra, the sparse trees dotting the tree line amidst a fall backdrop of crimson reds, bright oranges and dark greens. The plane lands on the private strip beside Arctic Haven Wilderness Lodge. Nestled on the tree line, Arctic Haven is situated on the shores of one of the largest expanses of water on the Barrens, the eighty-four kilometre long Ennadai Lake. Guests are welcomed into the lodge, a short introduction is given and guests are given the opportunity to settle into their private rooms.

Your wallet is no longer of any use, your worries from the south are behind you, this is the start of your Arctic adventure.

Ennadai is a remote lake located 700 kilometres east of Yellowknife and 150 kilometres north of the Manitoba-Nunavut border in the barren lands of the Canadian Arctic. The lodge is on the tree line; go north and there are no trees, go south and it quickly becomes forested, a location rich in wildlife. The lodge is in the path of one of great caribou migrations; the Qamanirjuaq caribou herd of more than 300,000 animals. Every fall, the caribou go south into the trees for the winter, and each spring they head north, many of them walking up Ennadai Lake to their calving grounds. Wolves and wolverines are plentiful. There are also barren land grizzly bears, black bears, and many types of birds, including tundra swans, golden eagles, jaegers, and more. The lake holds trophy size lake trout, northern pike and grayling. At different times of the year, it is possible to catch all these fish on a fly rod. The lodge is fortunate to be located at the just the right latitude for great [northern lights](#).

The lodge is a beautiful post and beam structure with 12 guest rooms, each with a full private bathroom. During the summer of 2013 a solar system was installed so that the use of generators is almost eliminated. The staff are passionate, professional, expert and very caring. And the food is incredible, including local foods such as musk-ox and Arctic char. Every day starts with fresh hot muffins and ends with a hot shower and a glass of wine!

After dinner, guests are welcomed to walk the surrounding tundra, where numerous caribou trails can be explored in



solitude. For those looking to relax and unwind, we are proud to offer a wood-fired sauna on the shore of our lake for your comfort and enjoyment. For the keen fisherman, or avid learner, great trout fishing can be enjoyed just a short walk from the lodge.

Each night at Arctic Haven is a chance to witness the northern lights. Virtually every clear night there is a light show in the sky.

Day 2: Arctic Haven

Breakfast, served at 8:30, typically includes fresh espresso coffee, home-baked pastries, muffins, cinnamon rolls, fresh fruit, yogurt, muesli, French toast or pancakes with Quebec maple syrup, eggs, organic double-smoked bacon and sausages. Guests are given an introduction prior to heading out onto the waters of Ennadai Lake by boat. Arctic Haven has three twenty five foot enclosed custom boats as well as a fleet of smaller boats. These boats are used on a daily basis as our mode of transportation to find and view caribou, to explore the far reaches of the lake and to arrive to locations where great hiking and panoramic views of the Barren Lands can be enjoyed. Today's excursion explores the northern reaches of Ennadai Lake. It is here above the tree line that caribou can be found on islands and shorelines. This trip features great views, photographic opportunities and even the unique experience of tracking and viewing caribou from the land. Majestic bulls can be seen on the shores, grazing and slowly making their way south. Females and calves can be seen cautiously moving across the tundra. A lunch spread of soup, gourmet meats and cheeses, hummus and vegetables, and fresh-baked bread and sweets is served by your guides on the unique and picturesque beach on Paradise Island. The afternoon is spent cruising amongst the islands to spot caribou with short walks on land to view them closer.

The full day of adventure stirs up an appetite. Our chef greets guests from a day of adventure on the Barren Lands tundra with a Canadian gourmet meal. Flavours include AAA Alberta prime rib glazed with a Dijon, garlic and rosemary rub; radicchio, prosciutto and reduced maple-balsamic appetizers rolls, fresh arugula and blueberry salads with desserts such as maple creme brûlée. In the evening, Richard Weber, internationally recognized polar explorer and owner of Arctic Watch, offers an informal lecture on his North Pole adventures. His historic 1995 unassisted journey to the North Pole and back—a feat that has never been repeated—is highlighted.

For those wishing to perfect their aurora borealis photography skills, our staff provide an evening excursion beneath the northern lights to focus on capturing the green, red and purple shimmer as they dance along the evening skies.

As always, the sauna awaits you at the end of a long day on the lake and on the land. Our staff are happy to fire it up for you at any time. A cooling dip in the lake under the aurora borealis is an experience not to be missed!

Day 3: Arctic Haven

We begin today's adventure with a short, 20-minute boat ride to arrive at the shoreline where our hike to the Blind Hill esker begins. This 9-kilometre hike takes you from the soft and wet blueberry flats to a dry and well-worn caribou trail on the spine of an esker, to an open tundra ridge overlooking the lakes and land below. The eskers are remnants of the great glaciers that covered this land in the last ice age. They are unique sandy ridges and hills that were deposited by the rivers flowing beneath retreating and melting glaciers. The ease of travel on eskers make them an ideal migration route for caribou. With your guides interpreting the flora along the way, the hike makes its way to a sheltered forest gully where another gourmet lunch spread is prepared for you. The hike continues over rolling terrain to a high point where an Inuit stone hunting blind still sits on the ridge above the tundra below. An observer on top of the esker can look northward and see treeless Barrens or look south and see the dark green of the boreal forest. This is the tree line. As we make our way across the high ridge, lakes and rivers and tundra can be seen below, amongst the blanket of vibrant autumn colours. Various types of berries carpet the ground; blue berries, lingonberries, crow berries and more. We re-enter the black spruce forest and esker paths before ending our hike on the blueberry flats near the lake. Here you are more than welcome to harvest blueberries which our chef will be happy to incorporate into our meals and baking. An alternative option to hiking today is a fishing trip at Richard's shoal and Grayling Rapids. At the shoal, trout like are abundant and Grayling Rapids offers an opportunity to fly fish for grayling.

Both experienced and new fisherman are provided with equipment and accompanied by expert guides. The shallow waters of the rapids spilling into the lake and the narrow crossing point of land make for the perfect location for a convergence of wildlife. The caribou trails dig deep into the tundra and caribou frequent this crossing point.

Guests who wish to try their hand at fishing for Arctic Grayling, either on a fly or spinning, have the opportunity to do so. No prior experience is required, some love the way a winged Arctic Grayling will treat a well-presented fly. Others are fascinated by its rarity and appearance. Either way, this fish provides ample action for a great light tackle experience. The full day excursion is complemented by a gourmet meal that awaits guests upon arrival. Arctic Haven's chef focuses on local flares to the evening dishes, including fresh arctic lake trout gravlax. The Arctic Haven wine list offers some of Canada's best wines, paired to match the local dishes.

This evening, a presentation on the Ahiarmiut of Ennadai Lake will shine light on the history and culture of the Inuit



people who once called the lake home, hunting from kayak, living off the land and subsisting almost entirely on caribou. Several thousand Inuit once lived along the shores of Ennadai Lake and the surrounding area. This population was reduced to forty-five people by the mid-1950's; a result of starvation and disease, when the Ahlarmiut were tragically relocated from their homeland to coastal communities.

Day 4: Arctic Haven

Another hearty breakfast begins the day at 8:30. Today we board our boats and head to the North Arm exploring the far reaches of our lake where caribou are most frequently seen. As we enter the North Arm we begin to cruise the shorelines, looking for caribou either on land or swimming between the islands. Our lodge has a remote camp in this part of the lake and staying a night is an option, as it will give you the opportunity to thoroughly enjoy the remoteness of the Barren Lands. Here we dine on another great picnic spread and guests are free to explore the island, perhaps even catching a glimpse of caribou on nearby islands. Our day includes a short hike up to Big Bear, the highest point on the lake. The terrain is quite different from the rest of the lake; here the bedrock is exposed and round rocks have been placed on top by glaciers. From the summit, a truly awe-inspiring panoramic view is enjoyed and guests are given time to explore, relax and take in the scenery in solitude. We embark the boats yet again in search of more caribou, which if given the opportunity, we will try to stealthily approach from land to get a better view.

This evening, after another spectacular meal, photographer Nansen Weber, offers an informal lecture on his photographic experiences on the Barren Lands. The principal photographer at Arctic Haven and Arctic Watch Wilderness Lodge, Nansen has spent the past 10 years photographing some of the most important and dramatic wildlife events in the arctic. He highlights his presentation with local photography – both of wolves and caribou.

Day 5: Arctic Haven

Today's breakfast begins with espresso, tea or juice, Arctic blueberry and lingonberry waffles topped with fresh cream, French Canadian maple syrup, fresh fruit and organic Alberta breakfast sausages.

Today we offer a range of activities, using our cabin outpost as a central hub. We board the boats for a 40 minute boat ride to Cabin Island, where guests can disembark and explore before choosing their activity for the morning. Optional activities include; kayaking amongst the islands, fishing from our boats at nearby shoals and visits to archaeological sites in the surrounding area. Kayaking is led by our certified sea kayak guides who teach you proper technique and bring you to sheltered bays and inlets amongst the islands where the opportunity to see caribou is high. Spin fishing is offered either from shore or from the boat, where an experienced guide provides equipment and tips on technique if desired. Also available is the unique opportunity to visit historical sites where Ahlarmiut have camped for hundreds of years. Here we see stone caches and cairns, tent rings, tent poles, stone tools, and more recent tools like pots, plates and even a harmonica. It is an honour to be able to explore these untouched traditional camping and hunting grounds. Back at Cabin Island, a bonfire on the beach is ablaze throughout the day and a fish fry lunch will supplement our usual gourmet spread! The cabin itself offers a cozy abode for those desiring a relaxing morning or afternoon.

This cabin is also equipped for overnight stays and we welcome guests to enjoy a night of solitude during their stay. The cabin offers a wood stove, cozy sleeping platform, comfortable chairs and amenities such as coffee, tea, gas stove for heating water and cooking, outdoor fire pit and Muskoka chairs. It is the perfect one-night getaway where the opportunity to see the aurora borealis in a private and secluded location could be the highlight of your trip. Please let us know in advance if this is of interest to you!

The pace today is relaxed and all about taking in the surroundings and everything the islands have to offer. There is something for everyone! After returning to the lodge and enjoying another healthy and hearty meal, we invite you to attend a short informal presentation on the Mythology and Folklore of the Aurora Borealis. This talk is a labour of love and inspired by stories from around the world about the northern lights and their relation to the living on land. If it's a clear night, your evening could come to a close gazing out above the lake at the majestic aurora.

Day 6: Arctic Haven

Today's adventure necessitates a gourmet breakfast to start, served at 8:30. Heading south into the tree line, today's excursion starts with a short boat ride up the Kazan River – one of the largest rivers on the Barrens. Here, the tundra begins to turn into forest – birch, black spruce and tamarack trees lay claim to the territory, with caribou trails weaving amongst the sparse yet impressive arctic forest. Moose have been seen in this forested and marshy area as well. This location is also excellent for tundra swans; the majestic Arctic swans nest on the edge of the river bank, in small grassy openings. This area was burnt by natural forest fire some years ago. Now the new growth is clearly visible all around. For the more adventurous, there is a spectacular 7 km walk along the eskers, following caribou, moose and wolf tracks that takes us back to Birch Bay on Ennadai Lake. The walk normally takes about four hours. For those who want to walk less, a short walk amongst the forested eskers bring us to the final paths of the Qamanirjuaq caribou – only a few miles south from here they overwinter. Have your camera ready! Wolves have been seen here in the past and a den is strategically placed near one of the eskers. After lunch, guests are given the opportunity to try a final hand at fishing for arctic grayling. The swift current of the Kazan is an excellent location for the species. Near-to world record grayling



has been caught in these waters! After dinner guests are welcome to join Arctic Haven guides for catch-and-release arctic lake trout fishing. The shallow beach on the shoreline in front of Arctic Haven is excellent for lake trout at sunset.

That evening, for the foodies at heart, Josée Auclair, co-owner of Arctic Watch & Arctic Haven, provides an informal cuisine class. At Arctic Haven, everything is prepared fresh and homemade from bread to ice cream. All the meat is organic. On the tundra are edible wild foods. There is also a seminar of cleaning and filleting fish. As always, we are happy to fire up the sauna for those interested in relaxing by the lake.

Today is the last opportunity to take in the northern lights! Cozy up in a blanket on the front deck Muskoka chairs and enjoy a glass of fine Canadian wine as the lights begin their show.

Day 7: Arctic Haven

By their last day in the Barren Lands, guests are familiar with the area of Ennadai Lake and Arctic Haven Lodge. Today we offer a short hike following the caribou trails on the esker near the lodge. Wolf and caribou tracks can be followed in the sandy paths and beautiful shimmering ponds are seen through the black spruce forest. We return to the lodge for a hearty lunch and guests are free to relax for the afternoon before the plane arrives. We are proud to offer a final and unique Arctic experience; homemade tea and bannock – a staple food of the Arctic. The tea is infused with fresh, fragrant and local Labrador Tea and the bannock is freshly baked and served with blueberry jam, honey and butter.

In the late afternoon, the plane will arrive to take guests back to Yellowknife where the Arctic Haven program ends.

You can choose to spend some time visiting Yellowknife or catch a flight south. Add a stay in Yellowknife pre or post tour, or both! We can put together a package of accommodation and tour options for you.

Embracing the unexpected is part of the legacy – and excitement – of an experience at Arctic Haven. In the Arctic, there are no guarantees that we can achieve everything we set out to accomplish. The weather and the wildlife run on their own schedule. A measure of flexibility is something all of us must bring to an Arctic experience.

Optional add-on tours:

Heli-Safari/Heli Hiking – Added Flight Time

View the 300,000+ strong Qamanirjuaq caribou's migration and the Barren Lands from above – it's a 1.5 hour once in a lifetime experience. Get into the helicopter and take in the vibrant and transforming Spring or Fall landscapes. The colours of Fall are magnificent bursts of rich reds, purples and oranges in the sandy eskers and marshy tundra. Different spots will offer opportunities to land and hike for a closer experience with the animals (caribou, grizzly bears, wolves and muskox) and environment. This is also a fantastic way to reach the most remote fishing spots such as the North Kazan River which offers world-class fly fishing opportunities. PRICE: \$1,200 person/per day (note: this is additional to the already included heli-assisted adventures)

Recommended Packing List

Recommended Packing List: Proper preparation for a trip to the Arctic is key to your enjoyment and safety. Please take a few moments to read through the gear list below. If you have any questions please contact us and we'll be happy to provide you with the answers and information you need.

NEOPRENE BOOTS: These are a new option to the traditional "rubber" boot. They have neoprene uppers and a neoprene/polyurethane foot. There is no insulation to get wet and they are comfortable to walk in. One of the best brands is Muck Boots, but there are other options available at outdoor stores or online.

HIKING BOOTS: A sturdy full-leather waterproof/water-resistant pair of comfortable lightweight boots is useful but can be replaced with the neoprene boots.

LIGHT WINTER JACKET OR DOWN VEST: Again for cooler evenings. (Yes, even in 24-hour light the nights are colder.) A warmer jacket is essential.

COMFORTABLE PANTS FOR HIKING: A couple of comfortable pairs of pants are useful. Try to choose "quick dry" fabrics made from tightly woven, wind-resistant material. No cotton or silk content please.

LONG UNDERWEAR: It is the Arctic, so bring a couple of sets of long underwear. Synthetic or wool material, no cotton or silk content please. In the winter, spring and fall you will need long underwear. The temperature can vary greatly. Winter (April) expect -20°C (-4°F) at night to +5°C (41°F) in the day. Spring and fall (May, June Aug, Sep) expect -2°C (28°F) to +20°C (68°F). Summer (June, July) expect +5°C (41°F) to +25°C (77°F).

DAY PACK: You need this to carry your extra things, e.g., a camera and clothing, while on a day's outing such as walking, sea kayaking, fishing (with waterproof storage compartments) or when travelling in our boats. We recommend Osprey Backpacks or similar.

PERSONAL ITEMS: Bring your toiletries, camera, sunglasses and other personal items.

FISHING: If you enjoy fishing and prefer your own gear, please bring it.

RAINCOAT AND RAIN PANTS: This is primarily for protection against the wind and rain. A rain/wind jacket is a necessity to wear when walking on cool days. Your jacket must be waterproof and seam-sealed. We recommend goretex coats such as Arcteryx Alpha SV or equivalent.

LODGE SHOES: Light shoes for wearing around the lodge are useful. For those who enjoy a morning jog/walk, bring



your trail shoes. Nearby caribou trails offer great opportunities for exploration on foot.

FLEECE JACKET: A fleece jacket is always useful and good for wearing around the lodge.

HAT: A wool toque (cap) or fleece hat made of a material that dries easily is necessary.

GLOVES: Gloves or mittens with a wind-resistant outer fabric are good for cold days or those ATV rides.

SOCKS: A few pairs of good wool or wool-synthetic blend socks are essential. Remember that socks are small to pack and wonderful to wear! We have Smartwool socks available for sale. (No cotton or silk please).

SUNSCREEN: The summer sun at Arctic Haven is extremely strong – we recommend packing sunscreen.

GEAR AVAILABLE AT ARCTIC HAVEN: We have the following gear available for you to use when doing the applicable activity: ATV helmets, fishing gear, paddling dry jackets and pants, life jackets (PFDs) and more. If you have specific gear questions, please ask and we'll find the information for you.

ALCOHOLIC BEVERAGES: Alcohol is available for purchase at the lodge. If you wish to bring any alcoholic drinks of your own, please do so as it's your vacation. We just ask that you respect the other guests.

Other Arctic Haven programs

Arctic Wolf Photography Tour – limited to 4 passengers per tour

Led by Nansen Weber, this rare opportunity is for four guests only to photograph arctic wolves. Set amidst the backdrop of one of the largest remaining caribou herds in North America (The Qamanirjuaq caribou herd), you'll be escorted by expert wildlife guides and spend a week observing, tracking and photographing the arctic wolves of Ennadai Lake. As of 2019, the wolf pack consisted of two alpha adults, four individuals and six wolf pups.

Dates:

2021: August 23, 29

2022: August 28; September 03

2021 & 2022 Prices:

From CA\$15,900 – per person

Ultimate Canadian Arctic Expedition

In a single trip you'll have the once in a lifetime opportunity to visit both Arctic Watch and Arctic Haven Lodges. This exclusive adventure encompasses the best of what the Arctic has to offer from the midnight sun to the spectacular northern lights.

First stop: Arctic Watch nestled along the shores of the Northwest Passage on Somerset Island. It's a photographer's paradise with belugas whales, polar bear, muskox, and more; go rafting, paddle boarding or kayaking on the Cunningham River; visit archaeological sites, spectacular waterfalls and canyons; bike or hike the tundra; and fish for arctic char.

Second stop: Arctic Haven on the shores of Ennadai Lake in the Barren Grounds. The lodge is on the path of one of the last great caribou migrations, so the chances of a close encounter with a caribou is high. Hike and see the unique and stunning flora and fauna of a treeline environment and its wildlife – bears, wolves, wolverines, and eagles.

Dates:

2021: August 12

2022: August 11

2021 & 2022 Prices:

From CA\$19,800 – per person

Details

Group Size: Maximum 20

2021 & 2022 Departures:

Select dates, August and September

2021 & 2022 Pricing:

From CA\$9,795 – twin

Tax: 5% GST

Prices are "starting from" rates, shown in CA\$, per person based on two people sharing a twin room. Single rooms may be accommodated on request, depending on availability, as the lodge only has 12 rooms.

See Tour Notes for information on the Spring Caribou Migration tour. Ask us for details if you're interested in this tour.



Trip Code:

009633 - W20

INCLUDED

- Charter flights between Yellowknife and Arctic Haven lodge
- Accommodations at Arctic Haven
- Meals at Arctic Haven
- All touring and transfers at Arctic Haven
- Gear provided for fishing and kayaking

NOT INCLUDED

- Airfare from home to Yellowknife and return
- Required nights in Yellowknife
- 5% GST

TOUR NOTES

Spring Caribou Migration

Come and witness the natural spectacle. In May, the Qamanirjuaq caribou herd begins to gather together and the call to reach their calving grounds 300 miles to the north drives them northward. Big lakes such as Ennadai are natural corridors for the migration. Large numbers of Caribou walk up the lake past the lodge. Travel by snow mobile in search of the herds and the Arctic wolves that follow the caribou. This grand migration is described as a life-altering experience by the caribou biologists and people who have witnessed it. We regularly see wolverine, which are normally very elusive. We look for the Arctic wolves that follow the caribou. Staying at Arctic Haven Wilderness Lodge, a "green" lodge that runs on solar and wind power, the only one of its kind in Nunavut, daily experiences are offered to witness the great migration.

Different times of the year provide better photography opportunities as they're a different time in the Caribou's developmental stages. Ask to speak to one of our Arctic Specialists and we'll be able to help you decide which departure will suit you best.

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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