



# The Arctic Travellers Guide



The Canadian Arctic, Greenland, Iceland, Spitsbergen, The Russian Arctic and the North Pole

**The Latin America and Polar Specialists**

*Live for today...*

## WELCOME TO THE ARCTIC

At last your Arctic trip is about to begin. If you are reading this Travellers Guide it means that you are about to set off on an incredible adventure.

The Arctic is one of the world's most extraordinary regions, famous for its incredible landscapes, uninhabited valleys and fascinating wildlife.

The Canadian Arctic offers some of the most dramatic glaciated landscapes on the planet, as well as diverse wildlife and a rich Inuit culture plus access to the fabled Northwest Passage. Greenland showcases towering coastal cliffs lined with vast fjords and glaciers, waters strewn with imposing icebergs and isolated Inuit communities. Spitsbergen is the land of the polar bear and the midnight sun, the 'wildlife capital of the Arctic'. Iceland, the 'Land of Fire and Ice' is overrun with stunning landscapes that encompass volcanoes, geysers, hot springs, lava fields, waterfalls and massive glaciers. And then there is the Russian Arctic, a wilderness paradise and gateway to the North Pole.

Please read carefully through this Arctic Travellers Guide as it contains some important information and helpful hints that will help you to prepare for the day-to-day activities and alert you on some things to expect whilst travelling to the Arctic.

Thank you for choosing to travel with us. We hope you are as excited about your trip as we are! We are sure you will make the most of it!

**Greg Carter & Chad Carey**

Co-Founders of Chimu Adventures





## YOUR TRAVEL DOCUMENTATION

Being environmentally accountable is a crucial part of our organisation. We are currently striving towards using less paper, taking several initiatives to do so and tracking our progress along the way.

Our goal – **a paperless organisation.**

When taking into consideration gas emissions from paper production, transportation, use and disposal, 98 tonnes of other resources are going in to making paper. Paper and pulp production has been noted as the 4th largest industry contributor of greenhouse gas emission in the world today and around 30 million acres of forest is destroyed each year. As a way of giving back to the earth that makes who we are and what we do possible, we are highly dedicated to playing our part in minimising our impact with our 'paperless' movement.

Our office initiatives include online banking, sending of all items electronically, printing only to order on recycled paper and ensuring our staff are kept accountable for their paper usage. We also use online messaging boards for staff communication and frequently recycle in office.

### **Your Travel Documentation**

For these reasons all documentation including your Final Travel Documentation will be sent electronically. We encourage our travellers to support our aspirations and actions and ask that you reconsider printing out your documentation. To view your Travel Documentation including this guide simply download them to your iPad, Smart Phone or portable computer before you depart for access during your trip. Our full range of Travellers Guides including this one can be found at [www.chimuadventures.com/travel/travellers-guides](http://www.chimuadventures.com/travel/travellers-guides)

At the end of the day you've paid for an incredible holiday experience, not for a piece of paper. So we hope you're on the same page (pardon the pun!).

### **We're going paperless, will you?**

For more information about our Best Practice Guide on sustainability for our organisation and our travellers please go to: [www.chimuadventures.com/about/bestpractices](http://www.chimuadventures.com/about/bestpractices)



## M.A.D PROJECT

Travelling to Latin America and the Polar regions is a moving and thought provoking experience. We have talked to many, many travellers who have returned wanting to give back to the wonderful destinations that gave so much and have asked how?

For years we have been working with separate projects in and around Latin America and Antarctica and have been advising our travellers individually about these wonderful initiatives. Now we have pulled these all together under the banner of the M.A.D. (Make a Difference) Project, a place where we can directly work and promote humanitarian programs that otherwise would not have a voice.

Here we are working with ecological, cultural, social and historical preservation. One such project is the Mawson's Huts Foundation that works to conserve our Antarctic heritage.

The Mawson's Huts Foundation is a not for profit charity that exists solely to conserve the historic fragile huts at Cape Denison, East Antarctica, which was used as the main base for two years of the Australasian Antarctic Expedition (AAE) of 1911-14. Named after the expedition's leader Sir Douglas Mawson, the buildings are the birthplace of our Antarctic heritage and are rare, as they are only one of six that have survived from the heroic era of Antarctic exploration between 1896 and 1916. All cash donations to the Foundation are used to help fund ongoing maintenance and conservation at the remote site.

If you would like to contribute or learn more about this or one of the other projects, donate, join an event or get involved, visit our project at:  
[www.madproject.org](http://www.madproject.org)

**Doubt breeds Inactivity, Hope breeds Movement - we hope you join our M.A.D. world.**



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## 1. PRE-DEPARTURE INFORMATION

Once you are confirmed on an Arctic cruise, you will receive an itinerary and welcome letter, plus various forms requesting personal and medical information, flight details etc. Completed forms need to be returned at least 90 days in advance of your departure, as the forms contain information required for the ship's manifest, as well as your safety on-board. Final documents are sent out approximately 30 days prior to departure. These include detailed transfer and boarding information, contact information for the ship and local emergency contact information for your port of departure or joining city.

We strongly recommend that you book at least one night pre-tour accommodation in your joining city to ensure that you do not miss departure or cruise embarkation due to a flight delay.

If you would like to book any other additional services or tours, prior to or after your Arctic cruise, please contact your booking agent.

### 1.1 PASSPORTS & VISAS

#### **Passports**

Please ensure that your passport is valid for at least six (6) months beyond the return date of your expedition, and that you have sufficient space in your passport for any entry/exit stamps.

#### **Visas**

*Disclaimer: Whilst we will assist in every possible way to provide you with accommodation and flight details needed to obtain any necessary visas, we are not a consular service and it is the sole responsibility of the traveller to obtain the necessary visas before departing their home country either through a partner site such as Visalink, or through the relevant consulate. Travelling without a visa may result in the cancellation of part or all of your tour without refund as per the terms and conditions.*

#### **Canadian Arctic**

An eTA (Electronic Travel Authorisation) is required for citizens of the following



countries flying into Canada: Australia, European Union, United Kingdom, Ireland and New Zealand.

Applications can be made on line using the following link:

<http://www.cic.gc.ca/english/visit/eta-start.asp>

You will need a valid passport, credit card and email address. The cost is currently CA\$7.00 per person, and the eTA is valid for a period of 5 years from the date of issue. In most cases applications are approved within minutes.

Citizens of the USA do not need a visa or eTA to enter Canada.

Citizens of South Africa need a visa to enter Canada.

For other nationalities, please contact one of our destination specialists.

### **Greenland**

Greenland tourist visas are not required for citizens of the following countries for stays of up to 90 days: Australia, New Zealand, United Kingdom, USA, Canada and European Union.

For other nationalities, please contact one of our destination specialists.

### **Spitsbergen**

Spitsbergen is a visa-free area. If you are flying into or out of Longyearbyen via mainland Norway, a pre-arranged visa is not required to enter Norway for citizens of the following countries: Australia, United Kingdom, USA, Ireland, Canada, New Zealand and European Union.

For other nationalities, please contact one of our destination specialists.

### **North Pole & Russian Arctic**

A visa is not required to visit the North Pole but a visa is required by all foreign nationals to travel to the Russian Federation. As North Pole cruises generally start from Murmansk in Russia, a visa will be needed. Your cruise operator will supply you with the necessary letter of invitation needed to apply for your Russian Federation visa, as well as instructions on how to apply.



## 1.2 TRAVEL INSURANCE

Please note that **travel insurance is mandatory** on all Arctic tours.

Travel insurance is one of the most important components of any trip, especially if you are travelling to the Arctic, where regions are amongst the most remote and inhospitable on Earth. It is vital that you have the most suitable travel insurance cover with adequate levels of cover.

Any travel insurance policy you purchase should cover you for **accidents, emergency evacuation, sickness, loss of baggage and personal belongings**, as well as **disruption to travel** and **alterations to your pre-booked travel plans** due to local issues.

Due to the remoteness of parts of the Arctic, medical attention and evacuations can be extremely expensive, making travel insurance cover an absolute necessity, especially as you will have invested large sums of funds to travel there in the first place.

When organising travel insurance for the Arctic, ensure you are covered from the moment that you confirm your booking. This will cover you in case of a possible cancellation of your trip. It is always advisable to purchase travel insurance at the same time as booking your trip – in case any unforeseen circumstances prevent you from travelling.

**Weather:** Trip delays and unforeseen disruptions can occur in the Arctic – mainly due to weather and sea conditions – so an insurance policy that covers this is an absolute must.

**Activities:** There are several activities that can be undertaken in the Arctic and so it pays to have insurance that covers you for any additional activities you may take part in, such as snowshoeing, kayaking, polar diving and ski mountaineering. This is a very important aspect of your travel insurance policy and so you need to make sure you know exactly what you are covered for and ensure that your policy covers you even when you have disembarked your expedition cruise ship.

**Specific destinations:** It is also important to select a policy that will cover all your intended destinations in the Arctic. Some policies for example, may not cover for travel as far as the North Pole. So you need to ensure that your insurance will cover the destinations you intend to travel to.

**Emergency evacuation:** It is essential that you are covered for evacuation and repatriation back home, which can be difficult and extremely expensive from parts of the Arctic. Many operators will demand a policy with unlimited coverage for an emergency evacuation.





**Monetary level of cover:** Tour operators and ships often dictate a minimum amount of cover, both for delays and evacuation insurance, but it is often advisable to take out a higher level of cover.

**Transit:** If your itinerary involves departing from destinations in Canada, Norway, Iceland or Russia for example, you must ensure that you are covered whilst transiting to your cruise/flight of choice.

**Existing Medical Conditions:** It is also very important that your insurance covers you for any existing medical conditions. You may be required to complete a medical assessment, or possibly provide a doctor's certificate or medical report. Some pre-existing conditions are automatically covered, for others cover may be available at an additional cost.

## 1.3 FUEL SURCHARGES

Please note that your cruise booking may be subject to fuel surcharges should world oil prices increase significantly prior to the time of your departure. Cruise operators do attempt to factor this price into your tour cost. However, unexpected rises in the cost of marine fuel can result in a fuel surcharge that will depend on the cost of oil per barrel and the individual ship operator. By booking a tour with us, you agree that this may be the case with your booking. You will be advised of any surcharge once we have been notified of the surcharges from the cruise operator.

## 1.4 CHANGES TO SCHEDULE

All clients should be aware that Arctic cruises work in environments that can be fairly extreme. While all efforts will be made to keep to the planned schedule, there may be reasons outside of our control that will result in changes to your planned program, as per our terms and conditions.



## 1.5 DEPOSIT & FINAL PAYMENT

Please refer to your invoice for details of deposit and final payment. All deposits are non-refundable as per our terms and conditions. It is important to remember that failure to pay deposits or to make the final payment by the due date may result in the cancellation of your booking.

## 1.6 WHAT'S INCLUDED ON YOUR ARCTIC CRUISE

This does vary from cruise to cruise, but meals are included on all cruises, as are all main activities (such as Zodiac cruises and shore landings). Some cruises may charge for more extreme activities such as snowshoeing, polar diving and ski mountaineering etc. These may need to be booked in advance and as spaces are generally limited, the activities can become fully booked long before the cruise departure. Drinks, souvenirs, laundry services and any communication charges are not included and need to be purchased separately.

## 1.7 HEALTH INFORMATION

### **Vaccination Requirements**

No vaccinations are required for cruises to the Arctic, but we recommend that you check with your doctor or a travel clinic prior to travel to ensure that you have the necessary vaccinations for the places you are travelling to in order to join your cruise.

**It is every client's responsibility to have the necessary vaccinations for travel.** We will **not** be held responsible for travel delays or refused entry into countries due to customers not having the necessary vaccinations.

### **On Board Medical Facilities**

The majority of Arctic cruise ships have an infirmary or clinic, with a qualified physician accompanying every voyage, providing routine and emergency health care. There is usually a charge for a consultation and for any medication prescribed, although seasickness is usually treated free of charge. Please ensure that you bring



adequate supplies of any medications that you take regularly, with extra supplies in case of any unforeseen delays.

### **Seasickness**

Although Arctic waters are relatively calm, except maybe for the Denmark Sea, bad weather can result in rough sea conditions and some passengers will suffer from seasickness or motion sickness. There are a variety of over-the-counter and prescription remedies that your doctor, pharmacist or travel clinic can prescribe or suggest.

Motion sickness medication is preventative not curative and so we recommend that you bring your own medication and start taking it before the ship heads into rough waters. Seasickness medication is most effective if taken prior to the onset of nausea – so don't wait until you feel sick to start taking it!

Inter-dermal patches (such as Scopolamine patches) and bands tend to be the most effective preventative medications, and can be purchased from your local chemist in most countries. Phenergan (promethazine) tablets are one type of oral medication but oral medication is of little use if you are unable to 'keep it down'. Other medications include Sturgeon and Dramamine.

If you are prone to motion sickness, it is best to avoid alcohol, tobacco, excess liquids and confined spaces. Another piece of advice is to eat, as the sensation of nausea is worse on an empty stomach. So try to eat a little at every meal. Make sure you stay hydrated and rested and take your medication.

## **1.8 PERSONAL GEAR & PACKING ESSENTIALS**

Airlines often enforce baggage restrictions and so we recommend that you check with your airlines ahead of time to determine what your carry-on and checked bag allowance is. This will ensure that you avoid possible check-in issues or excess baggage fees which can be very expensive. The allowances vary greatly between airlines, so we advise you to check the restrictions for each of your flights.

Domestic flights often have stricter baggage restrictions than international flights, with lower weight restrictions. Check the luggage restrictions carefully on your flights into and out of your joining city.

Charter flights also have very strict luggage restrictions, so please check these carefully if a charter flight is included in your travels.



If you are traveling via the United States, we advise that you do not lock your luggage, or alternatively use a Travel Security Administration (TSA) approved security device. Always carry your important documents and basic necessities (including any prescribed medication) in your carry-on luggage, not in your checked luggage.

## 1.9 PERSONAL GEAR & PACKING ESSENTIALS

The Arctic can be an extreme environment and although Arctic cruises depart during the spring and summer months, the weather can change dramatically, with no warning and so you need to be prepared for conditions in this potentially harsh region.

Although summer temperatures can be surprisingly mild, you should expect wind, cloud cover and precipitation. For your comfort and safety, avoid getting wet (whether from perspiration, precipitation, unsuitable boots or sea spray). Bring wind and waterproof outer layers.

Beware of tight clothing that leaves no room for trapped air that is an excellent insulator. Wool and other natural materials tend to retain heat better than synthetic fibers.

Wetness increases the loss of body heat. Air is a very poor conductor of heat, but water is an excellent one. If your skin or clothing gets wet, your body will lose heat much more rapidly. Even at 10°C, you can suffer the effects of cold if you are wet.

### **Tips for staying comfortable and warm in cold weather**

Ensure you have enough changes of clothes so that you are able to change if you get wet.

Avoid overdressing to reduce perspiration.

Wear water repellent outer garments that will keep you dry on the outside and still "breathe" enough so that moisture from your body can escape.

Most heat is stored in the centre of the body and so it is important to keep this area warm. As conditions become colder, heat will be lost fastest from the parts of your body furthest from the centre, namely your hands and feet. This is why it is essential to keep your hands and feet warm and dry. For hands, mittens are better than gloves.

If the rest of your body is covered, as much as 90% of the heat you lose can come from your head, so be sure to wear a hat.



Dress in comfortable, loose layers, as the 'layer principal' is the secret to keeping warm. For anyone out in the cold, it is far better to wear layers of relatively light, loose clothing rather than one thick, heavy item. Between each layer there is a film of trapped air which, when heated by your body, acts as an excellent insulator. It also gives you the flexibility to remove a layer if you are too warm, to keep from overheating.

Wool and silk are superior to cotton because they can trap warm air. Synthetic fabrics that spring back into shape after compression are also good. When damp or wet, polyester down is a better insulator than goose or duck down. Polar fleece and merino wool are popular and recommended.

Another very useful tip for staying warm is to ensure you have a small bag of snacks with you. Nothing helps better than the occasional piece of chocolate or dried fruit to keep you warm!

### **What to pack:**

We recommend that you pack your gear in sturdy soft-sided luggage, as this is much easier to stow in your cabin than a hard-sided suitcase.

When packing, avoid weighing yourself down with too many clothes or too much gear. Select informal, practical attire for your trip that can be worn in layers, including:

- **Parka:** You should look for a lightweight, roomy, wind and weather-resistant shell with some insulation. Bright colours are more visible – and thus safer – in polar environments. That is why polar travellers traditionally wear red. (Some ships provide a parka, so please check your pre-departure information).
- **Warm Trousers:** Ski pants are suitable if you have them; otherwise, bring any sturdy trousers that can be layered between your long underwear and rain pants/trousers.
- **Waterproof Pants (Trousers):** Water resistant rain pants/trousers of coated nylon are essential for your comfort. Wear them over your regular clothes to keep you warm and dry. Even better is gear made of Gore-Tex and similar fabrics that are waterproof and "breathable". These materials keep out wind and water without trapping excess heat. Although excellent, these fabrics are expensive and can be damaged by prolonged exposure to salt water. Rinse Gore-Tex in freshwater after exposure to salt.
- **Long Thermal Underwear:** Thermal underwear is highly recommended since it keeps you warm without adding bulk. Most people prefer a lightweight version – but this depends on your personal thermostat. Merino wool products are highly recommended.





- Sweaters: Wool sweaters or a polar fleece jacket of medium weight are recommended.
- Turtlenecks: Bring several practical turtlenecks for layering and use around the ship.
- Mittens and Gloves: Keeping your hands warm and dry is a challenge – and important. Thin polypropylene gloves can be worn underneath warm mittens. This allows you to take off the mittens to operate your camera and still have some protection from the cold. It is a good idea to bring an extra pair of wool mittens to wear if your other pair gets wet (or lost).
- Woollen Cap: A warm cap to protect your ears – and a scarf. Balaclavas are another option.
- Warm Socks: Sturdy, long wool socks worn over a thin pair of silk, polypropylene or cotton/ wool socks should provide enough insulation for your feet. Bring several pairs, since you will inevitably get your feet wet.

### **Other Useful Items**

- A sturdy, lightweight and waterproof daypack to carry your gear on landings or Zodiac excursions.
- Sunglasses with U.V. filter.
- Protective sunscreen for the lips, hands and face. Reflected glare from water, snow and ice can be intense.
- Insect repellent.
- Swimsuit for hotels, aboard some ships and (maybe) for a polar plunge.
- Camera with spare batteries and memory cards. Bring twice as much memory as you think you will need!
- Extra pair of prescription glasses. Those who wear contact lenses should also bring glasses since salt and wind can irritate the eyes.
- Prescription medicines and other remedies such as seasickness medication. Be prepared for rough water. Bring along a signed and dated letter from your physician stating any health problems and dosage of medications, to provide information to medical authorities in case of an emergency.
- Binoculars for spotting wildlife from the deck.
- Zip lock plastic bags or dry sacks as an added protection for carrying cameras, batteries, etc.



- Torch/flashlight/head torch.
- T-shirts or other casual warm weather clothes, for layering and on-board the ship.
- Sturdy shoes with non-slip soles to wear on deck.
- Clothes for Joining Cities. (Don't forget this important aspect of your trip).

**Special equipment:**

- Some cruises provide you with a parka to keep. (Please check your pre-departure information from your ship).
- Rubber boots (knee-length) are generally supplied on-board the majority of ships, but are used by other passengers. Please bring your own if you are not comfortable with this, or use a non-conventional size.
- Many ships provide passengers with their own destination guide or wildlife guide. Each ship's library also has a good selection of guidebooks for reference and use whilst on board.

## 2. ON BOARD INFORMATION

### 2.1 CRUISE EMBARKATION & DISEMBARKATION

Your point of embarkation and disembarkation will depend on your itinerary and cruise ship. Each ship is different, and may depart from port or arrive in port at different times. The majority of Canadian Arctic cruises include a charter flight between Ottawa and Iqaluit where cruise embarkation and disembarkation takes place. We strongly advise that you arrive at your joining city the day before the tour starts, or at your place of embarkation the day before embarking your ship. We also recommend that you book a night's accommodation at the end of the cruise if possible, as we will not be held responsible if you do not arrive in time to board your vessel or for the late arrival of the ship from your voyage. Arrange flights or other transport from the port of disembarkation for the day after your cruise is scheduled to return. If you must depart on the day of cruise disembarkation, please ensure that you do not book a flight out before 12pm (Noon).

We will not be held responsible if you miss your flight due to late arrival and disembarkation from your cruise ship.



## 2.2 MONEY IN THE ARCTIC

The currency in the Arctic depends on the country or countries you are visiting on your voyage i.e. Canada, Norway, Greenland, Denmark, Finland, Iceland, or Russia.

If you are joining in Longyearbyen, the local currency is the "Norwegian Krone" and is represented as NOK, although many shops in Longyearbyen accept Euros. For tours that visit Reykjavik in Iceland, the local currency is the "Icelandic Krona" and is represented as ISK. If your tour visits Anadyr or Murmansk, the local currency is the "Russian Ruble" and is represented as RUB. In Iqaluit, the local currency is the "Canadian Dollar" and is represented as CAD and in Kangerlussuaq the local currency is the "Danish Krone", represented as DKK.

Most cruise ships accept Euros € and US \$. Major credit cards, in particular Visa and MasterCard are also widely accepted on board. In general, all on board purchases made during the cruise are charged to your cabin, and settled at the end of the voyage.

## 2.3 TIPPING GUIDELINES

Whilst crew members are paid a fair wage, they also spend a large amount of time at sea – away from their families. Tipping to staff is recommended by means of a kitty at the end of the trip, generally arranged on board. We advocate a policy of tipping what you deem as fair. All nationalities and individuals have their own customs, and we believe it is your right to tip what you would be prepared to in your home country. If you are looking for guidance, then a suggested amount would be US\$15 per day. Without the crew, and their expertise the whole voyage would not be possible! On the majority of cruise ships, tips are collected centrally and distributed amongst the entire crew.

## 2.4 LIFE ON BOARD

Whilst some of our Arctic cruise ships boast a gym, sauna and small pools, generally the majority just have a lecture theatre, library, bar and restaurant, as well as the main deck. All ships offer a series of lectures focusing on the geology, history and wildlife of the Arctic and the Arctic Ocean, to help you prepare for what lies ahead. You can interact with the crew and expedition team as well as your fellow passengers in the common areas. You can stand on deck taking in the spectacular scenery and wildlife-watching, scanning the horizon for whales, seals and seabirds, or do so from the comfort of the lounges and observation decks.

Zodiac excursions and shore landings are a feature of our Arctic cruises and are planned wherever possible, weather conditions permitting. Many itineraries include



visits to Inuit communities and National Parks such as Auyuittuq National Park on Canada's Baffin Island.

### **Daily Program**

Each evening the Expedition Leader will advise the daily program for the following day, including meal times, activities, events, landing times and details of any lectures or presentations. Please always remember that due to the nature of the Arctic, there may be changes to the scheduled daily program due to weather, sea and ice conditions or to take advantage of opportunities such as polar bear or other wildlife sightings.

### **Dress on Board**

Dress on board Arctic vessels tends to be casual and informal, and we recommend that you wear comfortable clothing that is lightweight and easy to care for. Warm clothing is needed when you head out on deck, so we recommend you bring clothes you can easily layer, as you may find yourself having to add layers in a hurry if there's an unexpected wildlife sighting! Some ships require slightly dressier attire, such as sports jacket and collared shirt for men, and equivalent for women, for the Captain's dinner.

### **Open Bridge Policy**

Many ships offer an open bridge policy, which means that you can visit the bridge whilst the ship is sailing, to see the navigational operations and talk to the officers. Please remember that this is a working area, and that it may be closed to visitors at certain times. Access is restricted during arrivals and departures from port and during times of complicated navigation.

### **Food & Dining**

The majority of Arctic vessels have dining rooms that are large enough to seat all guests in one sitting. The menus feature a diverse selection of gourmet dishes prepared by professional chefs. Breakfasts and lunches tend to be buffet style, while dinner is usually a three or four-course à la carte meal. Vegetarian options are available but please ensure that you advise us of any additional special dietary requirements.

### **Internet Access**

Internet access is available on board the majority of Arctic ships. Alternatively there may be a ship-based email system where you will have an email account to stay in touch with family and friends. Due to the remoteness of much of the Arctic, connections can be slow, so most ships charge for data used rather than time spent online. Please check your detailed pre-departure information for more information on Internet facilities on your ship.



## **Electrical Outlets**

The electrical outlets on board many vessels are 220V (AC current) with European 2 pin round holes, as well as 110-volt shaving sockets in bathrooms for electric razors only. This varies depending on your ship, so again please check your detailed pre-departure information. You may wish to bring an international adapter. If you plan on bringing the American standard 110V equipment with flat-pronged plug, you may need to bring a converter and a round two pronged European type adaptor plug, depending on your ship.

## **Laundry Services**

The majority of Arctic ships provide a laundry service with charges made per item and charged to your account for payment at the end of the cruise.

## **Storage of Wet Clothes**

Some ships feature a heated mudroom where wet clothes can be stored and dried.

## **Smoking**

On the majority of ships, smoking is only allowed in designated areas on the outside decks. Smoking is not permitted anywhere inside the vessel, in cabins or anywhere near the Zodiacs. Smoking is NOT permitted on any shore landings. Please remember to respect the natural environment, and dispose of all cigarette butts in designated ashtrays or bins. Do NOT in any circumstance throw any cigarette butts overboard.

## **Zodiacs**

Most sites are only accessible by Zodiac landing crafts. Zodiacs are large, stable, heavy-duty vessels that are extremely safe and designed for expedition work. They are used to transfer you to shore landings and for Zodiac cruises among icebergs and maybe alongside whales. Generally between 10 and 15 people are carried on each Zodiac.

Each ship will provide a briefing about the Zodiacs, including information on the best and safest way to board and exit a Zodiac and the difference between wet and dry landings. Each ship will have its own specific rules and regulations but the following acts as a general guide.

- You may only board a Zodiac if you are properly attired, including waterproof trousers and warm headgear.
- Waterproof boots should be worn.
- A Personal Flotation Device (PFD) must be worn over your parka at all times.
- Your personal belongings should be carried in a backpack so that your hands





are free to hold on and accept assistance when embarking or disembarking the Zodiac.

- You are advised to pack valuables and electronic equipment such as cameras and binoculars in waterproof bags or dry sacks within your backpack.
- Never attach anything to the grab lines.
- No smoking is permitted on Zodiacs or when ashore.
- While the Zodiac is in motion, you must remain seated with your feet on the deck. Never attempt to stand unless the Zodiac driver has given permission to do so. On arrival at a landing site or alongside the ship gangway, remain seated until instructed to disembark.
- Never jump into the Zodiac, but step in quickly and carefully and accept all the assistance offered by the crew.
- Keep your body, arms and hands inside the Zodiac to avoid any injuries.
- Please be considerate of others and make way for them to take photographs once you have taken yours.
- Boots and clothing must be cleaned before and after each landing to avoid contamination of landing sites.

## 2.5 A TYPICAL DAY ON BOARD

There is really no such thing as a typical day in the Arctic. Landing locations vary with each cruise depending on weather and ice conditions, the season and wildlife sightings. Different ships also operate differently. Some days are full sailing days whereas other days involve one or more landings or Zodiac cruises.

This is a very general example of a landing day.

**6.00am – 7.00am:** The day begins with an early morning wake up call, generally between 6.00 and 7.00am and usually made by the expedition leader across the PA System. If you are a quick riser you can make your way to the lounge for an early cup of tea or coffee and head out onto the deck to take in the new surroundings.

**7.00am – 8.00am:** A buffet breakfast is served in the dining room, giving you the chance to interact with some of your fellow passengers. After breakfast you return to your cabin to get ready for the first landing of the day, layering your clothes, packing your camera gear and binoculars and then heading to the Zodiac gangway.

**8.00am – 11.30am:** Once each Zodiac is loaded, it sets off towards the designated excursion site. You may spend the morning cruising amongst icebergs or alongside towering cliffs littered with birdlife. Maybe you will make a landing to walk to a viewpoint, to visit an Inuit community or to explore an area on foot, or maybe the



Zodiac will pull up so you can admire and photograph a polar bear on an iceberg. At the end of the excursion, you return to the ship by Zodiac.

**11.30am – 2.30pm:** Returning to your cabin, you shed some of your layers before heading to the dining room for lunch, generally buffet style. The ship is likely to set sail again as you have lunch, heading towards the next location. After lunch there is generally time to relax before the ship reaches its next destination.

**2.30pm – 5.30pm:** You return to your room to layer up once more and prepare for the afternoon excursion. At the end of the excursion you are returned to the ship by Zodiac.

**5.30pm – 7.00pm:** If there are no more excursions for the day, there may be the option to attend a presentation on an aspect of the Arctic – maybe the history of polar exploration or Arctic wildlife. Alternatively you can take the time to read a book, sit out on deck taking in the scenery and looking out for wildlife or maybe sorting through your photos. Later you may head to the bar for a pre-dinner drink.

**7.00pm – 8.30pm:** Dinner is served around 7.00pm and is usually a sit down à la carte meal. As you dine, the ship sets course for its new location the next day. After dinner there may be a movie shown or you can just relax in the lounge or bar and watch the day come to a close.



## 3. GENERAL ARCTIC INFORMATION

### 3.1 ARCTIC WILDLIFE

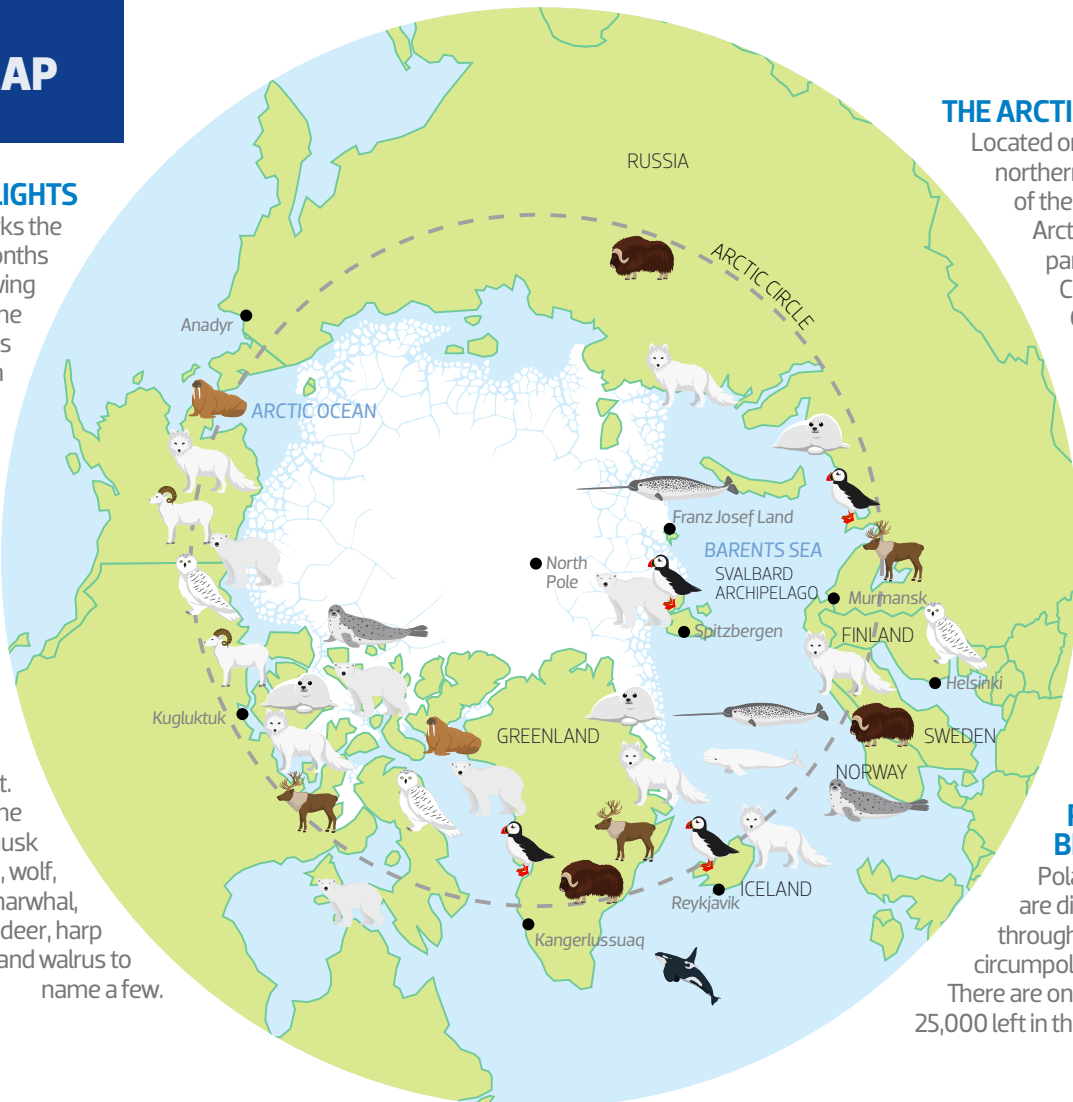
#### ARCTIC MAP

##### NORTHERN LIGHTS

September marks the first of three months of prime viewing time to see the aurora borealis or the 'northern lights'.

##### ARCTIC WILDLIFE

Many Arctic animals have evolved special adaptations & behaviours to deal with the extreme cold and hostile environment. They include the Arctic fox, musk ox, hare, tern, wolf, beluga whale, narwhal, dall sheep, reindeer, harp seal and walrus to name a few.



##### THE ARCTIC

Located on the northernmost point of the world, the Arctic consists of parts of Alaska, Canada, Finland, Greenland, Iceland, Norway, Russia, Sweden and the Arctic Ocean.

##### BIRDS

There are a total of 280 species of birds that live in the Arctic region.

##### POLAR BEARS

Polar bears are distributed throughout the circumpolar Arctic region. There are only 20,000 to 25,000 left in the wild.



There are about 20 species of land mammals in the Arctic including the polar bear, wolf, fox, squirrel, moose, caribou, reindeer and musk ox. Species of aquatic mammals found in Arctic waters include walruses, seals and whales. Most of the species are year-round inhabitants of the Arctic, migrating to the southern margins as winter approaches. The Arctic's bird population increases dramatically each spring with the arrival of thousands of migratory birds.

### **Polar Bear**

Massive and magnificent, the solitary polar bear is found only in the Arctic, where it lives and hunts for seals near ice-covered waters. Well adapted to the harsh climate, the semi-aquatic bear can swim for several hours and reach speeds of up to 25mph on land. Polar bears are classified as marine mammals because they spend most of their lives on the sea ice of the Arctic Ocean. They have a thick layer of body fat under their skin and a water-repellent coat that insulates them from the cold air and water. Their large paws with partially webbed toes help them to swim and their large feet also work as 'snowshoes' when on land, helping them to walk on the snow and ice. Polar bears are the largest bears in the world, adults weighing between 295 and 600kg. They have an acute sense of smell, enabling them to sniff dead animals from afar and locate seals in dens beneath the snow.

Whether you find a mother with cubs learning to navigate icy waters or a male on the hunt, the undisputed king of the Arctic is mesmerising to watch.

### **Atlantic Puffin**

Found exclusively in the North Atlantic Ocean, puffins are excellent swimmers and live most of their lives at sea, landing on North Atlantic seacoasts and islands to form breeding colonies each spring and summer. Iceland is in fact the breeding home of around 60% of the world's Atlantic puffins. In summer, the puffin's beak is red, blue and yellow and accounts for the bird's nickname as the 'sea parrot'. In the winter months the beak fades to a drab grey colour.

### **Other Arctic Birds**

The Arctic is a birder's paradise, with millions of birds migrating north to the Arctic for the short but rich summer feeding and nesting season. Endemic species include horned and tufted puffins, red-legged kittiwakes and harlequin ducks. Amongst the birds of prey are four species of skua, peregrine falcons and the pristine snowy owl. The gyrfalcon is the largest falcon in the world, breeding in Arctic and sub-Arctic regions and preying mostly on large birds. The Arctic Tern makes the longest



migration of any bird, around 35,000 km each year between the Arctic and the Antarctic. They arrive at their breeding grounds in the Arctic in May to nest and raise their young. In August the terns leave the Arctic to fly back to the Antarctic.

### **Walrus**

The walrus's most distinctive feature is its external tusks, which both males and females have. Tusks can grow to be a metre long and weigh up to 5kg. The walrus's scientific name is in fact *Odobenus rosmarus*, Latin for 'tooth walking seahorse'. Walruses are extremely social animals and form tight groups both on land and in the sea.

### **Arctic Fox**

Finding shelter in burrows, the Arctic fox feeds on everything from fish and shellfish to dead seals and leftover scraps from polar bears. They prey on voles, hares, ground squirrels, birds and bird's eggs. When meat is in short supply, Arctic foxes will eat fruit and berries. These animals are small, but well adapted to life in the Arctic, having thick coats. From winter to summer, their coat changes from white to yellow-brown to better blend in with the surroundings.

### **Reindeer**

The Svalbard reindeer, a sub species of reindeer that only lives in Svalbard, is so common that visitors are almost guaranteed to see one. Its short legs and neck, small rounded head and thick coat make up its characteristic appearance. In some places the reindeer may seem curious and tame while in other areas they are extremely shy.

### **Musk Oxen**

Musk oxen live in the frozen Arctic, a region they have inhabited for many thousands of years. Their long shaggy hair makes them well adapted to the harsh cold climate. The outer or guard hairs cover a second, shorter undercoat that provides additional insulation in winter. This undercoat falls out when temperatures start to rise with the onset of spring. Musk oxen roam the tundra in search of the vegetation (roots, mosses and lichens) that sustains them. They use their hooves to dig through snow to graze on these plants during the winter. In summer, they supplement their diet with Arctic flowers and grasses.





### **Whales, Dolphins & Seals**

A total of 17 different species of whales, dolphins and seals can be found in the Arctic's bountiful oceans, including the distinctive tusked narwhal, beluga and rare bowhead whale. Migratory species seen during the summer months include orca, grey, minke, fin, humpback and even blue whales. Narwhals feature a large, spiralled tusk at the forehead. They can reach up to 5m in length and weigh up to 1500kg. Seal species found in the Arctic include the ringed and harp seal. Walruses are related to seals and are also found in the Arctic seas. They have a layer of blubber under their thick, wrinkled brownish skin, providing them with the necessary insulation at sea or when resting on land. The walrus feeds on clams, mussels, fish, krill and crabs, and may also attack seals.

## **3.2 PHOTOGRAPHIC TIPS & HINTS**

Ensure that you check over and clean your photographic equipment before leaving home and ensure it is all in working order. If you have purchased a new camera or any other photographic equipment, we strongly recommend that you learn about it and how to use it before your voyage. Make sure you bring spare batteries and plenty of memory cards, as you are likely to take far more photos than you expect!

We recommend the following:

- Bring a dry sack or waterproof bag to protect your camera and other equipment, especially when on the Zodiacs.
- Use a polarising filter or a 'warming' filter for shots of the ice and to reduce the glare on the water.
- Use a longer lens length or zoom for wildlife photography to avoid getting too close and disturbing the wildlife.
- Use a wide-angle lens to capture the true scale of the Arctic.
- Consider bringing a tripod, especially if trying to capture the Northern Lights on film.
- Cold temperatures drain batteries faster than normal so bring spares and keep the camera in a dry sack or sealed waterproof bag whilst transferring from ship to shore in cold conditions. If you are recharging batteries then it is a good idea to have a spare on the charger whilst you are away from the ship, ready for use when you return.
- Bring spare memory cards, especially if you are not taking a laptop on which to download your images during the voyage.
- Bring camera-cleaning gear.



- Daypacks are a more convenient way to carry your equipment when getting into and out of the Zodiacs, rather than a side bag.

### **Other Tips**

- For portrait photography of wildlife, a wide-angled (18mm) lens will enable you to capture a wider angle of view, including more of the subject's surroundings. Using a telephoto lens (over 70mm) or fixed portrait lens (50mm) will enable you to capture a sharper focused more close-up view of the subject, but with slightly blurred background.
- For wildlife photography where you are trying to capture the natural behaviour or movement of the animal, take a series of photos. A fast zoom lens is useful for animals at a distance.
- For low light conditions, use a higher shutter speed. The lower the f-stop, the more light is allowed in. A tripod is useful for long exposures. As you increase the camera's ISO, you increase its sensitivity to light and reduce the time needed for a clear shot.

## **3.3 AECO GUIDELINES**

Much of the Arctic is a pristine natural environment. Please respect environmental practices both on board the ship and on shore excursions, such as disposing of toilet paper in the bins provided, not throwing objects overboard and not leaving any litter or anything behind.

### **Association of Arctic Expedition Cruise Operator (AECO) Guidelines**

The Association of Arctic Expedition Cruise Operators (AECO) is an international association for expedition cruise operators operating in the Arctic and others with interests in this industry. The association was founded in 2003 and has since become an important organization that represents the concerns and views of Arctic expedition cruise operators. AECO is dedicated to managing responsible, environmentally friendly and safe tourism in the Arctic and strives to set the highest possible operating standards.

The association's geographical range is considered to encompass the Arctic area north of latitude 60 degrees north. The core areas are Svalbard, Jan Mayen, Greenland, Arctic Canada and the Russian Arctic National Park.



## **General Guidelines**

- Leave no lasting signs of your visit. Do not engrave on rocks, buildings or rearrange stones.
- Avoid stepping on flowers or plant beds to protect the flora and vegetation.
- Do not take anything with you. Please leave stones, bones, antlers, driftwood and other items where you find them.
- Do not pick flowers.
- Do not disturb animals and birds. Please keep the minimum distances as advised by your guide/expedition leader.
- Take the polar bear danger seriously. They are potentially dangerous animals but also vulnerable.
- Please follow the instructions from your guide/expedition leader at all times.
- Never stray from the group and the leaders who carry equipment to protect you.
- If you catch sight of polar bears, stay calm and immediately inform your guide/expedition leader.
- Never approach a polar bear.
- Never leave food anywhere attempting to lure polar bears.
- Never approach or attempt to pat or feed Arctic dogs without permission or supervision of the dog owner/handler.
- Never touch live or dead wild animals.
- Respect local cultures. Talk to and not about the people you meet.
- Respect privacy. Keep a good distance from private houses and never glance or photograph through private windows.
- Do not visit graveyards or other areas of religious or cultural significance without permission. Ask before you photograph.
- You are encouraged to buy local souvenirs and products, but be aware of the legalities of importing/transporting purchases into other countries.

## **Protect Arctic Wildlife**

We follow strict guidelines in an effort to preserve the fragile environments that we are visiting. We believe we have a responsibility to minimize our impact and protect the environment and we take this very seriously.



## **Respect Protected Areas**

A variety of areas in the Arctic have been afforded special protection because of their particular ecological, scientific, historic or other values. Entry into certain areas may be prohibited except in accordance with a permit issued by an appropriate national authority. Activities in and near designated Historic Sites and Monuments, and certain other areas may be subject to special restrictions.

- Know the locations of areas that have been afforded special protection, and any restrictions regarding entry and activities that can be carried out in and near them.
- Observe applicable restrictions.
- Do not damage, remove, or destroy Historic Sites or Monuments, or any artefacts associated with them. Do not interfere with scientific research, facilities or equipment.
- Do not interfere with, or remove, scientific equipment or marker posts, and do not disturb experimental study sites, field camps or supplies.

## **Be Safe**

Be prepared for severe and changeable weather, and ensure that your equipment and clothing meet Arctic standards. Remember that the Arctic environment is inhospitable, unpredictable and potentially dangerous. Know your capabilities, the dangers posed by the Arctic environment, and act accordingly. Plan activities with safety in mind at all times.

- Keep a safe distance from all wildlife, both on land and at sea.
- Take note of the advice and instructions from leaders and do not stray from your group.
- Do not walk onto glaciers or large snowfields without the proper equipment and experience – there is a real danger of falling into hidden crevasses.
- Do not expect a rescue service. Self-sufficiency is increased and risks reduced by sound planning, quality equipment, and trained personnel.
- Do not enter emergency refuges (except in emergencies). If you use equipment or food from a refuge, inform the nearest research station or national authority once the emergency is over.
- Respect any smoking restrictions, particularly around buildings, and take care to safeguard against the danger of fire. This is a real hazard in the dry environment of the Arctic.



### **Keep the Arctic Pristine**

With some exceptions, the Arctic is generally characterized by huge wilderness areas and small remote towns and settlements, often with an Inuit population and it remains relatively pristine. Responsibility for respectable interaction with local culture is important. Because of its fragile environment and remoteness we encourage all to adhere to certain guidelines.

- Do not dispose of litter or garbage on land. Open burning is prohibited.
- Do not disturb or pollute lakes or streams. Any materials discarded at sea must be disposed of properly.
- Do not paint or engrave names or graffiti on rocks or buildings.
- Do not collect or take away biological or geological specimens or man-made artefacts as a souvenir, including rocks, bones, eggs, fossils, and parts or contents of buildings.
- Do not deface or vandalise buildings, whether occupied, abandoned, or unoccupied, or emergency refuges.

### **AECO – Additional Information**

The Arctic remains relatively pristine and is the largest wilderness area on Earth. For more information please visit the website of the Association of Arctic Expedition Cruise Operators: [www.aeco.no](http://www.aeco.no)





## 4. THE ARCTIC REGIONS



### 4.1 THE CANADIAN ARCTIC



Beyond Canada's continental north you will find the Canadian Arctic Archipelago, with over 36,000 islands, most lying deep within the Arctic Circle. A cruise in this remote region takes you through incredible wilderness scenery of fjords, glaciers, mountains and pack ice. The Canadian Arctic is also well known for its diverse wildlife, history and rich Inuit culture. It is home to seals, whales, polar bears, caribou, musk oxen, walruses, Arctic wolves and foxes as well as thousands of seabirds that nest in the cliffs. Here you may also encounter small indigenous communities and the archaeological remains of hunting lodges that date back thousands of years.

It is in this region that you can follow in the wake of the legendary explorers Amundsen, Baffin and Franklin who searched for the Northwest Passage, a fabled trade route across the Arctic from Europe to the Far East. The two ships under Franklin's command disappeared mysteriously before Amundsen made the first successful navigation of the route on his 1903–6 Gjoa expedition.

### **Climate & Weather**

The Canadian Arctic's main summer months are June to August, with temperatures averaging 10°C. Inuvik in Canada's Western Arctic experiences average highs of 19.5°C in the summer, with a record high of over 32°C having been recorded. During the height of the winter months, average daily temperatures across the Canadian Arctic are below -20°C, with February being the coldest month. Temperatures in the southeastern parts can be higher as a result of relatively warm winds blowing off the North Atlantic. In the coldest parts of the Canadian Arctic including parts of Ellesmere Island, winter temperatures can fall as low as -50°C.

Baffin Island experiences a later spring thaw than other parts of the Canadian Arctic and cloudy foggy summers. Snow can occur at any time of the year but is least likely in July and early August. The island is surrounded by sea ice for most of the year, this only disappearing completely from the north coast for short periods between June and September. Average summer temperatures are 4–8°C, with average highs of 7–12°C. In winter, temperatures average -26°C.

Ellesmere Island is the most northerly island in the Canadian Arctic Archipelago, its northern coasts being within 800km of the North Pole. The summers are cool and brief and the winters long and very cold. In the interior, temperatures as low as -56°C have been recorded. In the summer, temperatures rise above freezing and water flows from the ice caps. Ellesmere Island is a polar desert, with around 60mm annual precipitation in the north of the island.



## **Wildlife**

The wildlife of the Canadian Arctic ranges from polar bears, musk oxen, caribou, seals and whales (including beluga, narwhal and bowhead) to Arctic foxes, hares and wolves and thousands of seabirds.

Baffin Island is home to prolific wildlife and at the northern tip, Bylot Island Migratory Bird Sanctuary provides nesting habitats for over 70 species of birds. The caribou migrate from the north of the island to the south in the winter. Polar bears are found all along the coast but most prevalent where there is pack ice. Both Arctic and Baffin Island wolves are found on the island. Ringed seals are year round visitors with harp seals arriving in the summer. Beluga, narwhal and bowhead whales are also found off Baffin Island in the summer.

Musk oxen, polar bears, caribou and Arctic hares are seen on Ellesmere Island as well as many bird species and 13 species of spider! Quttinirpaaq National Park lies in the northeastern corner of Ellesmere Island with Arctic hares, lemmings, musk oxen and Arctic wolves residing in the park. Ringed and bearded seals, narwhals, polar bears and walruses can also be found here as well as a small population of Peary caribou. In the summer the park is a nesting site for many birds including long-tailed jaegers and red knots.

Victoria Island is home to a herd of dolphin-union caribou (island caribou) that migrate annually across the sea ice to their winter grazing area on the mainland.

## **Geography**

The Canadian Arctic Archipelago is a group of over 35,000 islands to the north of the mainland that comprise much of the territory of Northern Canada. The archipelago extends 2,400km west to east and 1,900km from the mainland to the northernmost tip of Ellesmere Island at Cape Columbia. The 3 largest islands are Baffin, Victoria and Ellesmere, the 5th, 8th and 10th largest islands in the world. Devon Island lies between Baffin and Ellesmere Islands and is the largest uninhabited island in the world. The islands are separated from each other and the mainland by a series of waterways known as the Northwest Passages.

Baffin Island is the largest island in Canada, with the Hudson Strait to the south separating it from the mainland and Baffin Bay separating it from Greenland. Its dramatic landscape features vertical cliffs, fjords, ice fields, massive tidewater glaciers, lakes and black granite peaks. The Baffin Mountains run along the northeastern coast, the highest peak being Mount Odin at 2,147m. In the centre of the island is the Barnes Ice Cap.

Ellesmere Island is the most northerly island in the Canadian Arctic archipelago with Cape Columbia being Canada's most northerly point of land. The Arctic Ocean lies to the north, Greenland to the east and its northern coasts are within 800km of the North Pole. The island is mountainous and rocky with deep fjords and vast ice shelves



extending from the northern coast. To the north are the Mountains of Grant Land that are shrouded in thick ice. The island is a polar desert, with rock spires (nunataks) projecting through the ice. Ellesmere is home to Barbeau Peak (2,616m), the highest mountain in eastern North America; Lake Hazen, the largest lake north of the Arctic Circle, plus Agassiz and Grant Land ice caps – the largest ice caps in Canada.

## **History**

- The Canadian Arctic has been occupied by the Inuit and their predecessors for over 4,500 years.
- There were attempts by explorers to find the fabled Northwest Passage trading route between Europe and the Far East dating back to the 15th century.
- The first Europeans to explore the waters around the Canadian Arctic were Frobisher, Davis, Baffin & Bylot in the late 16th century and early 17th century.
- Baffin & Bylot first recorded Jones and Lancaster Sounds, later recognised as the eastern entrance to the Northwest Passage.
- Sir John Franklin's 1845 expedition to find the Northwest Passage was the most famous, both ships under his command and all crew members mysteriously disappearing. The Franklin expedition wintered on Beechey Island in 1845. There are gravestones to three of the crew on the island as well as the remains of Northumberland House that was built in 1852 as a supply depot, in case the expedition returned to the island. HMS Erebus was finally located in 2014.
- Canadian sovereignty over all of the islands was established in 1880.
- Roald Amundsen was the first to successfully navigate the Northwest Passage in 1903–6 in the Gjoa.
- High Arctic Weather Stations were established by Canada–USA in the 1940's and 50's.
- The territory of Nunavut was created in 1999 comprising most of the Canadian Arctic Archipelago and a large proportion of Northern Canada.



## 4.2 GREENLAND



Unique, spectacular and dramatically beautiful, Greenland is dominated by a vast ice cap that covers 80% of the island. It is the largest non-continental island in the world, lying almost entirely within the Arctic Circle. Greenland's waters are strewn with icebergs, sometimes turquoise and sometimes beautifully sculpted. Glaciers are prolific and the coast is lined with fjords. The island is home to polar bears, musk oxen, reindeer, walruses, whales, seals and sea eagles. And then of course there are the incredible Northern Lights (Aurora Borealis), Greenland providing one of the best vantage points to see the spectacular display of colours flashing across the Arctic sky.

Greenland has a fascinating history, archaeological remains of communities dating back around 4,500 years having been found. It has a rich Inuit culture, with settlements that still thrive on ancient traditions, a culture still tied to the ocean and a lifestyle adapted to living on the edge of the Arctic.

The western side of Greenland offers incredible landscapes and a fascinating culture. Highlights include Disko Bay, the iceberg paradise of Ilulissat Icefjord and spectacular Eqip Sermia with its jagged, blue glacier front. Along the vast coastline lie small communities that survive by hunting and fishing and the capital Nuuk, the colourful heart of the nation. East Greenland is a hikers paradise and is also renowned for its amazing landscapes, overshadowed by towering mountain ranges and beautiful fjords including the spectacular Scoresbysund (Kangertittivaq). This is the largest fjord system in the world and towards the end of summer it offers some of the best views of the incredible Northern Lights. Greenland's National Park, a vast Arctic paradise and the world's largest national park, covers the entire northeastern part of the country, with polar bears, musk oxen and whales being found near its coastal regions.



## **Climate & Weather**

Due to the vast size of Greenland, there are great variations in the climate and weather from one region to another. The weather can also change suddenly and vary significantly over short distances. Summers can be relatively mild, especially in regions protected by hills, but winters can be severe. Generally the climate is Arctic along the northern and central coasts and sub-Arctic along the southern-central coasts with temperatures reaching above freezing during the summer months, although the average rarely rises above 10°C. In the interior, temperatures tend to remain below freezing year-round.

In Nuuk the capital, daytime temperatures average 7–10°C in the summer months, falling to –5°C between January and March. Temperatures are much colder in the north with Thule (Qaanaaq), the second most northerly town in the world, experiencing average temperatures as low as –25°C in February, reaching only 5°C in July. The ice cap is the coldest part of Greenland, where temperatures can fall below –70°C.

## **Wildlife**

Dominated by an ice cap and with a rugged, dramatic landscape, Greenland is home to an interesting array of wildlife, some of which you may be lucky enough to spot on your travels. Species found in Greenland include polar bears, whales (humpback, fin and minke), musk oxen, walruses, Arctic foxes, Arctic hares and reindeer. There are many species of birds including sea eagles. The island is dotted with nature reserves including one at Melville Bay that was established to protect breeding polar bears, beluga whales and narwhals and is also home to ringed seals.

Greenland's marine mammals include the distinctive walrus with tusks that are over 50cm in length. Other whales species sometimes spotted include orca, beluga or white, blue, sperm, humpback, fin and Greenland. Seal species include harbour, hooded, bearded, Greenland and ringed. The land is home to polar bears, caribou, Arctic foxes and hares. Arctic wolves are rare, but are found in the most northerly regions and lemmings are found in the northeastern part of Greenland. More than 10,000 musk oxen are found around Kangerlussuaq. Greenland's reindeer migrate huge distances each year between the interior and the coast in search of food and to reach their summer calving grounds near the ice cap.

Bird life is prolific with over 235 species found in Greenland including white-tailed sea eagles and Greenland falcons. The list also includes buntings, siskins, fulmars, guillemots, auks, puffins, kittiwakes, terns, gulls, divers, Arctic skuas and owls and also the ptarmigan that changes the colour of its plumage depending on the season.



## **Geography**

Greenland is the largest non-continental island in the world, with over 40,000km of coastline and covering an area of over 2 million square kilometres. It lies between the Arctic and North Atlantic Oceans, to the northeast of Canada and to the northwest of Iceland. Greenland spreads across the Arctic Circle, two-thirds of the island lying within the Arctic Circle. Its northern extremity extends to within less than 800 kilometres of the North Pole.

Greenland possesses the 2nd largest ice sheet in the world (after Antarctica's), 80% of the country being covered by the ice cap, leaving a narrow, rugged, mountainous and mostly barren coastline. The ice sheet averages 1,500m in thickness, reaching a maximum thickness of 3,000m. The highest point in Greenland and in fact the Arctic, is the summit of Gunnbjorn Fjeld at 3,694m. The rugged coastline is indented with numerous fjords including the iceberg-covered Ilulissat Icefjord on the west coast, designated a UNESCO World Heritage Site. Jakobshavn Glacier (or Sermeq Kujalleq) is one of the fastest moving glaciers in the world, with an average daily flow rate of 20–35m and calving over 35 billion tonnes of icebergs every year. These icebergs pass out of Ilulissat Icefjord and can measure up to a kilometre in height, often becoming stuck in the fjord for years.

## **History**

- The first humans are thought to have arrived in Greenland around 4,500 years ago.
- At least 6 Inuit groups migrated over the years, the Thule being the last to arrive in the 9th century.
- Icelandic Vikings led by Erik the Red settled on the southwest coast in the 10th century but disappeared leaving only the Inuit for several centuries.
- During this time Denmark–Norway continued to claim sovereignty believing Norse settlements had survived.
- Denmark–Norway sent a missionary expedition to Greenland with the aim of reinstating Christianity among the Norse–Greenlander descendants but instead baptised the Inuit.
- In the 16th & 17th centuries, Dutch and English whalers frequently travelled the waters around Greenland.
- The colonial era began in 1721 when Denmark–Norway founded a trading company and Lutheran mission near present-day Nuuk.





- In 1776 the Danish government assumed a full trade monopoly with Greenland, closing the coast to foreign access.
- Scoresbysund on the eastern coast of Greenland, was named after William Scoresby, a whaler, scientist and clergyman who charted Greenland's east coast in 1822.
- During German occupation of Denmark in World War II, Greenland came under the protection of the USA, Denmark resuming control after the war.
- In 1953, Greenland ceased to be a colony of Denmark and became a province.
- Home rule was granted to Greenland in 1979.
- In 1985, Greenland left the European Union.

## 4.3 ICELAND

Lying just below the Arctic Circle, Iceland is the 'Land of Fire and Ice'. It is a country of contrasts where the darkness of winter and the dancing lights of the Aurora Borealis (Northern Lights) alternate with the Midnight Sun of summer. Iceland's landscapes are diverse and ruggedly beautiful, ranging from lava deserts to ice fields, dazzling fjords, steaming geysers, ice-covered volcanoes, geothermal lagoons, towering mountain peaks, hot springs, waterfalls, tundra and massive glaciers. For wildlife enthusiasts the ocean is alive with whales, seals and porpoises; Arctic foxes are sometimes seen inland, and the coastal cliffs support a vast array of seabirds. To top things off, Iceland offers a rich Viking history and a fascinating culture.

### **Climate & Weather**

Iceland enjoys a much milder climate than its name and location just south of the Arctic Circle would suggest. The island lies in the path of the North Atlantic Current, but the weather can still be extremely variable.

Icelandic winters are remarkably mild. The southerly lowlands average around 0 °C in winter, while the highland areas tend to average around -10 °C. Snow is fairly common between October and April but it rarely stays on the ground for long. In the summer months, Reykjavik averages daytime highs of 10–13°C, but warm summer days can reach as high as 20–25°C.



The main tourist season is from late May to early September. During the first half of this period, the sun stays above the horizon for almost 24 hours a day. But even at the height of summer, the sky is frequently cloudy or overcast. In the winter months, the nights are very long and severe storms can occur. But tourists are drawn to the lure of the incredible coloured hues of the Northern Lights.

## **Wildlife**

Despite its rugged and sometimes stark landscape, Iceland has a varied array of wildlife, in particular marine mammals and birds.

The only native land mammal is the Arctic fox, and although there are thought to be around 8,000 in Iceland, they are fairly elusive. Reindeer are also found on the island, originally imported from Norway. Introduced mammals include the Icelandic horse, cattle, sheep and the Icelandic sheepdog.

The Icelandic waters are rich in marine life with over 300 species of fish and many whales, dolphins and seals. Harbour porpoises are also found in Icelandic waters, one of the smallest marine mammals in the world. Seal species include the grey seal and hooded seal, and amongst the whale species are orcas, humpbacks, minke and fin whales.

Dozens of species of birds are found in Iceland during the summer nesting season. Amongst the seabirds are puffins, skuas and kittiwakes that nest on the sea cliffs.

## **Geography**

Iceland lies in the Atlantic Ocean just south of the Arctic Circle between Norway and Greenland. It is the 18th largest island in the world, covering an area of just over 100,000km<sup>2</sup>. Iceland's terrain is mostly plateau interspersed with mountain peaks and icefields with a coastline deeply indented by fjords and bays. Roughly half of the area is a mountainous lava desert, the highest point being Hvannadalshnúkur at 2,110m, a pyramidal peak on the rim of the summit crater of ice-covered Örfajökull volcano. Glaciers account for just over 10% of the total land area. The largest glacier is Vatnajökull glacier in southeast Iceland, with an area of 8,400km<sup>2</sup>. It is the largest glacier in Europe, and reaches a thickness of 1km.

Iceland has extensive geothermal and volcanic activity. Being one of the youngest landmasses on the planet, it is home to some of the world's most active volcanoes. Eyjafjallajökull volcano erupted in 2010 and Grímsvötn in 2011. The volcanic eruption in Holuhraun from August 2014 to February 2015 produced a lava field of more than 85km<sup>2</sup>, the largest in Iceland since 1783. Due to its volcanic origin, the country's



landscape features geysers, natural hot springs, as well as vast lava fields and black sand beaches.

## **History**

- Archaeological evidence suggests that Iceland was first settled by Gaelic monks from Ireland, prior to the arrival of the Vikings.
- Viking explorers and their slaves from the east settled in Iceland in the late 9th century, a permanent settlement being established near present day Reykjavik around 874 AD.
- By 930 AD, the Viking chieftains had established a form of governance, the Althing, one of the oldest parliaments in the world.
- Leif Eriksson, son of Erik the Red, and the most famous Icelandic Viking, set sail from Iceland to become the first European to reach North America.
- Christianity came to Iceland at the end of the 10th century, with Iceland remaining independent.
- The Sagas of Icelanders were written in the 12th and 13th centuries.
- In the centuries that followed, Iceland fell under Norwegian rule and later Danish rule.
- In the early 19th century, an independence movement began, reaching full force under the leadership of Jon Sigurdsson.
- The trade monopoly ended in 1854, domestic autonomy was established in 1874, followed by home rule in 1904 and limited sovereignty in 1918.
- Iceland proclaimed its independence from Denmark in 1944, with Independence Day being celebrated on June 17th, the birth date of Jon Sigurdsson.



## 4.4 SPITSBERGEN



Deep inside the Arctic Circle lies the remote and rugged Svalbard archipelago, the final strip of land separating Norway from the North Pole. With its stark but beautiful landscape of glaciers, fjords, jagged snow-capped mountains and frozen tundra, this is the land of the polar bear and the midnight sun. Remote and untouched, the 'wildlife capital of the Arctic' is home to Svalbard reindeer, Arctic foxes, colonies of walruses, whales, seals, thousands of migratory seabirds nesting on coastal cliffs and in excess of 3,000 polar bears. If the scenery and wildlife are not draw cards enough, Svalbard also offers a

fascinating history, the staging post for many expeditions to the North Pole in the 16th century due to its close proximity.

Spitsbergen, the largest island of the archipelago offers spectacular scenery on an epic scale, a place where polar bears outnumber humans. One of the world's northernmost inhabited areas, Spitsbergen, meaning 'pointed mountains' in Dutch, houses the frontier-like settlement of Longyearbyen. Remote and surrounded by polar bears, the town was founded at the turn of the 20th century as a mining town. Colourful wooden houses line the streets and reindeer wander through the town.

### **Climate & Weather**

The Arctic climate of Spitsbergen and the Svalbard archipelago means that summers are short but winters are long and extremely cold. Spitsbergen is still covered in ice in April, with average temperatures of between  $-9^{\circ}\text{C}$  and  $-16^{\circ}\text{C}$ . May temperatures are slightly higher, between  $-3^{\circ}\text{C}$  and  $-7^{\circ}\text{C}$  and rainfall is at its lowest during these months, averaging 13 to 16mm. By June, temperatures have increased to between  $-1^{\circ}\text{C}$  and  $3^{\circ}\text{C}$ , with around 18mm of rain during the month, but there is still plenty of snow and ice. July tends to be the warmest month in Spitsbergen, with temperatures averaging  $3-7^{\circ}\text{C}$ , sometimes even reaching double figures. Rainfall is a little higher than in June, but usually falls as drizzly rain and sleet. By August the sun is starting to set, but there are still around 20 hours of daylight and temperatures are generally above zero, averaging  $2-6^{\circ}\text{C}$ . Temperatures start to fall below zero by September, averaging between  $1^{\circ}\text{C}$  and  $-3^{\circ}\text{C}$ .



As summer comes to an end, the archipelago starts to freeze over and by mid-winter Spitsbergen is experiencing the darkness of the polar nights and temperatures as low as  $-20^{\circ}\text{C}$ .

## **Wildlife**

Spitsbergen is the wildlife capital of the Arctic and in the summer, Svalbard becomes the land of the polar bear (or ice bear), with polar bear numbers exceeding that of the human population. Wildlife is protected in Spitsbergen, and abundant in the summer months. In the winter, only the hardiest of species such as Svalbard reindeer, Arctic foxes, polar bears and the Svalbard rock ptarmigan are found.

19 species of marine mammals are found in the waters around Spitsbergen and Svalbard including 12 species of whales and dolphins (bowhead, white beluga, narwhal, blue, fin, humpback, minke, sperm, northern bottlenose, killer and pilot whales and white-beaked dolphins), 5 species of seals (ringed, bearded, harbour, hooded and harp), polar bears and walruses. The only land mammals are the Svalbard reindeer, Arctic fox and sibling vole.

Arctic birds are also abundant in the summer months and some of the most characteristic ones include the following: northern fulmars, pink-footed geese, red-throated divers, barnacle and brent geese, common eider, purple sandpipers, Svalbard rock ptarmigans, Arctic and great skuas, grey phalaropes, Arctic puffins, black-legged kittiwakes, little auks, snow buntings as well as various gulls and guillemots. 60,000 pairs of Brunnich's guillemot breed on Alkefjellet, probably the most famous cliff of the Spitsbergen archipelago.

## **Geography**

Svalbard is an archipelago in the Arctic Ocean, the largest island being Spitsbergen. The archipelago lies between  $74$  and  $81^{\circ}$  north, midway between Norway and the North Pole and is the northernmost part of the Kingdom of Norway. Spitsbergen covers an area of  $39,000\text{km}^2$ . and is bordered by the Arctic Ocean and the Norwegian and Greenland Seas. It is in fact the largest island in Norway and the 36th largest in the world.

60% of Svalbard is covered by glacial ice, 30% is barren rock and the remaining 10% is covered with vegetation. The landscape features snow-covered mountains, fjords, glaciers, wetlands, steppe vegetation and valleys. There are 7 national parks and 23 nature reserves across Svalbard that account for  $2/3$  of the archipelago and serve to protect the pristine yet fragile natural environment. The highest peak in the Svalbard archipelago is Newtontoppen at  $1,717\text{m}$  and the longest fjord is Wijdefjorden at  $108\text{km}$ .



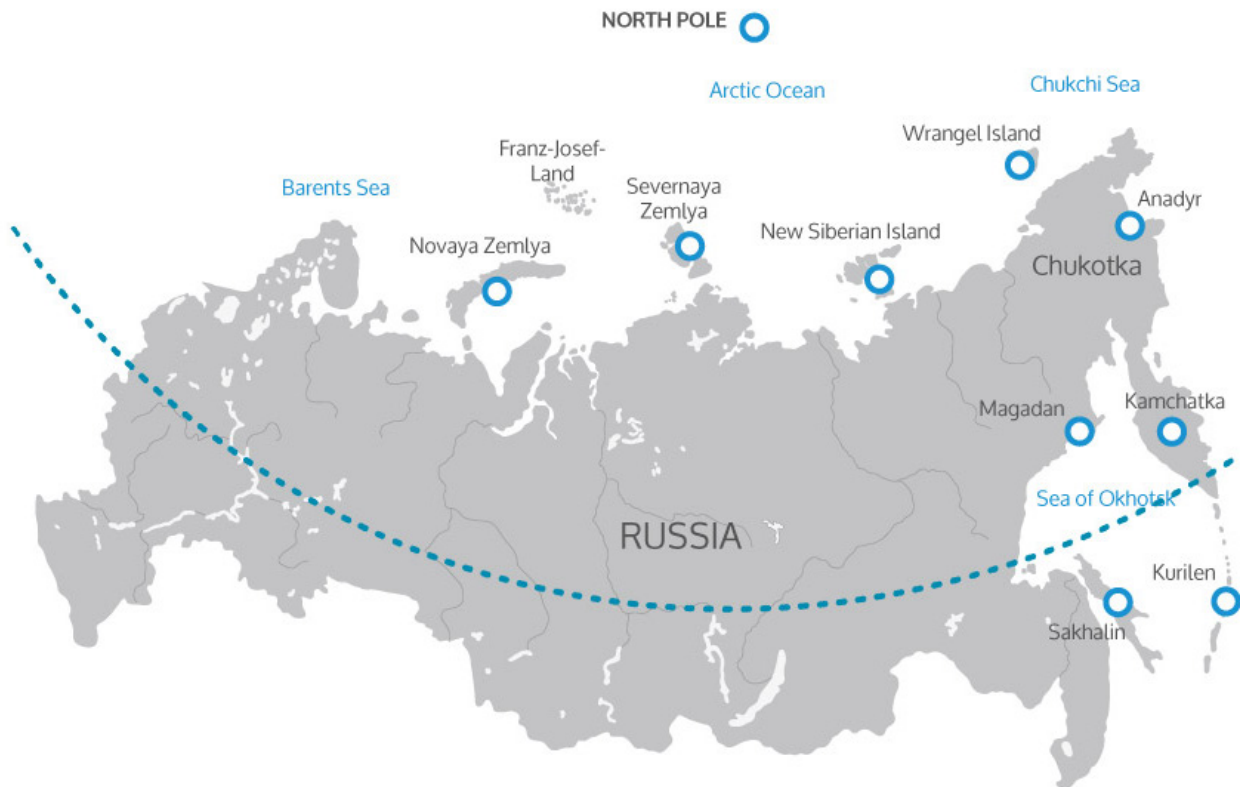
With its location north of the Arctic Circle, Svalbard experiences the Midnight Sun in the summer and the long dark polar nights in the winter.

## **History**

- Spitsbergen was discovered by Dutch navigator Willem Barentsz in 1596 on his search for the Northern Sea Route.
- Whaling expeditions began in the early 1600's, continuing to the 1820's.
- The first known landing on Spitsbergen was made by an English ship in 1604.
- The Danish crown claimed ownership of Svalbard in 1616.
- Russian hunters arrived in the late 17th century and hunted walruses, polar bears and foxes.
- Norwegian hunting, mainly for walruses, began in the 1790's.
- The islands were being used as a base for Arctic exploration by the 1890's.
- Coal deposits were discovered and the Norwegians started mining in 1899.
- Longyearbyen was founded in 1906.
- The Svalbard Treaty of 1920 saw Norway being granted full sovereignty, the archipelago was renamed Svalbard and the main island Spitsbergen.
- The Svalbard Act of 1925 made the archipelago part of Norway, not a dependency.
- Ny Alesund, the most northerly settlement in the world, was the departure point for the 1926 airship flight of Amundsen over the North Pole.
- Longyearbyen was destroyed in 1943 and rebuilt after World War II.



## 4.5 THE RUSSIAN ARCTIC



The Russian Arctic is a truly remote and wild destination. This vast, largely ignored region on the roof of the world opened up to expedition cruising in its purest form after the dismantling of the Soviet Union. It is an absolute wilderness paradise with mammoth steppe vegetation filled with strange endemic flora where you can observe musk oxen, reindeer, walruses and polar bears plus a multitude of birds including tufted and horned puffins, guillemots and crested auklets. A graveyard of ancient walrus skulls is a haunting reminder of the days of hunting, whilst rocky landscapes come alive with colour as the Arctic wildflowers start to bloom. Amongst the indigenous groups of the Russian Arctic are the Chukchi who live mainly on the Chukchi Peninsula or along the shores of the Chukchi and Bering Seas. Those who live in the interior of the Peninsula have traditionally been nomadic herdsman who migrated seasonally with their reindeer, whereas the coastal Chukchi have traditionally survived by hunting sea mammals. Their religion is a form of shamanism and their culture is rich in folklore.

### **Climate & Weather**

The Arctic city of Murmansk is located in the extreme northwest of Russia. Average highs in July exceed 17°C, but in the height of winter temperatures have been known to fall as low as -40°C. Anadyr lies in the extreme northeast. January, the coldest month sees average temperatures of -23°C with average highs of -18°C. In July, average highs are 16°C.





Franz Josef Land, an archipelago that forms part of the Russian Arctic is warmer than the Canadian Arctic archipelago but colder than Spitsbergen, with summer temperatures averaging 0 to 3°C.

The Northeast Passage connects the Atlantic and Pacific Oceans across the Arctic along the coasts of Russia and Norway. Parts remain ice-free year round while other parts freeze in winter and partially melt in the summer, opening up the route to some Arctic voyages.

## **Wildlife**

Cruising the waters of the Russian Arctic you may see grey and minke whales and possibly a white beluga whale. Around the islands you find birds such as least and crested auklets, tufted and horned puffins and guillemots. There are at least 40 different species of birds in the area. Emperor geese and spoon-billed sandpipers are found on Belaka Spit near the mouth of Kolyuchin Inlet and grey whales also frequent the area.

Wrangel Island is known for its wildlife. It is a significant polar bear denning site and also boasts the world's largest population of Pacific walrus. Musk oxen and reindeer thrive on the island, as do tundra geese. Each summer thousands of birds migrate here to breed including snow geese, snowy owls, gulls (Ross's, Sabine's and ivory), skuas and Arctic terns.

The Sea of Okhotsk is one of the unique wildlife areas within this region where the little known and beautiful ribbon bear can be found.

## **Geography**

The Russian Arctic extends west to east for nearly 7,000 kilometres from the Kola Peninsula to Nenetsia, the Gulf of Ob, the Taymyr Peninsula and the Chukchi Peninsula in the Russian Far East. The islands and archipelagos in the Arctic Sea that also form part of the Russian Arctic include Severnaya Zemlya, Novaya Zemlya, Franz Josef Land, Wrangel Island, Heron Island, New Siberian Islands and Kolguyev Island.

North of the Arctic Circle, the Russian Arctic is mainly barren tundra or permafrost. The subsoil is permanently frozen and so the only natural vegetation comprises mosses, lichens and low shrubs.

The Franz Josef Land group of islands are located in the Barents Sea, the most northerly group of islands of the Russian Arctic, lying within 900 kilometres of the North Pole. The archipelago is made up of 191 ice-covered glaciated islands that are encased in sea ice for most of the year.



## **History**

- The first recorded voyage to the Russian Arctic was by the Novgorodian Uleb in 1032, in which he discovered the Kara Sea.
- Between the 11th and 16th centuries, Russian coastal dwellers of the White Sea, known as 'pomors', explored the Barents Region, Spitsbergen and Novaya Zemlya, all within the Arctic Circle and founded the settlement of Mangazeya east of the Yamal Peninsula. They developed the first icebreaking ships known as 'kochi'.
- By the 17th century the pomors established a continuous sea route from Arkhangelsk to the Yamal Peninsula, known as the Mangazeya Seaway. This was an early precursor to the Northeast Passage.
- The Mangazeya Seaway was closed by Russia in 1619, as Russia feared the English and Dutch would penetrate into Siberia as they explored the western parts of the passage.
- In 1648 the Bering Strait between Asia and North America was passed through for the first time by Fedot Popov and Semyon Dezhnyov.
- The Great Northern Expedition of 1733–1743 was one of the largest exploration enterprises in history and resulted in the mapping of most of the Arctic coastline of Russia, producing 62 large maps and charts of the Arctic region.
- In 1878–79 the Finnish explorer Adolf Erik Nordenskjöld made the first complete crossing of the Northeast Passage, leading the Vega Expedition from west to east.
- The late 19th century and early 20th century saw a renewed interest in Arctic exploration and new attempts to explore the Northern Sea Route.
- The last major unknown archipelago, Severnaya Zemlya, was discovered by Boris Vilkitsky during his 1913 expedition.
- Exploration of the Russian Arctic was completed in the 1930's under Otto Schmidt.
- North Pole –1, the drifting ice station with a team led by Ivan Papanin, became the first expedition of its kind in 1937–38. It inaugurated a succession of drifting polar research stations that continues to this day.



## 4.6 THE NORTH POLE

Only a few places in the world have stirred the hearts of explorers more than the North Pole. This region has unspeakable power and the journey to reach the most northern point on Earth is equally as inspiring. At 90° north, you are at a point on Earth where the only direction you can go is south. A journey to the North Pole offers the chance of a lifetime, the chance to be one of the privileged few to have stood at the top of the world, surrounded by white icescapes. Travelling through thick pack ice, the voyage itself is an exciting adventure.

### **Climate & Weather**

The North Pole lies at sea level in the middle of the ocean and as a result is warmer than the South Pole. In July and August temperatures even peak above freezing. In winter, temperatures at the North Pole range from -13 to -50°C. In the summer months of June to August, temperatures average 0°C.

### **Wildlife**

At the North Pole, the drifting ice makes for an unpredictable habitat and land mammals rarely migrate here. Arctic foxes and ringed seals have been spotted in the area and occasional polar bear tracks have been seen near to the North Pole. The most frequent visitors and inhabitants are migratory birds such as snow buntings, fulmars, kittiwakes and the Arctic tern. The Arctic tern migrates over 60,000 kilometres on its annual round trip between the North and South Poles. Several species of fish are found at the North Pole including Arctic cod.

### **Geography**

The North Pole is the most northernmost point on Earth at latitude 90° north, and from the North Pole, all directions point south. It sits in the middle of the Arctic Ocean, on water that is almost permanently covered with constantly shifting sea ice. The depth of the ocean at the North Pole is over 4,000m and the ice is 2-3m in thickness.

### **History**

- The first major attempts to reach the North Pole were in the 19th century.
- Frederick Albert Cook and Robert Peary both claim to have been first to reach the North Pole in 1908/9, still debated to this day.



- The first verified flight over the North Pole is credited to Roald Amundsen in 1926.
- The first men to set foot at the North Pole were a Soviet party in 1948, landing in 3 aircraft.
- The USS Nautilus submarine was the first vessel to travel beneath the North Pole in 1958.
- Ralph Plaisted reached the pole by snowmobile in 1968, the first confirmed surface crossing.
- Wally Herbert was the first person to reach the North Pole on foot in 1969.
- The Soviet nuclear-powered icebreaker NS Arktika was the first surface vessel to reach the North Pole in 1977.
- In 2007 a Russian submersible reached the seabed under the North Pole, dropping a titanium flag there.
- Canada, Russia & Denmark all claim the North Pole as part of their territory but currently no country owns it.

## 5. JOINING CITIES

### 5.1 LONGYEARBYEN

Longyearbyen is a small coal-mining town on the island of Spitsbergen, in Norway's Svalbard archipelago. It is the largest settlement and administrative centre of Svalbard, with a population of just over 2,000.

The **Svalbard Museum** aims to provide information on the natural and cultural history of the region. The **Life in Light & Ice Exhibition** is a journey through Svalbard's history from the first whalers to trappers, seal and walrus hunters and on to Arctic exploration, mining and tourism. There are also exhibits on flora, fauna and geology with a mix of text, artefacts and even stuffed birds and mammals

**Galleri Svalbard** houses the Gallery and Longyearbyen Arts & Craft Centre. The Gallery features the works of renowned Norwegian artist Kåre Tveter, as well as works by other artists such as Olav Storø. There are both permanent and temporary exhibitions. There are historic maps of Svalbard dating back to 1570, etchings and a vast collection of books on display, plus there is a short film called The Arctic Nature of Svalbard available for viewing.



The **Spitsbergen Airship Museum** or **North Pole Exhibition Museum** is a private museum that houses a fascinating collection of artefacts, original newspapers and expedition films, photographs, maps and other documents and items relating to the history of polar exploration. It relates the story of 3 airships that departed from Svalbard towards the North Pole.

The **Svalbard Global Seed Vault** is a secure seed bank designed to protect the world's plant life by providing a safety net against accidental loss of diversity in traditional gene banks. The exterior of the building is decorated with an illuminated artwork entitled Perpetual Repercussion by Norwegian artist Dyveke Sanne.

**Svalbard Church** is the most northerly church in the world. Longyearbyen's first church was consecrated in 1921, but it was bombed in WWII and burned down. The foundation stone for the new church was laid in 1956 and the church consecrated in August 1958. Built of wood, the church houses the original silver altar candlesticks and the baptismal bowl that was a gift from King Haakon VII and Queen Maud.

## Climate

Longyearbyen's and Svalbard's climate is an Arctic one. Average temperatures in July range between 3 and 7°C, with the highest temperature ever recorded being over 21°C in 1979. In the winter months temperatures plummet to an average low of -20°C, with -46.3°C being the lowest ever recorded in March 1986. Longyearbyen experiences Midnight Sun from mid-April to nearly the end of August and Polar Nights from the end of October to mid-February, but the sun is generally not visible in Longyearbyen until the second week in March. Snow is usual between November and March.

	AV. MAX. TEMP. (°C)	AV. MIN. TEMP. (°C)	RAINFALL (mm)
JANUARY	-13	-20	22
FEBRUARY	-13	-21	28
MARCH	-13	-20	29
APRIL	-9	-16	16
MAY	-3	-7	13
JUNE	3	-1	18
JULY	7	3	24
AUGUST	6	2	30
SEPTEMBER	1	-3	25
OCTOBER	-4	-9	19
NOVEMBER	-8	-14	22
DECEMBER	-11	-18	25



## **Getting There & Away**

Longyearbyen is the main departure point for cruises in Spitsbergen and is a short domestic flight from Norway's capital, Oslo. There are also flights between Tromsø and Longyearbyen. We strongly recommend that you arrive in Longyearbyen at least one night prior to embarking your ship as low cloud often results in flights being delayed. This also gives you a good opportunity to explore the town.

*Please note that cruise ships sail at specified times and will not wait for missing passengers or luggage.*

Each ship is different, and arrives in port at different times. We strongly advise you to book a night's accommodation in Longyearbyen at the end of the cruise if possible, as we will not be held responsible for the late arrival of the ship from your voyage. Arrange flights or other transport from Longyearbyen for the day after your cruise is scheduled to return. If you must depart on the day of cruise disembarkation, please ensure that you do not book a flight out before 12.00pm (Noon) at the very earliest.

*We will **not** be held responsible if you miss your flight due to late arrival and disembarkation from your cruise ship.*

## **Airport Shuttle**

There is an airport shuttle that links up with all flight arrivals and departures into and out of Longyearbyen, stopping at every hotel and guesthouse in town. Payment must be made in Norwegian krone (NOK) or by credit card. Please note that the airport shuttle does not accept foreign currency. The cost is currently around 75 NOK (8 Euro).

## **Environmental Protection & Guidelines**

The flora and fauna on Svalbard have adapted to the difficult Arctic conditions, but the nature is still very fragile, and even minor encroachments can cause lasting damage. This is why strict environmental regulations have been developed for Svalbard. The purpose of the Environmental Act of Svalbard is to ensure the protection of Svalbard's vulnerable natural environment and its many valuable historical monuments.

1. Do not leave any litter anywhere or any lasting signs of your visit.
2. Birds and other animals are not to be disturbed.



3. Help take care of the biodiversity. Do not pick flowers.
4. Leave old cultural remains alone.
5. It is prohibited to lure, pursue or otherwise seek out polar bears in such a way as to disturb them or expose either bears or humans to danger.

### **Other Useful Information**

#### **Tourist Information Office:**

- Opening Hours: April, May & Sep Daily 10.00am – 4.00pm; June to August Daily 10.00am – 5.00pm

#### **Svalbard Museum**

- Address: Vei 231 – 1, Longyearbyen 9170, Svalbard & Jan Mayen
- Opening Hours: Daily 10.00am – 5.00pm

#### **Galleri Svalbard**

- Address: Vei 100, Longyearbyen 9170, Svalbard & Jan Mayen
- Opening Hours: Tues to Sat 1.00pm – 5.00pm, Sun 11.00am – 3.00pm

#### **North Pole Expedition Museum**

- Address: Behind UNIS, Longyearbyen, Svalbard and Jan Mayen
- Opening Hours: Daily 9.00am – 2.00pm (Feb to May), 9.00am – 5.00pm (June to Sep)

#### **Svalbard Global Seed Vault**

- Address: Svalbard and Jan Mayen
- Opening Hours: Wed to Sun 2.15pm – 8.15pm

#### **Shops**

Most shops are open Monday to Friday from 10.00am to 6.00pm and on Saturdays from 10.00 to 4.00pm. Some shops also open on Sundays generally between 11.00am and 4.00pm.





## Local Currency & Exchange Rates

The local currency is the "Norwegian Krone" and is represented as NOK. Many shops in Longyearbyen will accept Euros. Major credit cards are also widely accepted and there are ATM machines at SpareBank, adjacent to the Post Office.

Please check with websites such as [www.oanda.com](http://www.oanda.com) or [www.xe.com](http://www.xe.com) for current rates of exchange.

## Banks

Opening Hours: Mon to Fri 9.00am – 3.30pm

### SpareBank 1 Nord-Norge

- Address: Vei 227.2

## Post Office

Opening Hours: Mon to Fri 10.00am – 5.00pm; Sat 11.00am – 2.00pm

## 5.2 REYKJAVIK

Situated on the coast on the southern shore of Faxa Bay, Reykjavik is the capital of Iceland and its largest city. At a latitude of 64°08' N, Reykjavik is the world's most northernmost capital of a sovereign state. Founded in 1786 as a trading town on the location of the country's first permanent settlement, Reykjavik is one of the cleanest, greenest and safest cities in the world. It is the starting point for many cruises to east, west and south Greenland as well as to the Russian Arctic.

**Höfði House** was built in 1909 and was initially the house of the French consul in Iceland. It is one of the most beautiful and historically significant buildings in the Reykjavik area, best known as the location for the 1986 summit meeting of Presidents Reagan and Mikhail Gorbachev, a historic event that effectively marked the end of the Cold War. Although not open to the public, it can be viewed from the outside.

The **Perlan** is a futuristic revolving glass dome building, designed by Ingimundur Sveinsson and supported by 6 vast hot-water tanks. The dome has an observation platform that offers panoramic views of Reykjavik and the surrounding area.



The main landmark of Reykjavik is the striking concrete **Hallgrímskirkja Church** whose tower is visible from most parts of the city.

The **National Museum** traces Iceland's history from the Vikings to its current contemporary culture. The main exhibition has over 2,000 artefacts and includes the Valhjófsstadur door that features elaborate medieval engravings.

Reykjavik has many other fascinating places of interest including the **Culture House**, the colourful **Old Harbour**, the impressive **Reykjavik City Hall** on the northern shore of Lake Tjornin, **Nordic House**, the **Imagine Peace Tower** – a work of art conceived by Yoko Ono as a beacon to world peace and the **Whales of Iceland Exhibition** that opened in 2015 and takes you into the world of whales with 23 life-size models of whales on display.

The **Krýsuvík Geothermal Area** lies a short distance from Reykjavik. A boardwalk takes you past the steaming volcanic vents, boiling hot springs and colourful crater lakes, with information boards explaining the geological facts. Nearby are the stunning **Krýsuvíkurborg Cliffs**, where thousands of sea birds nest in the rugged hillside.

## Climate

Reykjavik has a sub-Arctic climate but despite its northern latitude, temperatures rarely fall below  $-15^{\circ}\text{C}$ , even in the height of winter. Summers are cool, with temperatures fluctuating between  $10$  and  $15^{\circ}\text{C}$  and rarely exceeding  $20^{\circ}\text{C}$ . July and August are the warmest months and January the coldest. Gales are common in winter.

	Av. Max. Temp ( $^{\circ}\text{C}$ )	Av. Min. Temp ( $^{\circ}\text{C}$ )	Precipitation (mm)
<b>JANUARY</b>	2	-3	76
<b>FEBRUARY</b>	3	-2	72
<b>MARCH</b>	3	-2	82
<b>APRIL</b>	6	0	58
<b>MAY</b>	9	6	44
<b>JUNE</b>	12	7	50
<b>JULY</b>	13	8	52
<b>AUGUST</b>	13	8	62
<b>SEPTEMBER</b>	10	5	66
<b>OCTOBER</b>	7	2	86
<b>NOVEMBER</b>	3	-1	73
<b>DECEMBER</b>	2	-3	79



## **Getting There & Away**

For cruises that start or end in Iceland there are direct flights to Reykjavik from London as well as other European capitals. We strongly recommend that you arrive in Reykjavik at least one night prior to embarking your ship in case of any flight delays. This also gives you a good opportunity to explore the city.

The main cruise ship terminal is located 3km to the east of downtown Reykjavik.

*Please note that cruise ships sail at specified times and will not wait for missing passengers or luggage.*

Each ship is different, and arrives in port at different times. We strongly advise you to book a night's accommodation in Reykjavik at the end of the cruise if possible, as we will not be held responsible for the late arrival of the ship from your voyage. Arrange flights or other transport from Reykjavik for the day after your cruise is scheduled to return. If you must depart on the day of cruise disembarkation, please ensure that you do not book a flight out before 12.00pm (Noon) at the very earliest.

We will **not** be held responsible if you miss your flight due to late arrival and disembarkation from your cruise ship.

## **Other Useful Information**

### **Tourist Information Office:**

- Address: Tjarnargata 11, 101 Reykjavík
- Opening Hours: Daily 8.00am – 8.00pm

### **Höfði House**

- Address: Fjörutún, 105 Reykjavik

### **Perlan Museum**

- Address: Varmahlíð 1, 105 Reykjavik
- Opening Hours: Daily 9.00am – 7.00pm

### **Hallgrímskirkja Church**

- Address: Hallgrímstorg 1, 101 Reykjavik
- Opening Hours: 9.00am – 5.00pm (Oct to April), 9.00am – 9.00pm (May to Sept)



## **Shops**

Most shops are open Monday to Friday from 9.00am to 6.00pm and on Saturdays from 10.00 to 4.00pm. Some shops also open on Sundays.

## **Local Currency & Exchange Rates**

The local currency is the "Icelandic Krona" and is represented as ISK. Major credit cards are also widely accepted and cash can be withdrawn through ATM machines.

Please check with websites such as [www.oanda.com](http://www.oanda.com) or [www.xe.com](http://www.xe.com) for current rates of exchange.

## **Banks**

Opening Hours: Mon to Fri 9.00am – 4.00pm.

Larger banks may have longer opening hours.

### **Islandsbanki (Various Branches)**

- Address: Fiskislóð 10, 101 Reykjavík
- Address: Höfðabakki 9, 110 Reykjavík

### **Landsbankinn**

- Address: Austurstræti 11, 101 Reykjavík

### **Central Bank of Iceland**

- Address: Kalkofnsvegur 1, 150 Reykjavík
- Opening Hours: Mon to Fri 8.00am – 5.00pm

## **Post Office**

Opening Hours: Mon to Fri 10.00am – 6.00pm



## 5.3 ANADYR

Located at the mouth of the Anadyr River, Anadyr is Russia's most easternmost town and the starting point for the majority of cruises to the Russian Arctic including Chukotka and along the Northeast Passage.

The beautiful wooden **Russian Orthodox Holy Trinity Cathedral** is the largest wooden church in Russia and the only cathedral in Chukotka.

There are several monuments scattered around Anadyr including the **Monument to the Writer Yuri Rytkeu**, the **Monument to Fighters for Freedom**, the **Monument Nobody is Forgotten, Nothing is Forgotten** and a **Memorial to the First Workers of Chukotka**.

The **Chukotka Okrug Museum** provides a fascinating insight into the Chukchi culture and life in the region.

### Climate

The climate of Anadyr is fairly harsh, with long, very cold winters and short, cool summers. July is the warmest month with average temperatures of 11–12°C, although temperatures have been known to drop below zero even in July. The lowest temperature recorded in Anadyr was -46.8 °C in January 1913.

	Av. Max. Temp (°C)	Av. Min. Temp (°C)	Precipitation (mm)
<b>JANUARY</b>	-20	-26	45
<b>FEBRUARY</b>	-18	-25	40
<b>MARCH</b>	-15	-23	33
<b>APRIL</b>	-9	-16	23
<b>MAY</b>	2	-4	13
<b>JUNE</b>	11	3	18
<b>JULY</b>	16	9	34
<b>AUGUST</b>	14	7	43
<b>SEPTEMBER</b>	8	2	31
<b>OCTOBER</b>	-2	-7	26
<b>NOVEMBER</b>	-10	-16	34
<b>DECEMBER</b>	-16	-23	42



## **Getting There & Away**

For cruises that start or end in Anadyr there are direct flights to Anadyr from Moscow. Some cruises may offer a charter flight between Nome, Alaska and Anadyr. If travelling from Australasia, this may give you the option to travel via the USA or transit through Moscow. We strongly recommend that you arrive in Anadyr at least one night prior to embarking your ship in case of any flight delays. This also gives you a good opportunity to explore the city.

Anadyr's airport is located in the settlement of Ugolnye Kopi, across the Anadyr estuary from the city. Motorboats take you across the estuary, with a journey time of about 40 minutes.

*Please note that cruise ships sail at specified times and will not wait for missing passengers or luggage.*

Each ship is different, and arrives in port at different times. We strongly advise you to book a night's accommodation in Anadyr at the end of the cruise if possible, as we will **not** be held responsible for the late arrival of the ship from your voyage. Arrange flights or other transport from Anadyr for the day after your cruise is scheduled to return. If you must depart on the day of cruise disembarkation, please ensure that you do not book a flight out before 12.00pm (Noon) at the very earliest.

*We will **not** be held responsible if you miss your flight due to late arrival and disembarkation from your cruise ship.*

## **Other Useful Information**

### **Holy Trinity Cathedral**

- Address: Lenina St. 21
- Opening Hours: Mon to Fri 7.00am – 6.00pm, Sat & Sun 9.00am – 6.00pm

### **Chukotka Okrug Museum**

- Address: Rul'tytegina ul., d. 5, Anadyr

### **Shops**

Most shops are open Monday to Saturday from 10.00am to 8.00pm and on Sundays from 10.00 to 6.00pm. The shopping mall is open daily from 10.00am to 10.00pm.



## Local Currency & Exchange Rates

The local currency is the "Russian Ruble" and is represented as RUB.

Please check with websites such as [www.oanda.com](http://www.oanda.com) or [www.xe.com](http://www.xe.com) for current rates of exchange.

## Banks

US\$ and Euros can be exchanged for rubles.

### Asia-Pacific Bank

- Address: Otke Street, 22, Anadyr
- Opening Hours: Mon to Fri 10.00am – 7.00pm, Sat 11.00am – 4.00pm

### Sberbank of Russia

- Address: Otke Street, 17, Anadyr
- Opening Hours: Mon to Fri 9.30am – 7.00pm, Sat 9.30.am – 3.00pm

## 5.4 MURMANSK

Situated in the extreme northwest of Russia, Murmansk lies on the Kola Bay, an inlet of the Barents Sea. It is the largest city north of the Arctic Circle and a major port on the Arctic Ocean that remains ice-free year round. It is a gateway city for Arctic cruises to the North Pole and Russian Arctic including Franz Josef Land.

Founded in 1916 as Romanov-na-Murmanye, the last city founded in the Russian Empire, it was renamed Murmansk in 1917 after the February Revolution. Although the city's streets are lined with stark Soviet-era architecture, Murmansk is surrounded by Arctic scenery.

One of the most famous sights of the city is the **Alyosha Statue** or **Defenders of the Soviet Arctic**. This 30-metre high statue of a soldier was built in 1974 to commemorate the Soviet defence of the Arctic during WWII. It is one of the largest statues in Russia.





The **Lenin Nuclear Icebreaker**, the world's first nuclear powered surface ship, now rests in Murmansk docks after being decommissioned in the 1950's. It is now a museum.

The **Regional Museum of Local History** has displays of cultural and archaeological artefacts whilst the **Murmansk Regional Museum of Art** features Russian works dating back to the 18th century.

The tallest building in Murmansk sits in the October District and is the 18-storey **Arctic Hotel**. Nearby is Murmansk's first monument – the **Monument to the Victims of Foreign Intervention**.

The city also boasts the most northerly aquarium in the world – the **Murmansk Oceanarium**.

### Climate

Murmansk's sub-Arctic climate means that the city has long, cold winters and short, cool summers, with average temperatures only rising above freezing from May to October. In the winter, temperatures often plunge below  $-20^{\circ}\text{C}$ . July tends to be the warmest month with temperatures reaching an average of  $17^{\circ}\text{C}$ . The Midnight Sun is above the horizon for 63 days from 22 May.

	Av. Max. Temp ( $^{\circ}\text{C}$ )	Av. Min. Temp ( $^{\circ}\text{C}$ )	Precipitation (mm)
<b>JANUARY</b>	-7	-13	30
<b>FEBRUARY</b>	-6.5	-13	22
<b>MARCH</b>	-2	-9	23
<b>APRIL</b>	3	-4	24
<b>MAY</b>	8	1	36
<b>JUNE</b>	14	6	53
<b>JULY</b>	17	9	70
<b>AUGUST</b>	15	8	61
<b>SEPTEMBER</b>	10	4	52
<b>OCTOBER</b>	4	0	51
<b>NOVEMBER</b>	-2	-7	38
<b>DECEMBER</b>	-5	-11	34



## **Getting There & Away**

For cruises that start or end in Murmansk, there are direct flights to Murmansk from Moscow and St. Petersburg. We strongly recommend that you arrive in Murmansk at least one night prior to embarking your ship in case of any flight delays. This also gives you a good opportunity to explore the city.

Murmansk airport is 27km southwest of the city at Murmashi. Buses run between the airport and the city, departing approximately every 30 minutes, between 6.00am and 11.30pm.

The Cruise Terminal is designed for foreign cruise vessels and is located at the central port of Murmansk, adjacent to the Icebreaker 'Lenin'.

*Please note that cruise ships sail at specified times and will not wait for missing passengers or luggage.*

Each ship is different, and arrives in port at different times. We strongly advise you to book a night's accommodation in Murmansk at the end of the cruise if possible, as we will **not** be held responsible for the late arrival of the ship from your voyage. Arrange flights or other transport from Murmansk for the day after your cruise is scheduled to return. If you must depart on the day of cruise disembarkation, please ensure that you do not book a flight out before 12.00pm (Noon) at the very earliest.

We will **not** be held responsible if you miss your flight due to late arrival and disembarkation from your cruise ship.

## **Other Useful Information**

### **Murmansk Oceanarium**

- Address: Murmansk Prospect Geroev Severomortsev, 4
- Opening Hours: Wed to Sun 10.30am – 6.00pm

### **Nuclear Icebreaker Lenin**

- Address: Portovy pr 25, Murmansk
- Opening Hours: Wed to Sun – Tours at 12, 2 and 4.00pm

### **Regional Studies Museum**

- Address: Lenina pr 90, Murmansk
- Opening Hours: Wed to Sat 11.00am – 6.00pm



## **Shops**

Most shops are open Monday to Saturday from 10.00am to 7.00pm and on Sundays from 12.00pm to 6.00pm. Murmansk shopping mall is open daily from 10.00am to 10.00pm.

## **Local Currency & Exchange Rates**

The local currency is the "Russian Ruble" and is represented as RUB.

Please check with websites such as [www.oanda.com](http://www.oanda.com) or [www.xe.com](http://www.xe.com) for current rates of exchange.

## **Banks**

US\$ and Euros can be exchanged for rubles.

### **Alfa-Bank**

- Address: Lenina Avenue, 19 A
- Opening Hours: Mon to Fri 9.00am – 8.00pm, Sat 10.00am – 6.00pm, Sun 11.00am – 5.00pm

### **Orient Express Bank**

- Address: Lenina Avenue, 50
- Opening Hours: Mon to Fri 9.00am – 8.00pm, Sat 10.00am – 6.00pm, Sun 11.00am – 4.00pm

### **Bank Sovetsky**

- Address: Poljarnye Zoru Street, 3
- Opening Hours: Mon to Fri 9.00am – 8.00pm, Sat 10.30am – 5.00pm



## 5.5 IQALUIT

A few Arctic cruises to the Canadian Arctic and also Greenland use Iqaluit as the starting or finishing point, linked by a flight to Ottawa. Iqaluit is located at the northern end of Frobisher Bay on Baffin Island. It is the capital of the Canadian territory of Nunavut, its largest community and its only city. The city is rich in Inuit culture having been used as a fishing place by the Inuit for thousands of years. Iqaluit means 'place of many fish' in Inuktitut.

The new **Igloo Cathedral** was opened in 2012, built in the shape of an igloo. Also within the city is the **Nunatta Sunakkutaangit** Museum featuring a large collection of Inuit and Arctic artefacts. The museum is housed in a restored and extended Hudson's Bay Company building, clad in the signature red and white and transported to Iqaluit from its original site on the Apex Beach.

In April the city holds its annual week-long spring festival – the **Toonik Tyme Festival**. The festival features traditional Inuit games and activities including igloo building, dogsled racing, snowmobile racing, seal skinning contests as well as musical performances and traditional food.

A short distance from Iqaluit is the **Sylvia Grinnell Territorial Park** with its beautiful rolling tundra landscape and meandering river with rapids and waterfalls. Caribou and Arctic fox roam the park and there are some ancient Thule ruins to be found near the falls. The woodsia fern, one of the rarest plants in Canada, grows here.

**Qaummaarviit Territorial Park** is located on a tiny rocky island near the city, containing archaeological remains of the ancient Thule people.



## Climate

Although Iqaluit lies well south of the Arctic Circle, it is a cold city with an Arctic climate that is influenced by the cold deep waters of the Labrador Current off Baffin Island. The winters are cold and the summers are short, with monthly temperatures averaging below freezing for eight months of the year. The summer is the wettest season and July the warmest month.

	<b>Av. Max. Temp (°C)</b>	<b>Av. Min. Temp (°C)</b>	<b>Precipitation (mm)</b>
<b>JANUARY</b>	-23	-31	20
<b>FEBRUARY</b>	-23	-32	19
<b>MARCH</b>	-18	-28	19
<b>APRIL</b>	-9	-19	27
<b>MAY</b>	-1	-8	29
<b>JUNE</b>	7	0	33
<b>JULY</b>	12	4	52
<b>AUGUST</b>	10	3	70
<b>SEPTEMBER</b>	5	0	55
<b>OCTOBER</b>	-1	-6	33
<b>NOVEMBER</b>	-8	-16	27
<b>DECEMBER</b>	-17	-26	20

## Getting There & Away

Iqaluit is the main cruise embarkation point for cruises to the Canadian Arctic and generally there is a charter flight available between Ottawa and Iqaluit. The easiest and most popular way for Australians to get to Ottawa is via Vancouver with Air Canada or via Los Angeles with United or American Airlines.

We strongly recommend that you arrive in Ottawa at least one night prior to your charter flight to Iqaluit in case of any flight delays and to give you the opportunity to explore the city.

*Please note that cruise ships sail at specified times and will not wait for missing passengers or luggage.*

Each ship is different, and arrives in port at different times. We strongly advise you to book a night's accommodation in Iqaluit at the end of the cruise if a charter flight is not included, as we will **not** be held responsible for the late arrival of the ship from your voyage. Arrange flights or other transport from Iqaluit for the day after your cruise is scheduled to return. If you must depart on the day of cruise disembarkation, please ensure that you do not book a flight out before 12.00pm (Noon) at the very earliest.



We will **not** be held responsible if you miss your flight due to late arrival and disembarkation from your cruise ship.

### **Airport**

The airport is only a 10-minute stroll from downtown Iqaluit. Taxis are also available and charge around US\$7 per person to anywhere in the town.

### **Other Useful Information**

#### **Unikkaarvik Visitor Centre**

- Phone: + (867) 979-4636

#### **Nunatta Sunakkutaangit Museum**

- Address: Sinaa Street, Iqaluit
- Opening Hours: Tues to Sun 1.00pm – 5.00pm

#### **Igloo Cathedral**

- Address: Mattaq Crescent, Iqaluit

#### **Shops**

Most shops are open Monday to Saturday from 10.00am to 6.00pm.

#### **Local Currency & Exchange Rates**

The local currency is the "Canadian Dollar" and is represented as CAD.

Please check with websites such as [www.oanda.com](http://www.oanda.com) or [www.xe.com](http://www.xe.com) for current rates of exchange.



## **Banks**

Opening Hours: Mon to Fri 9.30am – 4.00pm

### **Royal Bank of Canada**

- Address: Igluvut Building, 922 Niaqunngusiaruaq, Iqaluit

### **CIBC Bank**

- Address: 611 Queen Elizabeth, Iqaluit

### **First Nations Bank of Canada**

- Address: 630 Queen Elizabeth, Iqaluit

## **Post Office**

- Address: 615 Queen Elizabeth, Iqaluit
- Opening Hours: Mon to Fri 9.00am – 5.30pm



## 5.6 KANGERLUSSUAQ

Kangerlussuaq is the gateway for a few Arctic cruises to Greenland. Founded in 1941, this small settlement in western Greenland lies at the head of Kangerlussuaq Fjord, a deep fjord that extends for nearly 200 kilometres. The town of around 500 inhabitants is the location of Greenland's largest commercial airport and is in fact the islands main air transport hub. The airport dates back to WWII, when it was a US airbase and continued as such until 1992.

The region around Kangerlussuaq is home to range of wildlife including musk oxen, reindeer and the Arctic fox. There are over 3,000 musk oxen in the region, having being brought here from northeastern Greenland in the 1960's.

The **Greenland Ice Sheet** is within easy access of Kangerlussuaq, via a dirt road that runs for 25 kilometres northwest through the Isunngua Highlands.

**Russell Glacier** flows from the ice sheet, an active glacier that advances 25 metres annually. Its vertical walls rise up to 60 metres, making it an impressive sight.

Situated at the heart of the airport area is **Kangerlussuaq Museum**. The museum tells the history of the town as an American airbase as well as the history of flying in Greenland before, during and after WWII. It retraces the history of the region from the first Inuit camps to the present day.

Kangerlussuaq is one of the best places in Greenland to see the Northern Lights that are visible between October and April, set against a backdrop of the Greenland Ice Cap and the colourful houses of the town. Dogsledding tours are also available in the winter months.





## Climate

The climate of Kangerlussuaq is a polar tundra climate, the area receiving very little rainfall. July tends to be the warmest month and February the coldest.

	<b>Av. Max. Temp (°C)</b>	<b>Av. Min. Temp (°C)</b>	<b>Precipitation (mm)</b>
<b>JANUARY</b>	-15	-25	6
<b>FEBRUARY</b>	-16	-26	4
<b>MARCH</b>	-11	-22	4
<b>APRIL</b>	-3	-13	7
<b>MAY</b>	8	-2	7
<b>JUNE</b>	14	4	13
<b>JULY</b>	17	6	22
<b>AUGUST</b>	14	4	28
<b>SEPTEMBER</b>	8	0	18
<b>OCTOBER</b>	-2	-9	13
<b>NOVEMBER</b>	-8	-16	12
<b>DECEMBER</b>	-12	-22	6

## Getting There & Away

Air Greenland operates flights from Copenhagen and Reykjavik to Kangerlussuaq. Many cruises that include Greenland as part of the itinerary, start or end in Longyearbyen or Reykjavik, and charter flights may be included. If your cruise begins in Kangerlussuaq, we strongly recommend that you arrive there at least one night prior to your cruise embarkation in case of any flight delays.

Transfers are available between the airport and the harbour.

*Please note that cruise ships sail at specified times and will not wait for missing passengers or luggage.*

Each ship is different, and arrives in port at different times. We strongly advise you to book a night's accommodation in Kangerlussuaq at the end of the cruise if a charter flight is not included, as we will **not** be held responsible for the late arrival of the ship from your voyage. Arrange flights or other transport from Kangerlussuaq for the day after your cruise is scheduled to return. If you must depart on the day of cruise disembarkation, please ensure that you do not book a flight out before 12.00pm (Noon) at the very earliest.

We will **not** be held responsible if you miss your flight due to late arrival and disembarkation from your cruise ship.



## **Other Useful Information**

### **Kangerlussuaq Museum**

- Address: Kangerlussuaq 3910 (Located in airport area)

### **Shops**

Shopping is very limited in Kangerlussuaq, but there is a souvenir shop in the airport complex and a grocery store across from the airport.

### **Local Currency & Exchange Rates**

The local currency is the "Danish Krone" and is represented as DKK.

Please check with websites such as [www.oanda.com](http://www.oanda.com) or [www.xe.com](http://www.xe.com) for current rates of exchange.

There are no banks in Kangerlussuaq, but there is an ATM machine at the airport and some stores will accept credit cards such as Visa.

### **Post Office**

The Post Office is located in the airport complex. Opening hours are generally Monday to Friday 9.00am – 11.00am and 1.00pm – 3.00pm, Saturday 11.00am – 1.00pm.

## **6. BOOKING TERMS AND CONDITIONS**

Please refer to the following link for our full terms and conditions:

[www.chimuadventures.com/travel/terms-and-conditions](http://www.chimuadventures.com/travel/terms-and-conditions)

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