

THE ARCTIC - CHUKOTKA: WHERE RUSSIA'S DAY BEGINS



TRIP CODE

ACHEWRDB

DEPARTURE

11/06/2022

DURATION

15 Days

LOCATIONS

The Arctic, The Russian
Arctic



INTRODUCTION

North of Chukotka where the Chukchi Sea meets the Arctic Ocean lies the nature reserve and World Heritage site, Wrangel Island, which has outstanding wildlife values. Sometimes referred to as a Polar Bear Maternity Ward, because of the high density of denning Polar Bears, it is one of those islands that never disappoints those who are keen on natural history or enthusiasts of Arctic history. As the ice retreats each summer (further and faster than ever before) Polar Bears come ashore and we see good numbers of these, likewise walrus find refuge here each summer normally in large numbers. Birds like Snow Geese and Snowy Owls also breed here. And of course Wrangel Island is central to the story of the wreck of the Karluk and other Arctic exploration stories.

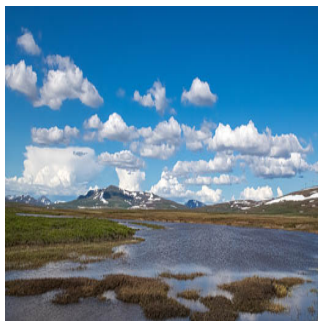
On this special Chukotka expedition we will meet the people; see and listen to their stories and learn of their love for and strong connection with the land and the sea. We will explore the vast expansive tundra with its wild flowers and dwarf tree species and we will watch for brown bears, reindeer, Arctic Foxes, ground squirrels, if we are lucky we may also see a Wolverine. We will explore Wrangel Island with its Polar Bears, walrus and rich Arctic history and at sea we will keep a look out for whales.

ITINERARY

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DAY 1: Nome, Alaska

Our expedition begins and ends in Nome, Alaska's most famous gold rush town. Make your way to the designated meeting point for your transfer to Heritage Adventurer (times and meeting point will be confirmed with your voyage documents) where the captain and expedition team will be waiting to welcome you aboard. You will have the opportunity to settle into your accommodation and familiarise yourself on board before joining your fellow expeditioners on deck as we set sail across the Bering Strait and International Date Line for Provideniya, Russia.



DAY 2: Provideniya

After clearing Russian Customs and Immigration there may be an opportunity to explore this fascinating former Soviet military port and administrative centre followed by an afternoon expedition.



DAY 3: Presbrazhenya Bay

We aim to be cruising along the south coast of Chukotka today and plan to stop at Presbrazhenya Bay. This is an excellent opportunity to Zodiac cruise some spectacular bird cliffs, as long as sea conditions permit we will get in close for some great photographic opportunities. We also plan to spend some time exploring the rich tundra landscape for wildlife and interesting flora.



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DAY 4: Whale Bone Alley

Our first landing of the day we expect to be at one of the most significant and intriguing archaeological sites in the Arctic - Yttygran Island's Whale Bone Alley. This ancient Inuit site is decorated with Bowhead Whale skulls and bones dating back to the 14th Century, but was only discovered in 1976. Thought to be either a ceremonial site or hunting camp, a UNESCO World Heritage Site application has been submitted highlighting its cultural importance. This afternoon we intend to make a landing at the Gil'mimyl Hot Springs. They are a short walk from the coastline, but well worth the effort. There will be a chance to explore the tundra for birds, plants and animals as we walk to and fro. After a soak in the springs we will re-join the ship for a relaxing evening.



DAY 5: Lavrentiya

Dropping anchor in beautiful Lavrentiya Bay, we expect to spend the morning exploring the historically and culturally rich village of Lavrentiya. A former indigenous settlement, this Soviet-planned community was established in the 1920s as an administrative centre where local Chukchi and Siberian Yupik were encouraged to move to. Visit the museum, meet local elders and enjoy an authentic taste and slice of village life in the main square. This afternoon we will be at Cape Dezhnev, the north-eastern most point of the Eurasian continent. This cape commemorates the accomplishment of the Cossack Semyon Dezhnev who was the first European to sail through the strait in 1648 (80 years before Bering did). On the cape is a lighthouse, a monument and the remains of a Border Guard base. If the weather and sea conditions are suitable we plan to land here and give you the opportunity to explore the area. A short distance south of the cape is the former Inuit settlement of Naukan. It is still possible to sense the melancholy in the air because the people never wanted to leave. As the relocation was fairly recent, there is a wealth of historic data and photographs that make a visit to this site even more poignant



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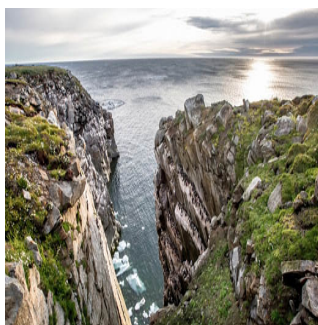
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DAY 6: Kolyuchin Island

Today is an expedition day where we plan to visit Kolyuchin Island and Inlet. Once the location of an important Russian Polar Research Station, this small island has since been abandoned following the collapse of the USSR. While the buildings are now derelict, the abundant wildlife the men studied is still there. Near the old station at the north-western end of the island are some of the most amazing bird cliffs in the Arctic, where puffins, guillemots, gulls and cormorants can be observed and photographed just metres away. A prominent walrus haul out often congregates at the south-eastern end and, if the animals are present, you can expect some excellent photographic opportunities from the Zodiacs. We also plan to visit Belaka Spit near the mouth of the Kolyuchin Inlet. So huge that it is visible from satellite photos, it contains vast numbers of waterfowl and migratory waders. This wild and desolate landscape is also a strangely beautiful birding hotspot. Joined by Beringia National Park rangers, we plan to search the dunes and tidal areas for Emperor Geese. If we are lucky, the Gray Whales which frequent the area will be feeding just metres offshore.



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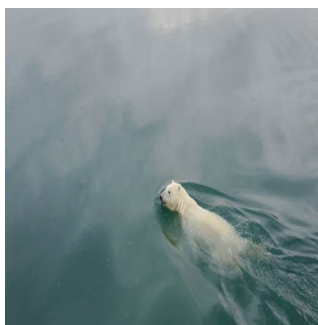
DAY 7: At Sea

Take the opportunity to spend time up in the bridge or out on deck looking for the first Polar Bears of our voyage with our expert expedition team as we cruise along the sea ice, or download photos as we navigate towards Wrangel Island.



DAY 8: Wrangel Island - Day 8 to 10

As we approach the island we will spend time searching the ice for Polar Bears, Ringed Seals and walrus. Should there be opportunities to land we will explore the tundra to look for species which breed here. We have allowed three days on and around the island to take advantage of whatever conditions we encounter and will be utilising the local knowledge of the Park Rangers to make multiple landings and Zodiac cruising the ice.



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DAY 11: At Sea

We sail south towards Kolyuchin Island. The day is filled with illustrated lectures, opportunities to spend time on deck, relaxing in the ship's bar and catching up with some reading or download and editing photos.



DAY 12: Bukhta Pultin and Unnamed Bay

This morning we plan to enjoy a Zodiac safari of Bukhta Pultin. Beyond its narrow entrance this sheltered and rarely-visited bay opens revealing a new world. Explore the coastline, fields of wildflowers, look for wildlife or hike up the ridgeline and take in the impressive helicopter view. Nearby, picturesque Unnamed Bay is our planned destination for this afternoon where we will Zodiac cruise to shore. Welcomed by an expansive stretch of beach, backed by a lagoon and surrounded by rugged hills, there's much to discover. Enjoy a walk along the beach and tundra looking for wildlife, or scale one of the nearby peaks and take in the stunning vistas.



DAY 13: Arkamachechen Island

This morning we will be launching our Zodiacs with a landing planned at Bukhta Penkingney, a long fiord cut into the coastline by glaciers and a popular spot for whale watching. Here a small braided river, its gravel bed studded with Willow bushes, winds its way down to the sea where we land. Exploring this scenic location we will be looking for Arctic Ground Squirrels and Pikas, Willow Ptarmigan, Sandhill Cranes and brown bears attracted by the berries and salmon-filled river. This afternoon we plan to cruise over to Arakamchechen Island just north of Cape Chaplino and separated from the Chukotka mainland by the 8-kilometre wide Senyavina Strait. Having watched Gray Whales feeding here previously, we recommend being out on deck as we slowly cruise through the strait. On Arakamchechen Island we will explore the lush tundra.



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DAY 14: Provideniya

After clearing Russian Customs and Immigration in Provideniya we will set sail for Nome across the Bering Strait. One of the world’s most nutrient-rich stretches of water, each spring the Bering Strait is the scene of one of the planet’s largest wildlife migrations. Beluga, Bowhead and Gray Whales, walrus, Ringed Seals and numerous seabirds are all known to frequent the strait so there is plenty of opportunity for wildlife encounters. Join the expedition team for a recap and disembarkation briefing before enjoying a farewell dinner to celebrate our journey as we sail back across the International Date Line.



DAY 15: Nome, Alaska

After breakfast and clearing US Immigration and Customs formalities it will be time to say our farewells. There will be a complimentary transfer to take you to the airport or a designated central location. Note: During our voyage, circumstances may make it necessary or desirable to deviate from the proposed itinerary. This can include poor weather and/or opportunities for making unplanned excursions. Your Expedition Leader will keep you fully informed.



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INCLUSIONS & DETAILS

Accommodation	Standard
Inclusions	Ship board accommodation All meals on board All scheduled landings/shore excursions Pre and post cruise transfers Additional fees Local Payment: \$500 p/p Exclusions Private charter flight Nome to Anadyr to Nome US\$2,000 p/p Airlines to/from disembarkation cities Visa fees (if applicable) Travel insurance All items of a personal nature Laundry Beverages on board Gratuities for staff/crew

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Difficulty Rating	2 (Light adventure)
Single Surcharge	Available upon request
Notes	Contact us for more details
Price Dependent upon	Season and availability

SUSTAINABILITY

Chimu Adventures undertakes a number of sustainability measures within its operations including:

- 1) Only using local guides and office staff to both maximise local employment opportunities and minimise carbon footprints. Local guides also ensure you benefit from the intimate knowledge, passion and culture of the country you’re visiting.
- 2) Where possible, using locally owned and operated boutique hotels to maximise the return to the local community.
- 3) Chimu’s “Pass it on” programme has provided funding to hundreds of local community projects in Latin America. Our aim is to empower local communities, helping them to develop their own infrastructure for the future. Since 2006, we have been working with Kiva (a well-known Non-Governmental Organisation), providing hundreds of loans to local businesses all over South America.
- 4) In our pre tour information we provide a range of tips and advice on how to minimise your impact on both local environments and communities.
- 5) Chimu Adventures’ offices also take a number of sustainability measures including carbon offsets for company vehicles and most staff travel. Chimu Adventure’s internal processes are also structures to create a paperless office and to reduce waste. There are also internal programmes to help staff minimise their carbon footprint such as our staff bike purchase assistance plan which encourages office staff to commute to work via bicycle. Currently almost half of our office based staff commute to work via bicycle.

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