

THE ARCTIC - NORTHWEST PASSAGE EASTBOUND | ROALD AMUNDSEN



INTRODUCTION

Join us on this incredible attempt to cross the fabled Northwest Passage. Starting in Vancouver, this incredible 26 day expedition will see you cruise from Alaska through the Northwest Passage to Greenland and onto the wonderful sights and history of Nova Scotia. Flying from Vancouver to Nome, Alaska your voyage expedition will begin as you traverse the Northwest Passage, navigating through glistening ice floes and mystical islands. Stopping along the way to undertake a number of zodiac landings you will have the unique opportunity to spot whales, seals and possible even polar bears.

As you cross Baffin Bay and the stunning Davies Strait you will arrive at the UNESCO listed Ilulissat Icefjord. Here you will visit the picturesque town of Sisimiut before exploring Eastern Canada and finally stopping at Halifax, Nova Scotia.

ITINERARY

TRIP CODE
ACHUNPT
DEPARTURE
18/08/2023
DURATION
26 Days
LOCATIONS
Alaska, Greenland & Canada


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DAY 1: Arrival in Vancouver

Your expedition cruise starts in Vancouver. Set amidst beautiful mountain scenery and the waters of English Bay, Vancouver is both bustling seaport and cosmopolitan city. If you arrange to arrive a few days ahead of your cruise, you'll soon find out just why people rave about British Columbia's largest city. Its various neighbourhoods buzz with world-class, farm-to-table, fresh cuisine. Chinatown and Punjabi Market have arguably the best Asian food in North America while Commercial Drive is the home of Little Italy. Don't rule out Vancouver's oldest neighbourhood either. Gastown's Victorian buildings house some of the hottest restaurants and its 167-metre-high Vancouver Lookout offers a perfect panorama. You can take in the neon lights and nightlife along the Granville Street strip or just go and chill on one of the beaches in West End. The latter is also the gateway to explore the wide-open spaces and greenery of Stanley Park.



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DAY 2: Fly Vancouver to Nome

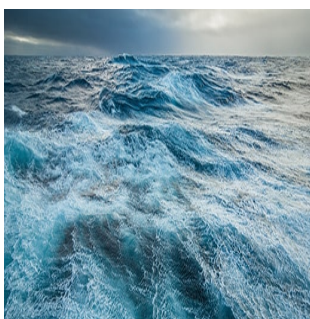
Situated on the Seward Peninsula, Nome's name went down in Alaska history the day the 'Three Lucky Swedes' discovered gold in Anvil Creek in 1898. Prospectors soon flocked from the Yukon and from San Francisco in steamers. Even the famous sheriff Wyatt Earp followed the call of gold and opened a saloon here. You can see evidence of the gold rush era everywhere, including abandoned dredges, turn-of-the-century steam engines, and old railroad tracks. Cries of 'Gold! Gold!' can still be heard today by those foraging on the banks of the Snake River and elsewhere in the area. The town also marked the end point of three of Roald Amundsen's great expeditions; the Northwest Passage in 1906, the Northeast Passage in 1921, and an aircraft attempt to the North Pole in 1926. It seems only fitting therefore that you'll board an expedition ship bearing his name here in Nome, eagerly embarking on your own modern-day adventure across the Arctic.



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DAY 3: At Sea - Day 3 to 7

These initial days at sea give you all the time you need to ease into your journey and acclimatise for your adventure ahead. You'll definitely want to explore the ship and enjoy onboard facilities like the infinity pool, hot tubs, sauna, indoor gym, outdoor running track and spa. There are also informative lectures from the Expedition Team in the Science Centre. Each topic, ranging from wildlife, tectonic activity, glaciology, or local history and culture, is designed to help you appreciate the areas you are sailing through and inform your upcoming landings. The Expedition Team will also talk you through important guidelines from AECO, the Association of Arctic Expedition Cruise Operators. You'll learn how you can protect wildlife habitats, keep a safe distance from animals, and visit Arctic communities in a dignified and respectful way. We'll sail through the Bering Strait and look to the skies to spot a range of sea birds. There are over 30 species to spot, including Black-legged Kittiwakes and various species of auklets and murrelets. Late summer sees upwards of 10 million winged wonders in the region, giving you plenty to point your binoculars at. Crossing Chukchi Sea, we reach Point Barrow, the northernmost point of the USA and enter the Beaufort Sea. Keep an eye on the waters here for bowhead and grey whales and we might also start seeing sea ice. We continue into the Amundsen Gulf, where we hope to observe the remarkable and colourful Smoking Hills - an amazing sight, with smoke billowing from the cliffs on the east coast of Cape Bathurst. Lignite - a combination of eroded shale and pyrite - spontaneously ignites when exposed to air, creating this photogenic phenomenon.



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DAY 8: Northwest Passage - Day 8 to 17

It's now time for us to attempt to make a complete transit of the Northwest Passage. Before us, only around 60 expeditions have tried to navigate this seaway, with the earliest attempts going as far back as 1497. James Cook attempted it in 1776 and many are familiar with the ill-fated Franklin expedition of 1845. The first to conquer the Northwest Passage by ship was Norwegian explorer Roald Amundsen on an expedition that lasted from 1903 to 1906. Now in our modern era, aboard a state-of-the-art expedition ship named in Amundsen's honour, we'll also enter the Northwest Passage on our own adventure, aiming to sail through to Greenland and eastern Canada. During our journey, we will land at sites that are linked to early exploration history, visit Inuit communities, and hope to spot Arctic wildlife such as polar bears, whales, seals, and a mixture of seabirds. The ship Captain and Expedition Leader will continuously assess the current weather and sea conditions, adapt activities accordingly, and adjust the itinerary to where the sea ice allows us to go. Like all good explorers, we respect and work with nature, not against it. Here are some of the places in the region that we hope to explore together during landings and short walks, if wind, waves, and sea ice allow: Ulukhaktok - Many in the 500-strong community are involved in the local artists' co-op, producing prints, tapestries, and other crafts. This is also the location of the world's northernmost golf course which plays host to a tournament each summer. Cambridge Bay - Located on Victoria Island, this is the largest stop for vessels traversing the Northwest Passage. It is also called 'Iqaluktuuttiaq', or 'A Good Fishing Place' due to the Ekalluk River which attracts Arctic char, muskoxen, and caribou. Beechey Island - This is the final resting place for three members of the lost Franklin expedition which sailed into the Northwest Passage in 1845 but never returned. It is customary for explorers in the region to stop and pay their respects at the graves, as Roald Amundsen did in 1903. Devon Island - Welcome to the largest uninhabited island on Earth. The only signs of human life are found at the long-abandoned settlement of Dundas Harbour along with several archaeological sites from the Thule period. Pond Inlet - Called 'Mittimatalik' in Inuktitut, it means 'the place where the landing place is'. This is a traditional Inuit community on Baffin Island, boasting views of Eclipse Sound and the mountains of Bylot Island. It is also known as a great place to see narwhal - the unicorn of the sea.

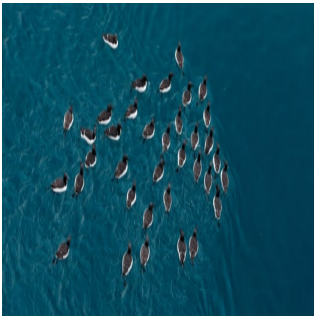


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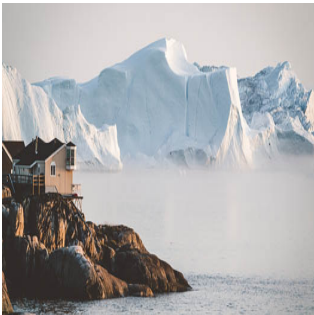
DAY 18: Labrador Sea

We have left Canada behind and now set course for Greenland. While sailing across Baffin Bay and Davis Strait, you can continue to enjoy informative lectures in the Science Center. Some of the topics may include wildlife you might see, Greenlandic culture, expedition history, geology, photography, and historic explorers. If you feel like getting active, you can hit the gym and get your pulse up. You'll also have access to the sauna, an infinity pool, and two outdoor hot tubs. Drinks can be enjoyed in the panoramic Explorer Lounge & Bar too, while settling into a sofa and watching the rhythmic ocean waves roll by outside. In the evening, swap stories of your adventures with the Expedition Team and learn more about these modern-day explorers. Each of them are walking, talking treasure troves of exploits and information.



DAY 19: Ilulissat

Ilulissat - meaning simply 'Icebergs' - is set in the stunning scenery of the Ilulissat Icefjord, a UNESCO World Heritage Site. This beautiful gem of a town is characterised by its colourful houses sitting down by the fjord which features an ever-changing gallery of icebergs - it really is a picture-perfect kind of place. It's also a vibrant hub for adventure seekers who head out onto the polar ice cap, and there are almost as many sled dogs living here as there are people. Each spring, one of the world's greatest dog sled races takes place here, with 100 sleds. Just outside the town you can often see enormous icebergs floating in the deep blue waters. They originate from the Jakobshavn Glacier, which calves some 35 billion tonnes of icebergs each year. The icebergs make their way down the 20km fjord before entering Disko Bay, and they are a photographer's dream.



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DAY 20: Sisimiut

Spectacularly situated Sisimiut – Greenland’s second city – is placed 40km north of the Arctic Circle in the central coastal area of the Davis Strait. It’s a modern settlement but its roots stretch back in time a long way, with estimates that the area has been settled by Greenlandic peoples for over 4,500 years. Its name translates into ‘the people at the fox holes’, a reference to the many burrows of Arctic fox that lie near the city. Another animal local to the area is the musk ox whose wool is used to make a local fabric called qiviut – said to be 10 times warmer than sheep wool. You might like to pick up a qiviut scarf, hat, or mittens while you are here. With a population of around 5,500, Sisimiut is an important regional hub and is often a stopover point for boats heading between Nuuk and the Disko Bay area, with many coming here to enjoy backcountry sports on the Greenland ice cap such as skiing or dog sledding. The small museum houses artefacts from excavations of ancient Saqqaq settlements near the town, some as old as 4,000 years. There’s also the Taseralik Cultural Centre, the place to go to learn more about the cultural heritage of the area.



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DAY 21: Labrador Sea - Day 21 to 22

You'll have time to relax, get to know your fellow travellers better, and make full use of the facilities on board. In the Science Center, the Expedition Team will hold lecture programmes on the wildlife and ecosystems of the Arctic. We also support a number of Citizen Science projects that you can join. These projects include Happywhale, where your photographs help identify and track the movement of specific whales across the planet due to their distinguishing characteristics. Or you can participate in the GLOBE Observer project, which combines your observations of clouds and sky conditions from below with data collected by satellites from above. By participating in these projects, not only will you be supporting the scientific community, you'll also be gaining a better understanding of the world around you.



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DAY 23: Red Bay

Red Bay is a former Basque whaling settlement on the coast of southern Labrador in the Strait of Belle Ile. You might catch a glimpse of humpback or minke whales that first drew Basque whalers to this harbour back in the 17th century. For about 70 years, these fishermen would return to catch whales and export their refined oil back to Europe. Not all whaling ships were able to reach Red Bay's shores though. Wrecked chalupas and galleons are just some of the ships that have been found preserved in the ice-cold waters. These discoveries make Red Bay one of the most important underwater archaeological sites in the world. As you explore this fascinating town, make sure to visit the local museum which is part of the Red Bay National Historic Site to see an eight-metre chalupa – a small whale-catching boat – and imagine life as a Basque whaler on the Labrador Sea. You can also look for whale bones in the protected National Historic Site or for pirate captain Kidd's buried treasure around Tracey Hill. While you might not find any gold doubloons, you'll at least be rewarded with a fantastic view.



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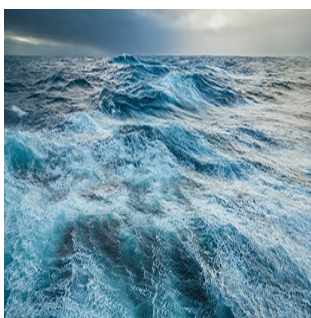
DAY 24: Corner Brook

As you sail into the Bay of Islands, surrounded by the jagged slopes and dense forests of the Long Range Mountains, you'll be charting the same course that Captain James Cook did over 250 years ago. You can get a sense of the regional history here at Corner Brook Museum. There are a number of artifacts that chart the indigenous cultures, logging industry, and of course, Captain James Cook. The exhibit on World War II brides from England and Scotland is particularly fascinating.



DAY 25: Last Days at Sea

It's our final day at sea and your cruise with us is fast drawing to a close. You might like to spend this day at sea just fully unwinding from the excitement of the past two weeks. Your thoughts might naturally turn to home, or maybe you'll find that you'll have already left your heart back in one of the special places you've visited. Today will be a good time to spend reflecting on and taking stock of all the wonderful experiences you've had.



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DAY 26: Disembarkation in Halifax

And with that, your exciting, epic journey from one end of the Northwest Passage all the way to the other ends in Halifax. The cosmopolitan capital of the Canadian province of Nova Scotia sits in the centre of the region’s east coast and is an important seaport that looks out over one of the world's largest natural harbours. With its red-brick heritage buildings, the landmark Citadel Hill National Historic Site, a historic 1820 brewery and the epic 4-km seafront boardwalk, Halifax offers plenty of potential if you want to extend your trip.



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INCLUSIONS & DETAILS	
Accommodation	Cabin on board ship
Inclusions	<p>INCLUSIONS</p> <p>Cabin accommodation on board vessel All meals whilst on board All scheduled landings and excursions by zodiac Guiding and lectures by experienced expedition crew Charter flight Vancouver to Nome, Alaska Overnight in Vancouver prior to embarkation Transfer from hotel in Vancouver to airport Transfer from airport to ship in Nome before expedition cruise Tariffs, Taxes and AECO fees</p> <p>EXCLUSIONS</p> <p>International flights Post-Expedition travel plans Travel insurance Visa and reciprocity fees (if applicable) Beverages (other than tea and coffee) Customary gratuity for crew Any optional activities not mentioned in the itinerary</p>
Difficulty Rating	2 (light adventure)
Single Surcharge	Available on request. Please contact us for more information.
Notes	Please note this itinerary is subject to weather, ice and sea conditions.
Price Dependent upon	Departure date, seasonality and availability.

SUSTAINABILITY

Being environmentally accountable is a crucial part of our organisation. Chimu is currently striving towards using less paper, taking several initiatives to do so and tracking our progress along the way. Our goal: A paperless organisation. For this reason, all information given to you will be sent electronically. We encourage those who choose to travel with us to support our aspirations and actions and ask that you reconsider printing out documentation. To view these documents, you can download them to your iPad or portable computer before and during your trip.

Chimu is passionate and dedicated to sustainability measures and understands the crucial part sustainability plays within the tourism industry.

We use local guides and office staff to both maximise local employment opportunities and minimise carbon footprint. Local guides also ensure you benefit from the intimate knowledge, passion and culture of the country you're visiting. Our guides are all highly qualified (most with university degrees) or equip with many years of experience and are paid above the standard wage. Whether it be our knowledgeable local guides, locally produced meals or the transport on tour, we do not use imported goods when local products are available. We aim to minimise our impact on the environment and give as much back as possible to the communities we work in.

While visiting the many national parks, heritage sites, museums and landmarks our travellers are encouraged to explore whilst remaining culturally aware and sensitive. We further encourage you to buy appropriate souvenirs and discourage the buying of anything wrongfully made or taken from the environment i.e. shells and endangered species products. Information on how you can be environmentally conscious, and travel responsibly will be made available in our Travellers Guides and provided during your travels by guides and staff.

For more information on our sustainability policies, including how we are striving towards being a paperless organisation, click [HERE](#)

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