

## Detailed Description Scottish Islands Aberdeen – Oban 7 nights/ 8 days

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Flexibility is paramount for expedition cruises.

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**Day 1** Arrive in Aberdeen, famed as the granite city and many times a winner of the Britain in Bloom competition, and embark for our trip. The lighthouse on Girdle Ness, to the south as the North Sea is reached, was designed by the grandfather of Robert Louis Stevenson.

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**Day 2** At Fair Isle, in the Shetlands, we are welcomed by the 70 or so inhabitants (famed for their knitwear, examples of which we will see) and walk to the bird observatory. Later, on Mousa, one of the smaller Shetland Islands, we visit one of the best preserved brochs in Scotland. Brochs are circular stone towers probably built by the Picts. During a night excursion we watch thousands of Storm Petrels return to their burrows or crevices. By day we view Grey Seals, Black Guillemots, Red-throated Divers, Arctic Skuas and a wonderful spring flora.

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**Day 3** To the west of Shetland lies the small island of Foula, home to the largest colony of Great Skuas in the northern hemisphere. There are small ponds with Red-throated Divers and spectacular cliffs (The Noup) crowded with nesting seabirds. We visit Arctic Tern and Arctic Skua colonies as well as calling on the islanders who number only about 30.

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**Day 4** Out in the Atlantic to the north-west of Scotland lie the tiny islands of North Rona and Sula Sgeir. We shall land on North Rona to see the seabird colonies and the Grey Seals. The island was inhabited in the 18th century and some remains are still visible: Leach's Petrels can be heard calling from their nesting burrows in the ruined walls of a small church in the 'village'. Sula Sgeir is the last island in Britain on which Gannets are harvested annually. There will be spectacular views of its cliffs as we sail around. In 2006 we saw a Black-browed Albatros at this island.

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**Day 5** We visit Lewis to see the prehistoric stone circle of Callanish, one of the finest in Britain with stones over 3m tall. There are several smaller stone circles and chambered cairns on the moorland near Callanish. Later there will be great opportunities to watch and photograph Guillemots, Razorbills and Puffins on the Flannan Islands, a group of small islands to the west of the Outer Hebrides.

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**Day 6** To the west of North Uist lie the St Kilda group of islands, built of volcanic rock and with cliffs rising to over 400m, the highest in Britain and home to the largest seabird colony in the country. St Kilda has its own sub-species of birds and mice, and of sheep, the Soay, probably brought here by Stone Age man over 5,000 years ago. Until 1930 St Kilda was inhabited, but then the last of the islanders left leaving a handful of windswept ruins, though there is also a military base which may be visited.

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**Day 7** The small islands of Mingulay, Berneray and Pabay, to the south of South Uist, are a nature reserve with important breeding populations of razorbills, guillemots, black guillemots, puffins, fulmars and shags. There are also five species of gull, all the

seabirds being attracted by the cliffs and caves which offer safe nesting sites. The islands also have significant historical sites, including the old village on Mingulay which the last islanders left in 1912. The islanders were fishermen and collected the seabirds and eggs for food. They also traded the feathers. If the weather is poor we will sail to Canna, one of the 'Small Isles' of the Inner Hebrides. It has a tiny agricultural and cattle-rearing population. From a walk along the cliff top we may see Golden Eagles, White-tailed Eagles and Peregrine Falcons. At the cliff edge the rare Loose-flowered Orchids grow.

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**Day 8**

We disembark at Oban, a small and cosy harbour town in west Scotland. From there it is a good option to take the train to Glasgow, a marvellous journey through one of the most scenic parts of Scotland, to join our homeward flights.

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The channels between the Scottish islands offer excellent possibilities to spot Minke Whales (a small baleen whale), White-beaked Dolphins and Harbour Porpoises. Several other cetaceans, including Orcas (Killer Whales), are also native to these waters.

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## Detailed Description St. Kilda - Jan Mayen

### 9 nights/10 days

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**Day 1** We embark at Oban, a small and cosy harbour town in west Scotland. From Glasgow it is a good option to take the train, a marvellous journey through one of the most scenic parts of Scotland. The channels between the Scottish islands offer excellent possibilities to spot Minke Whales (a small baleen whale), White-beaked Dolphins and Harbour Porpoises. Several other cetaceans, including Orcas (Killer Whales), are also native to these waters.

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**Day 2** To the west of North Uist lie the St Kilda group of islands, built of volcanic rock and with cliffs rising to over 400m, the highest in Britain and home to the largest seabird colony in the country. St Kilda has its own sub-species of birds and mice, and of sheep, the Soay, probably brought here by Stone Age man over 5,000 years ago. Until 1930 St. Kilda was inhabited, but then the last of the islanders left leaving a handful of windswept ruins, though there is also a military base which may be visited.

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**Day 3** In the afternoon we reach the Faroes, where we will sail through the maze of channels between the islands and where we pass Skuvoy and the north side of Streymoy with huge seabird colonies.

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**Day 4 & 5** We sail north to the Norwegian island of Jan Mayen, situated 300 nautical miles north-east of Iceland. During our two days at sea there will be plenty of time to watch for the blow of a Minke, Fin or Blue Whale, which could herald a rewarding encounter with these gentle giants. Perhaps we might run into a pod of Orcas, who can often be quite curious about boats such as ours.

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**Day 6** Jan Mayen is a volcanic island of breathtaking beauty and mystique, dominated by Mt Beerenberg. From the slopes of the 2300m volcano, impressive glaciers spill into the sea. Until recently, the island was off-limits as it is a military base, and was rarely visited by tourists, but with permission from the Norwegian authorities we hope to visit the weather station. We will also walk across the island to Kvalrossbukta to look at the remains of a 17th century Dutch whaling station and a substantial colony of Fulmars. We also plan to sail by Koksletta where thousands of Little Auks and Brünnich's Guillemots breed close to a glacier, watched over by piratical Glaucous Gulls.

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**Day 7 & 8** We spend two days at sea, looking out for Whales, Dolphins and Seals and a variety of seabirds.

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**Day 9** Depending on the position of the sea-ice, we cruise the maze of fjords in the spectacular Hornsund area of southern Spitsbergen, which is ringed by towering mountain peaks. Hornsundtind rises to 1,431m while Bautaen shows why early Dutch explorers gave the name 'Spitsbergen' - pointed mountains - to the island. There are also 14 magnificent glaciers in the area but as well as spectacular scenery, the area is renowned for its abundant and varied arctic wildlife. We have very good chances of

seeing Seals and with a little luck, the very symbol of the Arctic - Polar Bears. We may visit the Polish research station where the friendly staff will give us an insight into their research projects. Behind the station, the mountains are home to thousands of pairs of nesting Little Auks. Bearded Seals often cruise the inner fjords, whose cliffs are lined with colonies of Brünnich's Guillemots and Kittiwakes. On the tundra we will have good opportunities to observe foraging Barnacle Geese.

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**- Alternative - Day 9** We land at Kapp Toscana on Ahlstrandhalvøya at the mouth of Van Keulenfjord, where piles of Beluga skeletons are a reminder of the 20th century exploitation of these small white whales. Numbers are now recovering and there is a good chance of spotting small groups in the area. We then move to Recherchefjord, where a walk on the fragile tundra which backs the fjord may yield sightings of Reindeer and where we visit the remains of a 17th century Dutch whaling station at Lagerneset. Alternatively we may land at Midterhuken to explore the remains of 17th century English whaling sites. The weather will determine which good options will be chosen in this area.

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**Day 10** We disembark at Longyearbyen, the administrative centre of Spitsbergen, for flights south to Norway and onward to home. Alternatively we may stay on the ship and continue our voyage to North Spitsbergen (MLT06).

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## Detailed Description Lofoten - North Norway 7 nights/8 days

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**Day 1** We embark the ship in the harbour of Lødingen in the evening, after a drive of an hour by scheduled bus (at own expense) from the airport of Evenes.

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**Day 2 & day 3** We will spend two full days in the Tysfjord area to look for groups of Orcas which hunt in these fjords for herring. During these days we will have an excursion to the petroglyphs from Stone Age, depicting Orcas at Leiknes. At Skarvberget we will climb a hill, which is a look-out post for tens of Sea Eagles, which also catch herring in the fjord. One evening we will visit the Orca information centre, where we will get additional information about the whales.

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**Day 4** Today we sail into Vestfjord, also a good area to observe Orcas and other whales, and arrive at Henningsvaer, the Norwegian Venice, where we will lay overnight.

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**Day 5** We visit Kabelvaag, a cosy historical town, where we may visit the Lofoten aquarium and Museum. Later we sail into Trollfjord Raftsund, said to be one of the most spectacular fjords of Norway, and spend the night somewhere in the area.

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**Day 6** We work our way back through Vestfjorden looking for Orca's, and could visit for instance Hamarøy with the Knut Hamsun Museum, or Ofotfjord, where we may spot Orca's.

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**Day 7** Today we will sail into the harbour of Lødingen. Near Lødingen at Hustadgaard in Vestbygd we will have the opportunity to be fascinated by "øye I stein", a sculpture of 37 tonnes made by the Indian artist Anish Kapoor. In the same area at Nes in Kanstadsfjord we can admire the oldest rock paintings (9000 years old) near the remains of stone age dwellings.

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**Day 8** We disembark the ship in Lødingen in the morning for our transfer by scheduled local bus (at own expense) to the airport of Evenes.

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# Detailed Description Scottish Islands - Faroes - Jan Mayen - Bear Island - South Spitsbergen

## 11 nights/12 days

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**Day 1** We embark at Oban, a small and cosy harbour town in west Scotland. From Glasgow it is a good option to take the train, a marvellous journey through one of the most scenic parts of Scotland.

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The channels between the Scottish islands offer excellent possibilities to spot Minke Whales (a small baleen whale), White-beaked Dolphins and Harbour Porpoises. Several other cetaceans, including Orcas (Killer Whales), are also native to these waters.

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**Day 2** To the west of North Uist lie the St Kilda group of islands, built of volcanic rock and with cliffs rising to over 400m, the highest in Britain and home to the largest seabird colony in the country. St Kilda has its own sub-species of birds and mice, and of sheep, the Soay, probably brought here by Stone Age man over 5,000 years ago. Until 1930 St. Kilda was inhabited, but then the last of the islanders left leaving a handful of windswept ruins, though there is also a military base which may be visited.

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**Day 3** Today we arrive at Thorshavn, the capital and cultural centre of the Faroes. Here we are free to shop, to visit the museum or just wander at will. In the harbour the small Faroese boats are a reminder of the Viking origins of the islanders. The walkers among us can make an exciting two hours walk across the hills to Kirkjubøer where they will find a medieval cathedral. In the early evening we will try to land at Saksun, tucked away at the head of a fjord which was once a superb natural harbour. Today the bay is full of sand and we can only enter by zodiac at high tide. At Saksun is a Natural Heritage Museum. Continuing along the north side of Streymoy we pass huge seabird colonies.

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**Day 4 & 5** We sail north to the Norwegian island of Jan Mayen, situated 300 nautical miles north-east of Iceland. During our two days at sea there will be plenty of time to watch for the blow of a Minke, Fin or Blue Whale, which could herald a rewarding encounter with these gentle giants. Perhaps we might run into a pod of Orcas, who can often be quite curious about boats such as ours.

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**Day 6** Jan Mayen is a volcanic island of breathtaking beauty and mystique, dominated by Mt Beerenberg. From the slopes of the 2300m volcano, impressive glaciers spill into the sea. Until recently, the island was off-limits as it is a military base, and was rarely visited by tourists, but with permission from the Norwegian authorities we hope to visit the weather station. We will also walk across the island to Kvalrossbukta to look at the remains of a 17th century Dutch whaling station and a substantial colony of Fulmars. We also plan to sail by Koksletta where thousands of Little Auks and Brünnich's Guillemots breed close to a glacier, watched over by piratical Glaucous Gulls.

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**Day 7 & 8** We spend two days at sea, looking out for whales, dolphins and seals and a variety of seabirds.

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**Day 9** At Bear Island we visit the remains of a whaling station active from 1905-1908 in Kvalrossbukta. Arctic Skuas and Great Skuas can be seen during a walk across the desolate hills and tundra. The weather will decide whether we then sail along the west coast, where we can observe one of the largest seabird colonies in the North Atlantic teeming with Little Auks, Brünnich's Guillemots, Common Guillemots and Kittiwakes. Alternatively we will sail along the east coast to visit Tunheim, an abandoned mining settlement. When we approach the sea-ice at the southern tip of Spitsbergen, we may also encounter moulting Harp Seals.

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**Day 10** Depending on the position of the sea-ice, we cruise the maze of fjords in the spectacular Hornsund area of southern Spitsbergen, which is ringed by towering mountain peaks. Hornsundtind rises to 1,431m while Bautaen shows why early Dutch explorers gave the name 'Spitsbergen' - pointed mountains - to the island. There are also 14 magnificent glaciers in the area but as well as spectacular scenery, the area is renowned for its abundant and varied arctic wildlife. We have very good chances of seeing seals and with a little luck, the very symbol of the Arctic - Polar Bears. We may visit the Polish research station where the friendly staff will give us an insight into their research projects. Behind the station, the mountains are home to thousands of pairs of nesting Little Auks. Bearded Seals often cruise the inner fjords, whose cliffs are lined with colonies of Brünnich's Guillemots and Kittiwakes. On the tundra we will have good opportunities to observe foraging Barnacle Geese.

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**Day 11** Today we land at Kapp Toscana on Ahlstrandhalvøya at the mouth of Van Keulenfjord, where piles of Beluga skeletons are a reminder of the 20th century exploitation of these small white whales. Numbers are now recovering and there is a good chance of spotting small groups in the area. We then move to Recherchefjord, where a walk on the fragile tundra which backs the fjord may yield sightings of Reindeer and where we visit the remains of a 17th century Dutch whaling station at Lagerneset. Alternatively we may land at Midterhuken to explore the remains of 17th century English whaling sites. The weather will determine which good options will be chosen in this area.

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**Day 12** We disembark at Longyearbyen, the administrative centre of Spitsbergen, for flights south to Norway and onward to home. Alternatively we may stay on the ship and continue our voyage to North Spitsbergen (GMK05, MOL05).

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## Detailed Description St. Kilda - Jan Mayen 9 nights/10 days

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seeing Seals and with a little luck, the very symbol of the Arctic - Polar Bears. We may visit the Polish research station where the friendly staff will give us an insight into their research projects. Behind the station, the mountains are home to thousands of pairs of nesting Little Auks. Bearded Seals often cruise the inner fjords, whose cliffs are lined with colonies of Brünnich's Guillemots and Kittiwakes. On the tundra we will have good opportunities to observe foraging Barnacle Geese.

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**Day 10** We disembark at Longyearbyen, the administrative centre of Spitsbergen, for flights south to Norway and onward to home. Alternatively we may stay on the ship and continue our voyage to North Spitsbergen (MLT06).

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## Detailed Description North Spitsbergen 7 nights/8 days

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**Day 1** Arrive in Longyearbyen, the administrative capital of the Spitsbergen archipelago of which West Spitsbergen is the largest island. Before embarking there is an opportunity to stroll around this former mining town, whose parish church and Polar Museum are well worth visiting, while in the surrounds of Longyearbyen, more than 100 species of plant have been recorded. In the early evening the ship will sail out of Isfjorden.

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**Day 2** Heading north along the west coast, we arrive by morning in Krossfjorden, where we take to the Zodiacs for an exhilarating cruise along the sculpted front of the 14th of July Glacier. On the surprisingly fertile slopes near the glacier, a colourful variety of flowers bloom, while large numbers of Kittiwakes and Brünnich's Guillemots nest on the nearby cliffs. There is also a good chance of spotting opportunistic Arctic Foxes, patrolling the base of the cliffs in case a hapless chick falls from its nest, and Bearded Seals, who cruise this scenic fjord. In the afternoon we sail to Ny Ålesund, the world's most northerly settlement. Once a mining village - served by the world's most northerly railway, which can still be seen - Ny Ålesund is now a research centre. Close to the village is a breeding ground for Barnacle Geese, Pink-footed Geese and Arctic Terns. Visitors interested in the history of Arctic exploration will want to walk to the anchoring mast used by Amundsen and Nobile in the airship Norge in 1926 and Nobile in the airship Italia in 1928 before their flights to the North Pole.

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**Day 3** Depending on the weather we may now sail to the mouth of Liefdefjorden and go ashore for a walk on the tundra island of Andøya. Many Common Eiders and Pink-footed Geese nest here, and the rarer King Eider may also be seen. We hope to sail into Liefdefjorden, cruising near the 5km long face of the impressive Monaco glacier. The waters of the glacier front are a favourite feeding spot for thousands of Kittiwakes and on previous voyages Polar Bears have been seen on the glacier, providing wonderful opportunities for photography

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**Day 4** Today we will sail into Hinlopen Strait, home to bearded seals, ringed seals, polar bears, and ivory gulls. We'll navigate the ice floes of Lomfjordshalvøya in our zodiacs and explore the bird cliffs of Alkefjellet with thousands of Brünnich's guillemots. On the east side of Hinlopenstrait, we'll attempt a landing at Palanderbukta on Nordaustlandet, home to reindeer, pink-footed geese, breeding ivory gulls, and walrus.

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**Day 5** Today we will reach our northernmost point at Phippsøya, in the Seven Islands north of Nordaustlandet. Here we will be at 81 degrees north, just 540 miles from the geographic North Pole. Polar bears inhabit this region, along with ivory gulls. We may sit for several hours in the pack ice, taking in our spectacular surroundings and seeing a Ross gull, before we turn south again.

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**Day 6** Retracing our route westwards, we visit Raudfjord on the north coast of West Spitsbergen, a beautiful fjord dominated by spectacular glaciers and favoured by Ringed and Bearded Seals. The cliffs and shoreline of the fjord also support thriving seabird colonies and a surprisingly rich vegetation, which flourishes in sheltered spots. On the offshore island of Ytre Norskøya, we visit a 17th century Dutch whaling site,

whose large graveyard is a poignant reminder of the hardships and dangers of life here at the time. The island's bird life is prolific, with colonies of Little Auks, Black Guillemots, Brünnich's Guillemots, Puffins and Arctic Skuas accessible to visitors.

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**Day 7**

We land at the northern tip of Prins Karls Forland near Fuglehuken, where Barentsz probably set foot on Spitsbergen for the first time. Seabirds nest on the cliffs and along the coast we see Harbour Seals the only population in Spitsbergen. Further we also will observe the remains of the Polar Bear hunting era, with demolished set guns and bear traps. At the opposite site of Forlandsundet at Sarstangen is a haul out place for Walruses. Alternatively we sail into St. Johns Fjord or south to the mouth of Isfjorden and land at Alkhornet. Seabirds nest on its cliffs and Arctic Foxes search the cliff base for fallen eggs and chicks, while Spitsbergen Reindeer graze the relatively luxuriant vegetation. The reindeer may seem unbothered by human presence, but this is not really the case. The animals must survive the harsh winter, when temperatures plummet and food is hard to find, so they preserve what energy they can, fleeing only when it is absolutely necessary. In the afternoon we cruise through beautiful Borebukta, following a glacier front before continuing to Longyearbyen.

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**Day 8**

Return to Longyearbyen and disembark for the transfer to the airport and the flight to Oslo and home.

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## Detailed Description North Spitsbergen 11 nights/12 days

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**Day 1** Arrive in Longyearbyen, the administrative centre for Spitsbergen, and a former mining town. There will be a chance to visit the Museum, which has an interesting collection on the history of the islands, the mining industry and polar exploration. In the afternoon we sail through scenic Isfjorden, setting course for Alkhorner at the mouth of the fjord, whose cliffs are home to a large colony of Kittiwakes. Below the cliffs is a den of Arctic Foxes, who scavenge on fallen eggs and chicks. We continue to Trygghamna to visit the remains of a 17th century English whaling station and an 18th century Russian Pomor station.

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**Day 2** We leave Trygghamna early in the morning and sail through Forlandsundet, the sea passage that divides the island of Prins Karls Forland from the mainland. Weather permitting, we will go ashore at Fuglehuken, where the expedition of Willem Barentsz landed on Spitsbergen and in doing so became the first Europeans to set foot on the islands. Here we can see the graves of whalers and observe impressive colonies of Common Guillemots, Brünnich's Guillemots, Little Auks and Kittiwakes. Nearby, Harbour Seals and Walruses often haul out and prove popular subjects for photography.

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**Day 3** Today we visit Ny Ålesund, the northernmost permanent settlement in the world, a centre for polar research and a former starting point for many North Pole expeditions, including those of Amundsen and Nobile. The local bird life has adapted itself to human presence and is exceptionally tame. Barnacle Geese, Pink-footed Geese, Common Eiders, Arctic Terns and several species of wader can be observed and photographed at close quarters. Reindeer can also be seen in the vicinity - they are smaller than their mainland relatives and do not form large herds.

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**Day 4** In the morning we sail from Ny Ålesund to the 14th July Glacier where we take to the Zodiacs, for a spectacular cruise along its front. Not far from the glacier we visit an accessible breeding site for Brünnich's Guillemots, Little Auks and Puffins. The guano of these bird colonies, the southward exposure and the sheltered situation, give rise to a relatively rich vegetation with many species of flowering plants.

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**Day 5** Sailing northwards we visit Magdalenafjord, one of the most beautiful places on Spitsbergen, with many impressive glacier fronts. During a shore visit we will view the remains of 17th century English whaling activities. Birdwatchers will not be disappointed as there are substantial seabird colonies here, particularly noted for their Little Auks.

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**Day 6** Today we will try to visit Ytre Norskøya, a small island which was used for many years as a lookout point for Dutch whalers. There we can still follow their tracks to the summit of the island, passing excellent bird cliffs on the way. On shore the remains of 17th century blubber ovens can be found, while Arctic Skuas and Common Eiders breed among the graves of 200 Dutch whalers.

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**Day 7** Raudfjord on the north coast of Spitsbergen is a beautiful fjord with spectacular glaciers and an exceptional variety of wildlife. It is a favourite with Ringed and Bearded Seals, has abundant seabird colonies, and offers good chances for spotting Polar Bears and Belugas. Jermaktangen, at the fjord's eastern entrance, shows marked features of sea erosion.

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**Day 8** If sea-ice conditions allow, we may land on the northern-side of Reindyrfla, the largest tundra area on Spitsbergen. Its vast undulating plain provides good grazing for Reindeer and several species of waders also breed here. On the tundra lakes there is a good chance of spotting Red-throated Divers and King Eiders, whose breeding plumage is especially colourful.

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**Day 9** Today we visit the remains of Smeerenburg, the largest 17th century whaling settlement on Spitsbergen, and, if we obtain permission, Danskøya, where many historical remains are to be found of the 19th century expedition by the Swedish explorer Andree, who tried to reach the North Pole in a balloon.

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**Day 10 & Day 11** On our way south, we will try to make a landing on the coast of Forlandsundet at Engelsbukta or Sarstangen, where Walruses are often hauled out. From there we head straight for Longyearbyen, but if time allows we could call at Colesbukta, from where fit walkers can walk to Longyearbyen in around six hours, joining the rest of the party when the ship arrives later in the day.

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**Day 12** Departure by scheduled flight from Longyearbyen to Oslo.

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## Detailed Description South Spitsbergen 7 nights/8 days

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**Day 1** After arriving in Longyearbyen, the 'capital' (actually the administrative centre) of Spitsbergen, you may wish to visit the Svalbard Museum which has an interesting collection on the history of Spitsbergen, the mining industry and polar exploration. In the afternoon we sail, setting course for Alkhorneret, a high cliff. Below the cliffs we often see Arctic Foxes and Reindeer. We continue to Trygghamna to visit the remains of a 17th century English whaling station and an 18th century Russian Pomor station.

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**Day 2** We leave Trygghamna early in the morning and sail to the north side of Bell Sund, where we make a walk to the cliffs of Ingeborgfjellet and visit a glacier front in Fridtjofhamna.

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**Day 3 & 4** Continuing our exploration of southern Spitsbergen, we sail into the labyrinth of side fjords in Hornsund. Behind Brepollen, a large glacial deposit at the head of the fjord, we will sail along a beautiful glacier front with good chances of seeing Bearded Seals and Polar Bears. The geological formations in this area are very spectacular and colourful. We will also pay a visit to the Polish research station at Isbjørnhamna, where the friendly crew will discuss their scientific programs.

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**Day 5** On our way back we sail into Bell Sund to reach Ahlstrandhalvöya, with its interesting geological formations and the remains of the 20th century Beluga whaling industry. Bell Sund is a good area for observing Belugas and Polar Bears.

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**Day 6** We will pay a visit to Barentsburg, the only inhabited Russian settlement in Spitsbergen, or to Colesbukta, an abandoned Russian coal mining settlement.

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**Day 7** We sail into the inner reaches of the Isfjord system, where during nights with open sky we will experience temperatures of minus 10 degrees C, and new ice will be forming on the heqads of the fjords.

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**Day 8** Departure by scheduled flight from Longyearbyen to Oslo. These late September Spitsbergen voyages, just before the onset of winter, are ideal for observing the splendid Aurora Borealis (Northern Lights).

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## Detailed Description Around Spitsbergen 10 nights/11 days

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**DISCLAIMER !** All itineraries are for guidance only. Programs may vary depending on local ice and weather conditions and in order to take advantage of opportunities to see wildlife. Flexibility is paramount for expedition cruises.

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**Day 1** Arrive in Longyearbyen, the administrative capital of the Spitsbergen archipelago of which West Spitsbergen is the largest island. Before embarking there is an opportunity to stroll around this former mining town, whose parish church and Polar Museum are well worth visiting, while in the surrounds of Longyearbyen, more than 100 species of plant have been recorded. In the early evening the ship will sail out of Isfjorden.

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**Day 2** Heading north along the west coast, we arrive by morning in Krossfjorden, where we take to the Zodiacs for an exhilarating cruise along the sculpted front of the 14th of July Glacier. On the surprisingly green slopes near the glacier, a colourful variety of flowers bloom, while large numbers of Kittiwakes and Brünnich's Guillemots nest on the nearby cliffs. There is also a good chance of spotting opportunistic Arctic Foxes, who patrol the base of the cliffs in case a hapless chick falls from its nest, and Bearded Seals, who cruise this scenic fjord. In the afternoon we sail to Ny Ålesund, the world's most northerly settlement. Once a mining village - served by the world's most northerly railway, which can still be seen - Ny Ålesund is now a research centre. Close to the village is a breeding ground for Barnacle Geese, Pink-footed Geese and Arctic Terns. Visitors interested in the history of Arctic exploration will want to walk to the anchoring mast used by Amundsen and Nobile in the airship Norge in 1926 and Nobile in the airship Italia in 1928 before their flights to the North Pole.

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**Day 3** Near the mouth of Liefdefjorden, we will go ashore for a walk on the tundra island of Andøya. Many common eiders and pink-footed geese nest here, and the more rare king eider may also be seen. Sailing into Liefdefjorden, we will cruise near the face of the impressive Monaco Glacier. The waters of the glacier front are a favorite feeding spot for thousands of kittiwakes and occasionally polar bears are seen on the glacier.

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**Day 4** Today we will reach our northernmost point at Phippsøya, in the Seven Islands north of Nordaustlandet. Here we will be at 81 degrees north, just 540 miles from the geographic North Pole. Polar bears inhabit this region, along with ivory gulls. We may sit for several hours in the pack ice, taking in our spectacular surroundings and seeing a Ross gull, before we turn south again.

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**Day 5** We will visit Laagöya today, a low island with a big lagoon where a big herd of walrus tends to congregate. Sabine's gulls nest on the island, as well. At Sorg Fjord we may find another herd of walruses not far from the graves of 17th century whalers. On a nature walk, we may encounter families of ptarmigans.

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**Day 6** Today we will sail into Hinlopen Strait, home to bearded seals, ringed seals, polar bears, and ivory gulls. We'll navigate the ice floes of Lomfjordshalvøya in our zodiacs and explore the bird cliffs of Alkefjellet with thousands of Brünnich's guillemots. On the east side of Hinlopenstrait, we'll attempt a landing at Palanderbukta on Nordaustlandet, home to reindeer, pink-footed geese, breeding ivory gulls, and walruses.

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<b>Day 7</b>	Near Torrelneset, we will explore the polar desert of Nordaustlandet, next to the world's third largest ice cap, which meets the sea nearby. We will walk along beautiful coastline covered in smooth rocks, sculpted by the surf over thousands of years. We may encounter walrus along the way. Sailing south of Nordaustlandet we will have good chance to see Greenland whales.
<b>Day 8</b>	In Freemansundet we plan to land at Sundneset on the island of Barentsøya to visit an old trapper's hut and then take a brisk walk across the tundra in search of Spitsbergen Reindeer and Barnacle Geese. Later we cruise south to Diskobukta on the west side of Edgeøya. After a Zodiac cruise through the shallow bay, we land on a beach littered with whale bones and tree trunks, which have drifted here from Siberia. We can also climb to the rim of a narrow gully which is inhabited by thousands of Kittiwakes, together with Black Guillemots and piratical Glaucous Gulls. During the breeding season, the base of the cliffs is patrolled by Arctic Foxes and Polar Bears, especially females with young cubs, searching for young birds that have fallen from the nesting ledges.
<b>Day 9</b>	We start the day quietly cruising the side fjords of the spectacular Hornsund area of southern Spitsbergen, enjoying the scenery of towering mountain peaks. Hornsundtind rises to 1,431m while Bautaen shows why early Dutch explorers gave the name 'Spitsbergen' - pointed mountains - to the island. There are also 14 magnificent glaciers in the area and very good chances of encounters with seals and Polar Bears. We may visit the Polish research station where the friendly staff will give us an insight into their research projects. Behind the station the mountains are home to thousands of pairs of nesting Little Auks.
<b>Day 10</b>	Today we land on Ahlstrandhalvøya at the mouth of Van Keulenfjorden. Here piles of Beluga skeletons (the Beluga is a small white whale), the remains of 19th century slaughter, are yet another reminder of the consequences of thoughtless exploitation. Fortunately, Belugas were not hunted to the edge of extinction and may still be seen locally. Indeed, there is a good chance that we will come across a pod. Cruising into Recherchefjorden during the afternoon we can explore an area of tundra at the head of the fjord where many Reindeer feed.
<b>Day 11</b>	Return to Longyearbyen and disembark for the transfer to the airport and the flight to Oslo and home.
<b>N.B</b>	If ice conditions are favourable we may sail around Nordaustlandet, passing another Nordkapp and visiting Kvitøya, the place where the Swedish Explorer Andree perished, instead of sailing through the Hinlopen Strait. The area between Kong Karls Land and Edgeøya offers great chances of observing Greenland Whales.
<b>N.B.</b>	The chances that we can complete a full Spitsbergen Circumnavigation (based on our experiences from 1992 until 2008) are about, 20% in the first half of July, 55% in the second half of July, 90 % in the first half of August, 95% in the second half of August. In case we can not complete a full circumnavigation we will mostly resort to a programme in Northeast or Southeast Spitsbergen.

## Detailed Description Around Spitsbergen

### 11 nights/12 days

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**DISCLAIMER !** All itineraries are for guidance only. Programs may vary depending on local ice and weather conditions and in order to take advantage of opportunities to see wildlife. Flexibility is paramount for expedition cruises.

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- Day 1** Arrive in Longyearbyen, the administrative capital of the Spitsbergen archipelago of which West Spitsbergen is the largest island. Before embarking there is an opportunity to stroll around this former mining town, whose parish church and Polar Museum are well worth visiting, while in the surrounds of Longyearbyen, more than 100 species of plant have been recorded. In the early evening the ship will sail out of Isfjorden.
- 
- Day 2** Heading north along the west coast, we arrive by morning in Krossfjorden, where we take to the Zodiacs for an exhilarating cruise along the sculpted front of the 14th of July Glacier. On the surprisingly green slopes near the glacier, a colourful variety of flowers bloom, while large numbers of Kittiwakes and Brünnich's Guillemots nest on the nearby cliffs. There is also a good chance of spotting opportunistic Arctic Foxes, who patrol the base of the cliffs in case a hapless chick falls from its nest, and Bearded Seals, who cruise this scenic fjord. In the afternoon we sail to Ny Ålesund, the world's most northerly settlement. Once a mining village - served by the world's most northerly railway, which can still be seen - Ny Ålesund is now a research centre. Close to the village is a breeding ground for Barnacle Geese, Pink-footed Geese and Arctic Terns. Visitors interested in the history of Arctic exploration will want to walk to the anchoring mast used by Amundsen and Nobile in the airship Norge in 1926 and Nobile in the airship Italia in 1928 before their flights to the North Pole.
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- Day 3** Near the mouth of Liefdefjorden, we will go ashore for a walk on the tundra island of Andøya. Many common eiders and pink-footed geese nest here, and the more rare king eider may also be seen. Sailing into Liefdefjorden, we will cruise near the face of the impressive Monaco Glacier. The waters of the glacier front are a favorite feeding spot for thousands of kittiwakes and occasionally polar bears are seen on the glacier.
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- Day 4** Today we will reach our northernmost point at Phippsøya, in the Seven Islands north of Nordaustlandet. Here we will be at 81 degrees north, just 540 miles from the geographic North Pole. Polar bears inhabit this region, along with ivory gulls. We may sit for several hours in the pack ice, taking in our spectacular surroundings and seeing a Ross gull, before we turn south again.
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- Day 5** We will visit Laagöya today, a low island with a big lagoon where a big herd of walrus tends to congregate. Sabine's gulls nest on the island, as well. At Sorg Fjord we may find another herd of walrus not far from the graves of 17th century whalers. On a nature walk, we may encounter families of ptarmigans.
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- Day 6** Today we will sail into Hinlopen Strait, home to bearded seals, ringed seals, polar bears, and ivory gulls. We'll navigate the ice floes of Lomfjordshalvøya in our zodiacs and explore the bird cliffs of Alkefjellet with thousands of Brünnich's guillemots. On the east side of Hinlopenstrait, we'll attempt a landing at Palanderbukta on Nordaustlandet, home to reindeer, pink-footed geese, breeding ivory gulls, and walrus.

<b>Day 7</b>	Near Torrelneset, we will explore the polar desert of Nordaustlandet, next to the world's third largest ice cap, which meets the sea nearby. We will walk along beautiful coastline covered in smooth rocks, sculpted by the surf over thousands of years. We may encounter walrus along the way. Sailing south of Nordaustlandet we will have good chance to see Greenland whales.
<b>Day 8</b>	In Freemansundet we plan to land at Sundneset on the island of Barentsøya to visit an old trapper's hut and then take a brisk walk across the tundra in search of Spitsbergen Reindeer and Barnacle Geese. Later we cruise south to Diskobukta on the west side of Edgeøya. After a Zodiac cruise through the shallow bay, we land on a beach littered with whale bones and tree trunks, which have drifted here from Siberia. We can also climb to the rim of a narrow gully which is inhabited by thousands of Kittiwakes, together with Black Guillemots and piratical Glaucous Gulls. During the breeding season, the base of the cliffs is patrolled by Arctic Foxes and Polar Bears, especially females with young cubs, searching for young birds that have fallen from the nesting ledges.
<b>Day 9</b>	We start the day quietly cruising the side fjords of the spectacular Hornsund area of southern Spitsbergen, enjoying the scenery of towering mountain peaks. Hornsundtind rises to 1,431m while Bautaen shows why early Dutch explorers gave the name 'Spitsbergen' - pointed mountains - to the island. There are also 14 magnificent glaciers in the area and very good chances of encounters with seals and Polar Bears. We may visit the Polish research station where the friendly staff will give us an insight into their research projects. Behind the station the mountains are home to thousands of pairs of nesting Little Auks.
<b>Day 10</b>	Today we land on Ahlstrandhalvøya at the mouth of Van Keulenfjorden. Here piles of Beluga skeletons (the Beluga is a small white whale), the remains of 19th century slaughter, are yet another reminder of the consequences of thoughtless exploitation. Fortunately, Belugas were not hunted to the edge of extinction and may still be seen locally. Indeed, there is a good chance that we will come across a pod. Cruising into Recherchefjorden during the afternoon we can explore an area of tundra at the head of the fjord where many Reindeer feed.
<b>Day 11</b>	Return to Longyearbyen and disembark for the transfer to the airport and the flight to Oslo and home.
<b>N.B</b>	If ice conditions are favourable we may sail around Nordaustlandet, passing another Nordkapp and visiting Kvitøya, the place where the Swedish Explorer Andree perished, instead of sailing through the Hinlopen Strait. The area between Kong Karls Land and Edgeøya offers great chances of observing Greenland Whales.
<b>N.B.</b>	The chances that we can complete a full Spitsbergen Circumnavigation (based on our experiences from 1992 until 2008) are about, 20% in the first half of July, 55% in the second half of July, 90 % in the first half of August, 95% in the second half of August. In case we can not complete a full circumnavigation we will mostly resort to a programme in Northeast or Southeast Spitsbergen.

## Detailed Description Around Spitsbergen 15 nights/16 days

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**DISCLAIMER !** All itineraries are for guidance only. Programs may vary depending on local ice and weather conditions and in order to take advantage of opportunities to see wildlife. Flexibility is paramount for expedition cruises.

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**Day 1** After arriving in Longyearbyen, the 'capital' (actually the administrative centre) of Spitsbergen, you may wish to visit the Svalbard Museum which has an interesting collection on the history of Spitsbergen, the mining industry and polar exploration. In the afternoon we sail, setting course for Alkhornet, a seabird cliff with a large colony of Kittiwakes. Below the cliffs is a den with Arctic Foxes which scavenge off fallen eggs and chicks. We continue to Trygghamna to visit the remains of a 17th century English whaling station and an 18th century Russian Pomor station.

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**Day 2** We leave Trygghamna early in the morning and sail through the Forlandsundet. Weather permitting we will go ashore at Fuglehuken where the first Western Europeans (the expedition of Willem Barentsz) set foot on Spitsbergen. Here we can see the graves of whalers and visit colonies of Common Guillemots, Brünnich's Guillemots, Little Auks and Kittiwakes. Nearby we may be able to visit a haul-out of Harbour Seals and Walruses.

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**Day 3** Today we visit the remains of Smeerenburg, the largest 17th century whaling settlement on Spitsbergen. We also land on Ytre Norskøya where there are many graves dating from whaling days.

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**Day 4 to Day 15** Today we sail either to Sorgfjord, where we have a good chance of seeing Walruses, or to Murchison Bay, on the north side of which there is an extensive dry tundra, home to many Reindeer. There is also a Swedish research station here.

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**Day 16** Departure by scheduled flight from Longyearbyen to Oslo.

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## Detailed Description Spitsbergen – Northeast Greenland

### 12 nights/13 days

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**DISCLAIMER !** All itineraries are for guidance only. Programs may vary depending on local ice and weather conditions and in order to take advantage of opportunities to see wildlife. Flexibility is paramount for expedition cruises.

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**Day 1** Arrive in Longyearbyen, on Spitsbergen, the administrative capital of the Spitsbergen archipelago of which West Spitsbergen is the largest island. Before embarking there is an opportunity to visit this former mining village. The Parish Church and the Polar Museum are well worth visiting, while in the country around the village more than 100 species of plant have been recorded. In the early evening the ship will sail out of Isfjorden.

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**Day 2** We sail into Raudfjord on the north coast of West Spitsbergen, a beautiful fjord with spectacular glaciers. It is home to Ringed and Bearded Seals, seabird colonies and a surprisingly rich vegetation. We have good chances to see Polar Bears, for instance near Hamilton Glacier, or more to the head of the fjord. From there we continue to Moffen island on which Walrus haul out. If we have not seen bears on this day we may spend an other day in Liefdefjord near the Monaco glacier, where we also often see bears.

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**Day 3 & 4** At sea, on our way to Greenland, along the impressive East Greenland Ice. Keep watch for Fin Whales, Humpback Whales and Minke Whales, and also for migrating seabirds, especially the Brünnich's Guillemots, which swim with their small young from Spitsbergen, along the sea ice to South Greenland.

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**Day 5** Approaching Greenland we will attempt to sail through the sea ice into Foster Bugt, making our first landing at Myggebugten. Beyond the old hunters' hut (in the first half of last century Norwegian trappers hunted here for Polar Bears and Arctic Foxes) there is an extensive tundra populated by Musk Oxen and Arctic Hares. The small lakes are home to geese. We sail through Kaiser Franz Joseph Fjord, a magnificent fjord with towering mountains on both sides, its inner reaches choked with huge icebergs and an excellent place to encounter Narwhal. An alternative is Sofia Sund, which is much narrower, and where we can see Muskoxen from the ship.

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**Day 6** We will land at Blomster Bugt to view the beautiful geological formations. Arctic Hares are usually seen here, and there is a lake with Great Northern Divers with young. In the afternoon we sail along Teufelschloss and Ella Ö and may land at a beautiful spot in the early evening.

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**Day 7** The first half of the day we spend in Antarticahavn, a wide and extensive valley where we also could see groups of Musk Oxen. At this time of year the autumnal colours of the sparse vegetation make the landscapes even more beautiful.

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**Day 8** Today we reach the Scoresby Sund and sail in the morning along the ragged and glaciated Volquart Boons Coast, a good place for seeing Narwhal. Here we may organise a zodiac cruise along one of the glacier fronts of this coast, and have our first landing near a glacier. Later we land on Danmarks Ø where there are the remains of an

Inuit settlement abandoned around 200 years ago. The circular 'tent rings' of stones indicate the summer houses, while the winter houses can be seen closer to a small cape. The sites are excellently preserved, allowing entrances and even bear-proof meat caches to be identified. There are also grave sites. In the evening we continue our sailing through the beautiful fjords to the west, choked with ice-bergs.

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**Day 9** We go ashore at Cape Hofmann Halvø, a reliable spot for viewing Musk Oxen. We may also spot Rock Ptarmigans, and Great Northern Divers at sea. The landscape here is particularly beautiful, especially during autumn when the Dwarf Willow and Dwarf Birch change colour. Arctic Blueberry and Crowberry add their own colourful touch - the berries are tasty too ! Later, during a Zodiac cruise along the 3km wide face of the Eielson Glacier, we will come close to huge icebergs and may also see Ringed Seals, as well as distant views of Musk Oxen on shore. In the evening we sail through the fjord towards Scoresby Land, hoping to see Narwhal again and enjoying the contrast between the warm autumnal colours of the vegetation on shore, backed by huge dark mountains, and the cold blue of the icebergs.

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**Day 10** In Northwest fjord in Scoresby Land in the morning, we encounter huge icebergs, some over 100m high and more than a kilometre in length. Most of the bergs are grounded as the fjord is only about 400m deep here. We land near Sydkap to view the remains of the Thule culture winter houses. As many as 20 people lived in these tiny houses, hunting Greenland Whales and using their vertebrae to build the houses. We may also land at Gurreholm on Jameson Land. The landscape here is gently undulating, but the climate is harsh - sometimes snow lies throughout the summer - but some animals - Musk Oxen and Collared Lemmings - survive on the meagre vegetation.

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**Day 11** In the morning we land at a lagoon near Kap Stewart and walk from there to Kap Stewart, following the banks of a winding river through an autumnal tundra. In the afternoon we land at Illoqqortoormiut, the biggest settlement in the Scoresby Sund with about 500 inhabitants. At the post office you can buy stamps for your postcards, or just wander around to see the sledge dogs and the drying skins of Seal, Musk Ox and Polar Bear. After dinner we will sail south passing the amazing landscape of the Bløseville Coast.

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**Day 12** We are the whole day at sea and will have splendid opportunities to see large whales and seabird migration and, in the night, the Aurora Borealis (Northern Lights).

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**Day 13** Arrive in Akureyri (North Iceland) and transfer for the flight home, or take a bus to Reykjavik.

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## Detailed Description Spitsbergen - Northeast Greenland

### 13 nights/14 days

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**DISCLAIMER !** All itineraries are for guidance only. Programs may vary depending on local ice and weather conditions and in order to take advantage of opportunities to see wildlife. Flexibility is paramount for expedition cruises.

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**Day 1** Arrive in Longyearbyen, on Spitsbergen, the administrative capital of the Spitsbergen archipelago of which West Spitsbergen is the largest island. Before embarking there is an opportunity to visit this former mining village. The Parish Church and the Polar Museum are well worth visiting, while in the country around the village more than 100 species of plant have been recorded. In the early evening the ship will sail out of Isfjorden.

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**Day 2** We sail into Raudfjord on the north coast of West Spitsbergen, a beautiful fjord with spectacular glaciers. It is home to Ringed and Bearded Seals, seabird colonies and a surprisingly rich vegetation. We have good chances to see Polar Bears, for instance near Hamilton Glacier, or more to the head of the fjord. From there we continue to Moffen island on which Walrus haul out.

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**Day 3 & 4** At sea, on our way to Greenland, we may see the edge of the East Greenland sea-ice. We keep watch for whales, and also for migrating seabirds.

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**Day 5** Approaching Greenland we will attempt to sail through the sea ice into Foster Bugt, making our first landing at Myggebugten. Beyond the old hunters' hut (in the first half of last century Norwegian trappers hunted here for Polar Bears and Arctic Foxes) there is an extensive tundra populated by Musk Oxen. The small lakes are home to geese. We sail through Kaiser Franz Joseph Fjord, a magnificent fjord with towering mountains on both sides, its inner reaches choked with huge icebergs. An alternative is Sofia Sund, which is much narrower, and where we can see Muskoxen from the ship.

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**Day 6** We will land at Blomster Bugt to view the beautiful geological formations. Arctic Hares are usually seen here, and there is a lake with Great Northern Divers with young. In the afternoon we sail along Teufelschloss and Ella Ö and may land at a beautiful spot in the early evening.

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**Day 7** The first half of the day we spend in Antarticahavn, a wide and extensive valley where we also could see groups of Musk Oxen. At this time of year the autumnal colours of the sparse vegetation make the landscapes even more beautiful.

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**Day 8** Today we reach the Scoresby Sund and sail in the morning along the ragged and glaciated Volquart Boons Here we may organise a zodiac cruise along one of the glacier fronts of this coast, and have our first landing near for instance Maane Galcier. Later we land on Danmarks Ø where there are the remains of an Inuit settlement abandoned around 200 years ago. The circular 'tent rings' of stones indicate the summer houses, while the winter houses can be seen closer to a small cape. The sites are excellently preserved, allowing entrances and even bear-proof meat caches to be identified. There are also grave sites. In the evening we continue our sailing through the beautiful fjords to the west, choked with ice-bergs.

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**Day 9** We go ashore at Cape Hofmann Halvø, a reliable spot for viewing Musk Oxen. We may also spot Rock Ptarmigans, and Great Northern Divers at sea. The landscape here is particularly beautiful, especially during autumn when the Dwarf Willow and Dwarf Birch change colour. Arctic Blueberry and Crowberry add their own colourful touch - the berries are tasty too ! In the evening we sail through the fjord towards Scoresby Land, enjoying the contrast between the warm autumnal colours of the vegetation on shore, backed by huge dark mountains, and the cold blue of the icebergs.

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**Day 10** In Northwest fjord in Scoresby Land in the morning, we encounter huge icebergs, some over 100m high and more than a kilometre in length. Most of the bergs are grounded as the fjord is only about 400m deep here. We land near Sydkap to view the remains of the Thule culture winter houses. As many as 20 people lived in these tiny houses, hunting Greenland Whales and using their vertebrae to build the houses. We may also land at Gurreholm on Jameson Land. The landscape here is gently undulating.

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**Day 11** In the morning we land at Illoqqortoormiut, the biggest settlement in the Scoresby Sund with about 500 inhabitants. At the post office you can buy stamps for your postcards, or just wander around to see the sledge dogs and the drying skins of Seal, Musk Ox and Polar Bear. After dinner we will sail south passing the amazing landscape of the Blossville Coast.

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**Day 12** At the mouth of Nansen Fjord we spot Gunnbjørns Fjeld, at 3,700m: it is both the highest peak in Greenland and also the highest mountain north of the Arctic Circle. We sail into Nansen Fjord another magnificent landscape with an enormous calving glacier front, which we can easily approach. At the inner side of the fjord along the northern shore there are ample landing and zodiac cruising opportunities. We meet often tame Rock Ptarmigans with young, and on the ice-floes Bearded Seals. If we can not spend the day in Nansen Fjord, due to glacier ice which often fills the fjord, we will sail into Mikis Fjord, bounded by steep cliffs. The fjord is a good place to spot Ringed Seals and Harp Seals. At Södalen at the head of Mikis Fjord we land in a marshy delta. There are good populations of both Common and Arctic Redpolls, as well as a chance of seeing flocks of Barnacle Geese and Pink-footed Geese.

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**Day 13** We are the whole day at sea and will have splendid opportunities to see large whales and seabird migration and, in the night, the Aurora Borealis (Northern Lights).

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**Day 14** Arrive in Keflavik and transfer for the flight home.

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## Detailed Description East Greenland - Scoresby Sund (Akureyri-Keflavik) 9 nights/10 days

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**DISCLAIMER !** All itineraries are for guidance only. Programs may vary depending on local ice and weather conditions and in order to take advantage of opportunities to see wildlife. Flexibility is paramount for expedition cruises.

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- Day 1** Arrive at Akureyri airport and make the short journey to the small port of the same name to join the ship. In the early evening we leave Iceland and sail north towards the Denmark Strait.
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- Day 2** At sea, sailing north through the Denmark Strait. We may see Orcas (Killer Whales), and are almost certain to see Fulmars, Kittiwakes, Gannets and rafts of Common Guillemots and Razorbills. We cross the Arctic Circle and continue north, perhaps seeing White-beaked Dolphins, Humpback Whales and Minke Whales. In the evening we will spot our first icebergs appear as we approach the east coast of Greenland near Kap Brewster.
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- Day 3** In the morning we sail along the ragged and glaciated Volquart Boons Coast, Here we may organise a zodiac cruise along one of the glacier fronts of this coast, and have our first landing near a glacier, like Maanegletsjer or in Vikingebugt. Later we land on Danmarks Ø where there are the remains of an Inuit settlement abandoned around 200 years ago. The circular 'tent rings' of stones indicate the summer houses, while the winter houses can be seen closer to a small cape. The sites are excellently preserved, allowing entrances and even bear-proof meat caches to be identified. There are also grave sites. In the evening we continue our sailing through the beautiful fjords to the west, choked with ice-bergs.
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- Day 4** We go ashore at Cape Hofmann Halvø, a reliable spot for viewing Musk Oxen. We may also spot Rock Ptarmigans and at sea Great Northern Divers. The landscape here is particularly beautiful, especially during autumn when the Dwarf Willow and Dwarf Birch change colour. Arctic Blueberry and Crowberry add their own colourful touch - the berries are tasty too! Later, during a Zodiac cruise, we will come close to huge icebergs and may also see Ringed Seals, as well as distant views of Musk Oxen on shore. In the evening we sail through the fjord towards Scoresby Land, hoping to see Narwhals and enjoying the contrast between the warm autumnal colours of the vegetation on shore, backed by huge dark mountains, and the cold blue of the icebergs.
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- Day 5** On our way to Sydkap in Scoresby Land in the morning, we encounter huge icebergs, some over 100 m high and more than a kilometre in length. Most of the bergs are grounded as the fjord is only about 400 m deep here. We land near Sydkap to view the remains of the Thule culture winter houses. As many as 20 people lived in these tiny houses, hunting Greenland Whales and using their vertebrae to build the houses. We may also land at Gurreholm on Jameson Land. The landscape here is gently undulating, but the climate is harsh - sometimes snow lies throughout the summer - but some animals - Musk Oxen and Collared Lemmings - survive on the meagre vegetation. The lemmings are preyed upon by Long-tailed Skua, Snowy Owl and Arctic Fox.
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- Day 6** We land in Illoqqortoormiut, the biggest settlement near Scoresby Sund with about 500

inhabitants. At the post office you can buy stamps for your postcards, or just wander around to see the sledge dogs and the drying skins of seals, Musk Ox and Polar Bear. After lunch we will sail south, passing the amazing landscape of the Blossville Coast where groups of Harp Seals can be spotted among the ice floes.

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- Day 7** We continue along the Blossville Coast with wonderful views of snow covered peaks - these are the highest mountains of Greenland, some of them reaching over 3000m. At the mouth of Nansen Fjord we spot Gunnbjørns Fjeld, at 3700m: it is both the highest peak in Greenland and also the highest mountain north of the Arctic Circle. Next we sail into Mikis Fjord, bounded by steep cliffs. The fjord is a good place to spot Narwhal, Polar Bear, Ringed Seals and Harp Seals. At Södalen at the head of Mikis Fjord we land in a marshy delta. There are good populations of both Common and Arctic Redpolls, as well as a chance of seeing flocks of Barnacle Geese and Pink-footed Geese.
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- Day 8** In the morning, we head south for Kangerlussuaq fjord where glaciers reach the sea creating a fabulous landscape of glacier fronts, icebergs and cliffs. On shore there are the remains of dwellings of Thule culture people. The fjord is also a good place to see Polar Bears and Ivory Gulls. We conclude the day with a Zodiac trip to Skaergårdshalvø, a popular summer hunting ground for the people of Ammassalik. Most years a number of families arrive here in early summer and stay until the end of the hunting season and we might be able to meet them. In the afternoon we will sail south-east towards the Denmark Strait.
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- Day 9** The whole day at sea offers excellent opportunities to see large whales and seabird migration and, at night the Aurora Borealis (Northern Lights).
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- Day 10** Arrive and Keflavik, and transfer for the airport for the flight home.
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- N.B.** The chances that the sea-ice will allow us to sail into the Kaiser Franz Josef Fjord and Scoresby Sund in September (based on experiences from 1992 until 2007) is about 85%. In case we can not sail into the Scoresby Sund we will resort to a programme in the East Greenland fjords more to the south.
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## Detailed Description Northeast Greenland - In the wake of German explorers 12 nights/13 days

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**DISCLAIMER !** All itineraries are for guidance only. Programs may vary depending on local ice and weather conditions and in order to take advantage of opportunities to see wildlife. Flexibility is paramount for expedition cruises.

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**Day 1** Arrive in Longyearbyen, on Spitsbergen, the administrative capital of the Spitsbergen archipelago of which West Spitsbergen is the largest island. Before embarking there is an opportunity to visit this former mining village. The Parish Church and the Polar Museum are well worth visiting, while in the country around the village more than 100 species of plant have been recorded. In the early evening the ship will sail out of Isfjorden. We try to have an evening excursion in Tryghamna near a 17th century English whaling station.

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**Day 2 & 3** At sea, on our way to Greenland, we may see the edge of the East Greenland Ice. We keep watch for whales, and also for migrating seabirds.

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**Day 4** If the ice conditions allow we will try to get to Shannon Island, where at Kap Sussi there was a German weather station in World War II. Alternatively we may get to Kuhn Island with Schwarze Wand and Kap Hamburg.

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**Day 5** On Sabine Island we will try to land in the Hansa Bugt, where during World War II the Germans had the weather station "Holzauge". Further we will sail to Germania Havn, where in 1869 the members of the 2nd German North Pole Expedition under Koldewey spent the winter. In the following summer they were the first Europeans to enter the Kaiser Franz Josef Fjord.

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**Day 6** We sail through Kaiser Franz Joseph Fjord, a magnificent fjord with towering mountains on both sides, its inner reaches choked with huge icebergs. An alternative is Sofia Sund, which is much narrower, and where we can see Muskoxen from the ship. We will land at Blomster Bugt to view the beautiful geological formations. Arctic Hares are usually seen here, and there is a lake with Great Northern Divers with young. In the afternoon we sail along Teufelschloss.

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**Day 7** The first half of the day we spend in Alpefjord, a spectacular fjord with glaciers and icebergs. From there we have good view on the high Petermann Berg.

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**Day 8** Today we reach the Scoresby Sund and sail in the morning along the coast of Jameson Land. We try to reach the site where Alfred Wegener erected a small station ( Tyskit Nunat ) as support for one of his planned crossings of the Greenland Ice-cap.

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**Day 9** We land near Sydkap to view the remains of the Thule culture winter houses. As many as 20 people lived in these tiny houses, hunting Greenland Whales and using their vertebrae to build the houses. In Northwest fjord in Scoresby Land we encounter huge icebergs, some over 100m high and more than a kilometre in length. Most of the bergs are grounded as the fjord is only about 400m deep here. Alwin Pedersen explored this

area as the first European.

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<b>Day 10</b>	We sail either west or east of Milne Land, where we may land at Charcot Havn or Danmarks Ø, where there are remains of an Inuit settlement abandoned about 200 years ago. In the evening we continue along the ragged Volquart Boons Kyst.
<b>Day 11</b>	Today we land at Illoqqortoormiut, the biggest settlement in the Scoresby Sund with about 500 inhabitants. At the post office you can buy stamps for your postcards, or just wander around to see the sledge dogs and the drying skins of Seal, Musk Ox and Polar Bear.
<b>Day 12</b>	We are the whole day at sea and will have splendid opportunities to see large whales and seabird migration and, in the night, the Aurora Borealis (Northern Lights).
<b>Day 13</b>	Arrive in Akureyri (North Iceland) and transfer to Reykjavik by chartered bus.

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