



HEARTS IN THE ICE 2022 - TRAVEL INFORMATION

An Unforgettable Arctic Adventure in Svalbard, Norway **Thursday 8 September – Monday 12 September 2022**

On board **MS NORDSTJERNEN** from Longyearbyen - Longyearbyen, Svalbard

This travel information will provide you with the arrival and departure details of your voyage and may describe services that are not included in your personal travel arrangements. Please take note that we are working to make this voyage as sustainable as possible both onboard and as you depart. We will have options to contribute to climate education and carbon dioxide removal with permanent storage via Tomorrow's Air among other initiatives. *If you have any questions about the voyage, please contact :Hilde at hilde@heartsintheice.com or Sunniva sunniva.hiti@gmail.com*

For all booking related questions contact : Heartsintheice@gmail.com

ITINERARY

This Hearts In The Ice Voyage will be an unforgettable Spitsbergen experience.

Spitsbergen and Svalbard are both official names where the first refers to the largest island in the archipelago of Svalbard. Focusing on the South Spitsbergen National Park we will experience extraordinary Arctic landscape, glaciers and bird cliffs. We will attempt to reach as far south as Hornsund.

This 4-day Invite only voyage unites students, scientists, artists, manufacturers, environmental organizations, thought leaders and all who care about the health and well being of our planet and all people. Here above the Arctic Circle we will still experience the afterglow of the Midnight Sun which ends on 23 August with long days and light nights. If we are lucky, we might just see the King of the Arctic- the polar bear.

****We have thermal suits for all guests to borrow, however all other warm weather clothing and boots are the responsibility of each guest.**

THURSDAY 8 SEPTEMBER-LONGYEARBYEN/ARRIVAL INFORMATION

LONGYEARBYEN

Passengers who arrive at Longyearbyen airport (LYR) on 8 September 2022 with SK flight at 13:45, look for a sign “**Hearts In The Ice**”. You will be met at the airport and transferred to the ship with your luggage (bus ticket costs NOK 95 per person). You will drop your luggage off and then be shuttled to the center of town for shopping or other. At 15:45 the bus will pick you up from the same location where you were dropped off and you will go directly to the ship for embarkation at 16:00.

Earlier arrival in Longyearbyen before 8 September:

You can take the official airport shuttle bus Flybuss (NOK 95 per person) or a taxi (in front of the airport) for transfer to your hotel. The airport is only 5 kilometers away from the settlement. Check in after arrival at your hotel. Take a taxi or walk to the ship on Thursday on your own – please **board the ship on Thursday latest by 16:00**.

The voyage starts in the Norwegian settlement often referred to as the capital of Svalbard, Longyearbyen. Here you'll find all the amenities of a modern small town – situated in a fantastic Arctic landscape. The history of Longyearbyen is filled with a tradition of coal mining, and remnants from the early mining ventures can be seen everywhere.

If you arrive on Wednesday or earlier - after your breakfast, we recommend you join a sightseeing tour in Longyearbyen by bus – you will be picked up from the hotel for a guided sightseeing trip for 2 hours.

This can be booked at your hotel reception or through info@hurtigrutensvalbard.com

Other activity options : <https://hurtigrutensvalbard.com/en/activities>

A visit to the Svalbard Museum is also highly recommended. This fantastic museum is worth visiting as it will provide you with a great deal of background information on all the wonders you will experience on board MS Nordstjernen.

MS Nordstjernen will be ready for embarkation at 16:00.

We will set a course for Bamsebu (the remote cabin where Sunniva, Hilde and Ettra spent 19 months) at 17:00, heading out of Isfjord and south towards Bellsund and Bamsebu.

EMBARKATION

PLANNED PIER:	Gammelkaia, Longyearbyen (LYR)
START OF EMBARKATION:	16:00 hrs September 8th 2022
PLANNED DEPARTURE TIME:	17:00 hrs (cabins will be ready after 16:00 hrs)

After Hilde, Sunniva and the amazing Expedition team have welcomed you and preliminary information has been given, all guests will be instructed in ship safety procedures that will be held out on the deck. A delicious dinner will be served on board at approx. 19:00. Seating for dinner is open seating.

ISFJORDEN

As we sail out of the fjord, Alkehornet to the north of the fjord is a distinct landmark. To the south, Radio Isfjord's buildings at Kapp Linné emerge. Cultural remains from all of Svalbard's historic eras, glaciers, characteristic flat-topped and layered mountains can all be found within this giant fjord complex. We will visit Skansbukta. Under the impressive cliffs of Skansen there is a narrow beach terrace with a cabin.

North of the cabin there are remains from the gypsum mine that once was active here.

There are many remains of Pomor hunting stations, who may have been here before Spitsbergen was discovered by Willhem Barents in 1596. The name 'Ice Sound' was given in 1610 by the English whaler Jonas Poole 'because it was covered with Ice'. During the 19th and 20th century, numerous scientific expeditions have visited Isfjord. Norwegian trappers have had their hunting ground here, a tradition that has partly survived until today. Legendary hunters such as Hilmar Nøis and Arthur Oxaas lived in the Isfjord for many years in the first half of the 20th century.

FRIDAY 9 SEPTEMBER - BAMSEBU

We will have sailed during the night on Thursday for arrival to Bamsebu in the morning.

We plan to find a safe anchor and weather permitting we will stay in the area of Bamsebu all day. We will use PolarCircle boats to take us all ashore. Exact time to be determined.

This area is steeped in history. **Bamsebu (20 square meters) is where Hilde, Sunniva & Ettra overwintered from September 2019 until late May 2021.** This is where history was made! We will tour the area, see their living space and explore the unique surroundings. We have many special guests on board this voyage so we will be treated to relevant historical information and what we might discover in the area around us.

Trust us- this location is most special!

A little information about the **history of Bamsebu:**

Bamsebu is a privately-owned hunting hut at Cape Tuscan far West Ingebrigtsenbukta on the south coast of Van Keulenfjorden, central Spitsbergen, Svalbard. The place is known for the Beluga Beach (Kvitfiskstranda) - a mudflat with an estimated 550 skeleton by beluga (white whale) reminiscent of the unique hunting station for this species of whale here. You'll find 11 piles of Beluga bones on the beach in addition to large wooden boats upside down, used in whaling from Bamsebu.

Bamsebu was established by Ingvald Svendsen in 1930 as Svendsens beluga station, the only one of its kind in Svalbard - and possibly moved to this location from Camp 2 on Lægerneset in eastern Recherchefjorden. Bamsebu has in the postwar period been the only privately-owned hut in South Spitsbergen National Park. Large piles of beluga whale bones adorn the beach (below Bamsebu), the result of hectic and valuable summer-hunting during the interwar years. The beluga blubber as well as the skin was sought after. The beluga whales swam in large groups into the fjords where trappers were waiting with large seine nets to close the mouth of the fjord, trapping and slaughtering the whales. This slaughtering place is a unique cultural remain in Svalbard.

The cabin was used by Norwegian whalers in the interwar period and belonged then to trapping field 5 (Midterhuken). The area is in South Spitsbergen National Park.

Bamsebu and the area is automatically protected, and there are restrictions on traffic here. Bamsebu is included in the 50 highest priority cultural heritage sites in Svalbard and is situated 100 nautical miles from Longyearbyen and 140 km on land with snow scooter during a short period of the winter (March/April - ice dependent).

We might also visit Fleur de Lyshamna and Ahlstrandodden.

Three of the wooden boats lie on the beach here. The names of the bays, beaches and headlands of Ahlstrandhalvøya originated from the cultural heritage environment connected with the hunting of beluga. Hearts in the Ice often skied and ran to this area to explore and exercise.

Skarpsyn – utkikksbu/lookout for "kvitfiskfangsten" beluga hunting.

Hotæl blanke kniven/shiney knife – upturned boat which was used as a "shelter" during the hunting period



Hotel Blanke Kniven (Shiney Knife)



Skarpsyn- the lookout



Skeletons from kvitfiskfangsten/beluga hunting.



Bamsebu- 20 m² Vertical logs were set up to try to prevent polar bears from getting into the cabin.

SATURDAY 10 SEPTEMBER – HORNSUND

South Spitsbergen offers a strikingly varied landscape – from the large flat plain to peaked mountains like the magnificent Hornsundtind.

HORNSUND

Hornsund is a fjord on the western side of the southernmost tip of Spitsbergen island.

Majestic Peaks and dramatic fjords make a visit here very special. The Hornsund area displays large variations in landscape and geology over short distances.

The fjord's mouth faces west to the Greenland Sea, and is 12 kilometres wide- 30 km long.

A Polish research station has been operating here since 1957. Traces of human activity spanning 400 years are to be found around the fjord. Although ice and weather conditions will dictate where we explore, some areas we may visit include Gnålodden and Gåshamna.

We hope to take a PolarCircle boat cruise in front of a few of the dramatic and inspiring glaciers in the area.

The name Gnålodden is derived from the adjacent bird cliff Gnålberget (759 m.a.s.l.), home to thousands of nesting black-legged Kittiwakes and Brünnich's guillemots. "Gnål" means "nagging" in Norwegian.

Wanny Woldstad was tougher than most males. She was a female hunter and trapper who made Svalbard history. Below the steep and noisy bird cliff is where she stayed in one of her hunting cabins. The cabin stands as a monument over toil and self-denial.

Her nearest neighbours were the remains of a Russian trapping station and the grave of a 17th century whaler.

Wanny was a taxi-driver in Tromsø, in mainland Norway, in the 1930s. She often listened to stories told by the trappers who returned from Svalbard with a profit. They liked to spend some of it going to Ølhallen, the Mack brewery's bar, by taxi, which she drove.

In 1932 she was asked to join an expedition to Svalbard with Anders Sæterdal and she immediately accepted. In her words: "In two-three days I was converted from a taxi-driver in Tromsø to a female trapper on the way to Svalbard onboard Maiblomsten".

In the beginning, many of the experienced trappers were skeptical of her participation and abilities as a trapper in the harsh conditions. At 157cm tall, she was a small woman, with great drive and eagerness to learn eventually proving that this lifestyle was right for her.

The following two years she brought her two sons to Hornsund – Alf and Bjørvik Jacobsen – who later became experienced trappers in Svalbard.

Wanny used Hyttevika as her main station. Isbjørnhamna, close to the site of today's Polish Research Station, was the closest satellite station – it was near here that Wanny shot her first bear, on 12 December 1932. Fuglefjell (Gnålodden) was her second satellite station

Gåshamna means "goose bay" in Norwegian. The ruins of the large Russian research station built for the Arc of Meridian Expedition appear as colourful spots in a greyish landscape. The remains include a residence, laboratory and an observatory. Later, a small cabin for Norwegian overwintering trappers was built within the remains of the station and was named Konstantinovka. There are also fragments of two large 17th century English whaling stations with their blubber ovens flanking the area.

SUNDAY 11 SEPTEMBER – BELLSUND



We sail north, passing Wanny Woldstad's main trapper station Hyttevika. If we are very lucky with the weather, it might be possible to land here with our PolarCircle boats, but this is very rare. We will see it from a distance, and we will continue towards Bellsund.

BELLSUND

Bellsund is a 20km long sound on the west coast of Spitsbergen. The history of Bellsund starts with whaling at the beginning of the 17th century and it continues with Russian overwintering,

trapping in the 18th century and Norwegian overwintering, trapping and mining at the beginning of the 20th century.

Bellsund cuts into Spitsbergen south of Isfjorden and splits into two branches: the fjords Van Mijenfjorden and Van Keulenfjorden. The landscape here is characterized by high mountains where different geological structures can be seen clearly, including impressive folds.

There are large bird cliffs in the area; fertilization by seabird droppings accounts for the surprisingly lush vegetation in some areas. The area holds cultural remains from several periods of Svalbard's history, the most prominent being the era of mineral exploration and mining at the beginning of the 20th century.

MONDAY 12 SEPTEMBER – ARRIVAL IN LONGYEARBYEN AT 08:00AM

LONGYEARBYEN

Our Arctic Adventure draws to a close with minds and hearts full of new ideas, new friends and opportunities to participate on a much deeper, more informed participatory level as we all work to be a meaningful part of this Climate Crisis.

If you can stay a day or two extra connect with new contacts- both Hilde and Sunniva will be around.

An early morning transfer bus will take you to the hotel before an airport shuttle takes you to the airport at 11:30 for your flight at 14:45 on 12 September. If you are leaving the next day you can enjoy the quaint, evolving settlement of Longyearbyen for a few more nights! **Heartsinthelce.com** will have content updated on the "events page" so we can all stay in touch and create transformational change in this defining decade

DISEMBARKATION

PLANNED PIER:	Gammelkaia
PLANNED ARRIVAL TIME:	08:00am(12 September 2022)
START OF DISEMBARKATION:	After arrival
LATEST DISEMBARKATION TIME	08:30 am

TRANSFER FROM PIER TO LONGYEARBYEN AIRPORT AND HOTEL:

Flight departure Sept 12th at 14:45 am with SK4425:

Approx. 08:00 am transfer from pier to the city centre to Radisson Blu Polar Hotel (NOK 95 per person). You can store your luggage at the hotel and spend time at leisure in the morning.

At approx. 12:45 pm there is a departure with the airport shuttle bus FLYBUS (check the exact time in the reception) from Radisson Blu Polar Hotel to the airport (NOK 95 per person). Please take your luggage with you.

TRANSFER INFORMATION FOR GUESTS WITH AN EXTENDED STAY IN LONGYEARBYEN PRE- OR POST TOUR:

Guests who arrive/depart one or more days before/after our special voyage use the official airport shuttle bus (FLYBUS). The public airport shuttle bus schedule from Longyearbyen airport to all hotels and vice versa corresponds with all flight arrivals and departures. Guests taking their transfer from the hotel to the airport are kindly asked to check the timetable of the official airport shuttle bus with the hotel reception.

IMPORTANT INFORMATION

Hearts In The Ice and Hurtigruten reserve the right to make changes. Therefore, the above day to day program is only indicative. Final itinerary details will be shared on board the ship. This voyage is invite only and will have all of the authentic Arctic education and excursion components with the addition of special, notable guests, music, thought leadership content/what indigenous wisdom teaches us as well as sharing ways to engage with solutions, groups and ideas that drive us to solutions for a more equitable/sustainable world that includes all beings- human and otherwise

All times and information are subject to change!

MS Nordstjernen is a classic ship built in 1956. The cabins are very small and have bunk beds. Half of the cabins are outside cabins with private facilities and the rest have shared facilities. We will all be together in the cosy common areas and out on deck during the day. During the night we will mostly be at anchor and there will therefore be less noise and movements/vibrations.

HEARTSINTHEICEANDHURTIGRUTENCONTACTINFORMATION

Hearts In The Ice

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Coal Miners' Cabins P.O. Box 500 / N - 9171 Longyearbyen	Phone: +47 79 02 63 00
Radisson Blu Polar Hotel Spitsbergen P.O.Box 554 / N - 9171 Longyearbyen	Phone: +47 79 02 34 50

MS Nordstjernen

+47 46 93 55 68 (only available in ports) E-mail: reception@msnordstjernen.com

Practical information about life on board MS Nordstjernen

For Nansen, Amundsen and Sverdrup the M/S Fram was the vessel for world exploration – let MS Nordstjernen be the same for you. You will journey to some of the most ecologically fascinating and scenically diverse landscapes. Each of these spectacular adventures is a voyage of discovery through pristine environments, meeting people of different cultures.

Alcohol Policy

Guests are respectfully reminded that only beverages purchased from the ship's restaurant and bar can be consumed on board. According to Norwegian law, persons over the age of 18 are allowed to purchase beer and wine. Spirits are only available to persons over the age of 20 years.

Announcements

Announcements will be made over the public address system. There are no telephones in the cabins on board MS Nordstjernen.

Bar service

The ship has a bar with an excellent selection of spirits, wines, beers, and soft drinks at moderate prices, and a lounge with coffee service.

Cabins

All cabins will be ready upon your arrival. All cabins (except cabin 304) have a bunk bed. Not all cabins have hair dryers. Shared facilities for E and D grade cabins. We will accommodate all.

Children

For safety reasons, children under 12 years of age will be considered on each landing. It is entirely at the Captain's discretion to allow children on shore landings.

Cruise Card

A cruise card will be issued upon arrival on board as part of the check in procedure in accordance with ISPS regulations. All guests are requested to wear this card when disembarking the ship in all ports of call and landings.

The card serves as a control system on the gangway enabling the ship to know which of our guests are on board and ashore at any time. This card will be used as a charge card to make all onboard purchases. The card is the only means of payment for the on-board facilities. A running tab of all purchases will be kept for each card. The evening before the voyage ends the account will be totalled and settled on board, either by credit card, or in cash. We regret that there is no facility for cash withdrawals or currency exchange on board.

Please note that when using your credit card on board the ship, your account will be debited in Norwegian Kroner (NOK). The rate of exchange will be the one validated by your credit card company.

Disabled Cabins/Mobility

MS Nordstjernen is not suitable for wheelchair users. She has no accessible cabins or lifts. Guest in need of special assistance must travel with a companion.

Drones

Please note the use of guest-operated drones are not permitted during your voyage. This is for general safety, safety of the protected wildlife as well as the protection of other passengers' personal security.

Electricity

The sockets in your cabins are 220V/50hz. The sockets are continental two pin sockets. Please bring an adapter/converter if you should need it.

Environment and Green navigation

Our Captain takes pride in route planning that minimizes the load of the engines and reduces emissions. All waste is stored on board until it is deposited for treatment ashore. We never dump deposit waste in the sea, and we ask you not to leave any waste when you are on shore excursions. In populated areas there are containers for depositing waste, please use them. We ask you to respect the saying: "Leave nothing but footprints, take nothing but pictures.& memories"

Expedition team

The on board Expedition Team is composed of an Expedition Leader, an Assistant Expedition Leader, an Expedition Coordinator and several guides. Your Expedition Leader will regularly update you on the progress of the trip as well as the different points of interest and wildlife sightings that may occur.

Fitness room, sauna, pool, jacuzzi

There are no such facilities on board MS Nordstjernen.

Internet usage

On MS Nordstjernen, there is no internet connection on board, except while at port in Longyearbyen.

Language

Announcements are given in English and Norwegian. There will be English and Nordic speaking staff on board.

Laundry

No laundry service is available on the MS Nordstjernen. No dry-cleaning is possible on the ship.

Lecturers

The ship has experienced guides, specializing in various subjects. They have in-depth knowledge of the areas we sail in. They will conduct, on a regular basis, talks about topics such as Biology, History, and Geology at the landings throughout the course of the trip. The lectures will mainly be held on shore. Do not hesitate to contact our Expedition Team for any questions or concerns you might have.

Library

The ship has a small selection of books on different topics that are available to guests while on board.

Medical emergencies and medication

There is no doctor on board MS Nordstjernen. In serious emergencies the hospital in Longyearbyen will be contacted.

Remember to bring enough medication to last through any unforeseen delays. We also recommend that you keep your medication in your hand luggage properly labelled and with clear instructions for its use. Illness on board can lead to quarantine and orders from the ship's captain must be followed.

All guests must have travel/health insurance. In case of a medical emergency outside Longyearbyen the only means of evacuation is by helicopter to Longyearbyen Hospital. If any condition cannot be treated here, the patient is sent to the Norwegian mainland. This is very expensive and dependent on favourable weather conditions, therefore, comprehensive travel/health insurance that also covers medical evacuation is essential.

Mobile phone

Mobile phones can be used in Longyearbyen only. There is no mobile coverage during the voyage at sea, but we can contact MS Nordstjernen via satellite telephones. If your family back home need to get in touch with you in an emergency, please provide them with the telephone numbers for

Hurtigruten Svalbard, at +47 79 02 61 00. Via these numbers they can deliver urgent messages that will be forwarded to you.

Our team on board

The on board Expedition Team is composed of an Expedition Leader and expedition guides. Your Expedition Leader and Expedition Team will be informing you on a regular basis, on the progress of the trip as well as of the different points of interest and wildlife sightings that might occur.

The information bulletin board is located outside the restaurant and information will also be shown on the TV screen in the aft saloon.

Outdoor decks

Enjoy the views from the front or back of the ship. Both are perfect vantage points to sit back, relax and watch the world go by.

Outdoor clothing

Depending on the weather, several layers should be worn underneath. We suggest wearing several layers as the temperature may vary quite a lot during the day. We have thermal suits available on board in various sizes for all guests. These can be borrowed by guests who wish to spend a lot of their time on deck.

Passport and visa requirements

Please take a few minutes to familiarize yourself with the required travel documents you will be asked to provide prior to boarding the ship. It is the sole responsibility of the guest to identify and obtain all required travel documents and have them available when necessary.

We regret we are unable to accept any liability if you are denied access to a flight, or entry into Spitsbergen, or are otherwise affected by difficulties or costs resulting from your passport not being approved, or if you have not obtained the required visa or other documentation.

Post

You can hand in your mail at the reception and for a small charge covering the service fee and stamps we will forward the post whenever it is possible. Please be prepared for your postcard to take some time before it arrives! Hurtigruten Svalbard and Hurtigruten cannot accept responsibility for lost mail.

Restaurant & Cuisine

Your voyage includes breakfast, lunch and dinner. The open seating for the breakfast and lunch buffet creates a relaxed atmosphere. Dinner varies between buffets, set meals and barbeques. The type of dinner is announced in the daily programme. If you have special dietary requirements, such as vegetarian, diabetic or gluten free, please inform your sales office/ travel agent as early as possible and contact the Head Waiter when on board. The Chefs will do their best to meet your dietary requirements. Beer, wine, and soft drinks are sold in the restaurant during lunch and dinner. On MS Nordstjernen there is only one sitting for all passengers.

Where possible, we plan our menus around seasonal ingredients, taking advantage of local produce to satisfy healthy appetites stimulated by the fresh sea air. Regular coffee/tea is complimentary throughout the whole voyage. Still water by carafe is complimentary together with your breakfast, lunch and dinner. Other beverages and refreshments during the day are not included, but may be purchased on board in the restaurant, cafeteria and bar. On board MS Nordstjernen your table in the restaurant will be assigned after embarkation.

Room service

On MS Nordstjernen, the cabins will not be cleaned daily, but upon request. Fresh towels are always available. There is no room service on MS Nordstjernen.

Safety on board

The ship complies with all safety requirements and is suitable for sailing in icy waters. Upon arrival on board all passengers will be instructed in safety procedures, and the use and location of the safety equipment. There is a safety plan situated on the inside of the cabin door. We stress the importance of becoming acquainted with the ship's safety plan. Special safety regulations will apply on landings with the Polarcirkel boats. Please follow the instructions given by the Expedition Leader and crew/staff. Special lifejackets for use during landings will be handed out to all passengers before landings. A mandatory briefing regarding the safety guidelines will also be given.

Seasickness

Seasickness pills are available for purchase at the reception. If you are prone to seasickness, it is recommended that you bring pills that you are familiar with.

Ship's security

MS Nordstjernen complies with the ISPS-regulations (International Ship and Port Security System) where the luggage could be subject to X-ray/metal detector inspection upon arrival port. You are kindly asked to keep this in mind packing your luggage for the voyage. The ISPS regulations could also include a hand baggage scan in Longyearbyen.

Shoes

On Svalbard it is a tradition to take off your shoes when entering private houses, hotels and certain shops and public offices. Aboard the ship you may wear ordinary shoes or tennis shoes. Shoes with good soles are recommended for use outdoors on deck and for excursions ashore. On board the ship as well as in the hotel we advise you to bring a pair of shoes to use indoors. It is important that the shoes have a good grip (no slippery sole).

Shopping/payment

Svalbard is a tax-free area which means that many commodities are cheaper here than on the Norwegian mainland. Longyearbyen has a variety of shops selling everything from perfumes to outdoor- and sports equipment, gifts and souvenirs. Norwegian Kroner (NOK) is used all over Svalbard. Credit cards are accepted in Longyearbyen as well as on board MS Nordstjernen (Visa, Diners and Master-Card). Please note credit card payments will all be processed in NOK on MS Nordstjernen. There is also a cash dispenser in the centre of Longyearbyen.

Small boat landings

These sturdy boats enable both water-based exploration and safe landings in otherwise inaccessible areas. You will need to be fairly agile to board these but there is otherwise no need to worry about travelling in them. The crew will show you what to do and if you follow their instructions, after the first time it will become second nature. On all landings in small boats guests are expected to wear proper footwear.

MS Nordstjernen has for tendering/landing/small boat cruising operations 4 small boats for 7 guests and a driver.

Pay special attention for the following guidelines

The boat drivers are responsible for the boats and their landings. You must always follow their instructions.

All travelers must always wear appropriate life jackets regardless of weather and sea conditions.

Disembarking you should always accept help offered by the driver or the crew. The "sailors grip", in which one holds each other's forearms, is the strongest and most secure grip.

Always keep both hands free when embarking and disembarking. Give hand luggage to the helper for him to place it on board for you. Keep your hands inside the boat at all times.

Please limit your personal equipment on board the Small boats. Small backpacks and belt bags are ideal for transporting cameras, binoculars and for rain protection. Backpacks can be purchased in the on board shop.

Always wait for instructions from the driver before embarking or disembarking. Use waterproof bags to protect binoculars or cameras. You should also wear waterproof clothing to protect against spray. The Small boats are equipped with fire extinguisher, chart plotter, extra fuel, communications and first-aid kit.

Smoking

On board MS Nordstjernen, smoking is only permitted in designated areas on the outside aft deck. Please do not smoke in your cabin. To show respect for the environment, please use the provided ashtrays when smoking. Throwing cigarette ends overboard is strictly prohibited. A cleaning charge of 1.500 NOK will be applied for smoking in your non-smoking cabin, to cover for the cost of cleaning linen and curtains to return it to a non-smoking standard.

Special requests

If you have special requests (e.g. dietary or medical), please inform us at time of booking. We will do our best to meet such requests but cannot guarantee to do so and under no circumstance will any such request be accepted by us so as to form part of a contractual agreement.

Walking on board

We kindly remind you to be careful walking on board while at sea, especially venturing out on deck. Look out for the signs for warning of wet and slippery decks. Be aware that some doors leading to the outer decks are difficult to manage in windy conditions. Please adhere to the signs and announcements when it is not advised to go outside. While walking inside, hold on to railings but not to doorframes to avoid injury.

Water

The tap water in your cabin is drinkable. Filtered water by the carafe is available at your table during meals, while bottled water is available for purchase.

Important information

Itinerary changes

Some of our itineraries are to areas without, or with very limited infrastructure. This combined with some of the most extreme (polar) conditions on Earth we have to appreciate that wind, weather and ice – changing seafloor conditions and other things may and will determine our detailed programme.

Safety

Safety is always the priority and the ship's Captain will decide the final itinerary during the voyage, therefore every voyage is unique, and all published routes are only indicative.

Daily programme

Every day the Expedition Team distributes a daily programme with a list of port calls, landings, lectures, meals and activities on board. All our published plans are subject to change.

Weather conditions

Weather conditions can make landings and tender cruises with small boats more difficult or sometimes impossible. Remember that unforeseen twists often turn out to be the highlight of a trip. We invite you to be open to the unexpected and flexibility is important on our Explorer cruises.

Note

We are also subject to written and unwritten laws like assisting vessels or people in need.

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

——— Do I have to be in good health to participate in this journey?

It is important you are in good health as the journey can be long and tiring. Please note that in remote areas there is no immediate access to modern medical facilities. The voyage is not recommended if you have a life-threatening disease or illness that requires frequent medical care. To be able to participate in landings you must be able to walk on uneven or slippery surfaces and to climb on and off the small boats used for landings.

——— How much time do you spend on land?

All landings depend on factors such as the weather, the distance between the landing sites, and the operational conditions. The Expedition Leader and the Captain will arrange the daily route to ensure the best possible experience.

——— Are there any restrictions on activities on land?

As environmental protection is a concern there are regulations for the protection of wildlife, the environment and the cultures we encounter, which must be followed. Your Expedition Leader will provide necessary information on how to behave on land.

——— Will there be rough seas on the trip?

It is not possible to predict exact weather conditions. The Captain will do everything he can to make the voyage as comfortable as possible. If you are prone to seasickness, we suggest you bring your preferred medication.

Pack like an explorer

The dress code aboard the ship is informal. Bring casual and comfortable indoor clothing.

For a perfect experience, however, there are several things to remember to bring along when you are coming on a voyage with Hurtigruten. To make packing a bit easier, we have drawn up a packlist.

Remember ...

- Warm jacket
- Wind and water-resistant trousers and long thermal underwear & top
- Warm cap or headband
- Swimwear - for a dip in the Arctic ocean with Hilde ;)
- Scarf or neck gaiter
- Warm sweater
- Sunglasses with uv-filter lenses
- Warm gloves and mittens
- Warm socks
- Extra batteries for your camera
- Shoes with good soles \ recommended for outdoor use
- Good shoes to wear on board
- Memory card for your camera
- binoculars
- A small waterproof backpack
- Please remember to bring your passport and a copy of it
- Sun protection (Factor 30+)
- Lip salve with UV protection
- Money in the correct currency. Remember, our ships also accept several credit cards
- Remember to bring sufficient medication to last through any unforeseen delays.
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Svalbard

Svalbard is the crown of Arctic Norway. Located halfway between mainland Norway and the North Pole, one might expect it to be unbearably cold. However, thanks to the Gulf Stream, all the islands in the Svalbard archipelago boast a surprisingly mild climate with distinctive seasons. The large variety of plants and wildlife includes seals, thousands of seabirds coming in every summer, the Arctic fox and reindeer and the top predator: the polar bear.

Located on the southern fringe of the frozen Arctic Ocean, Spitsbergen offers expedition landings, hikes, kayaking and other activities in the largest Arctic wilderness in Europe. Svalbard has more than 3000 Polar bears and fewer than 3000 people.

Remote, mysterious, and extreme, Svalbard is the crown of Arctic Norway; a land forged by ice and wind, ocean, and snow that presents us with a spectacular range of unforgettable adventures. With its location right on the edges of the ever-frozen Arctic Ocean, the warmer currents of the Gulf Stream meet the cold air and water from the north. This Archipelago holds fascinating histories of the polar heroes of the north, and cultural heritage from the coal mining era as well as the history of exploration, hunting and whaling. Wildlife is rich, both at sea and on land; whales, seals, reindeer, polar fox, and a rich variety of birds. And of course, the king of the Arctic—the polar bear. You can leave your watch in your cabin. North of the Arctic Circle the day has no beginning or end. The Midnight Sun brings out magical colours in the surrounding landscape. The soft rays of the low-hanging sun bathe it all in a wonderful palette of pink, purple, yellow, and orange and create unforgettable memories.

Climate

Despite its northerly location (74° to 81° north) Svalbard has a relatively mild climate. Due to the Gulf Stream, Svalbard's west coast is the world's most northerly ice-free area. The average summer temperature is 6°C and the coldest winter month of March has an average temperature of minus 14°C. There is little rain, but the moist air from the sea can cause a light drizzle and fog during the summer.

History

Since Willem Barentz' discovery of Svalbard in 1596, several nationalities have explored, hunted and managed industries in this Arctic Archipelago. The Svalbard treaty dated 1920, signed by 43 member countries, gives Norway sovereignty over Svalbard.

Nature and wildlife

In order to preserve nature and wildlife on Svalbard, 65% of the Archipelago is protected through national parks, nature reserves and bird sanctuaries. There are only three land mammals on Svalbard: polar bear, Svalbard reindeer and the Arctic fox. In the sea however there are walrus, ringed seals, bearded seals, Greenland seals, hooded seals, white-nose dolphins, narwhales, white whales, killer whales. There is a rich bird life on the island and more than 100 species have been registered. Surprisingly the flora is very diverse for somewhere this far north.

Polar bears and safety

The polar bear is probably the foremost symbol of Svalbard's wildlife and it is an exhilarating experience to watch them in their natural habitat. The polar bear does not usually attack humans but can be lethal. On all our voyages and activities safety is maintained by experienced guides carrying weapons and giving warning shots if necessary. The authorities on Svalbard, together with the travel industry advise facts and make recommendations to travellers taking part in organized activities in order to protect both visitors and the polar bear population. If you are going outside Longyearbyen on your own, it is recommended that you take a weapon because of the polar bear danger. On organized trips the guide will always be responsible for safety and will carry a weapon and equipment.

Population and settlements

The population of Svalbard is approximately 2.500. Longyearbyen is the largest settlement in the islands and is also the seat of the governor. The town has a hospital, primary and secondary schools, university, sports centre with a swimming pool, library, cultural centre, cinema, bus transport, hotels, a bank and several museums. The newspaper Svalbardposten is published weekly.

Spitsbergen is among the safest places on Earth, with virtually no crime. Barentsburg is the second largest settlement in Svalbard with about 500 inhabitants, almost entirely Russian and Ukrainian. The Russian-owned Arktikugol has been mining coal here since 1932, and during the cold war Barentsburg was a hotbed of activity. Ny-Ålesund is one of the world's northernmost settlements, inhabited by a permanent population of approximately 30-35 people who work for one of the research stations or the logistics and supply company "Kings Bay AS", which 'owns' and runs the research village. In the summer the activity in Ny-Ålesund is greatly increased with up to 120 researchers, technicians and field assistants.

Seasons

From April 19th till August 23rd Longyearbyen has Midnight Sun.

From October 26th till February 16th it is dark, and from November 14th till January 29th it is what we call the polar nights which means that it is still dark, but the sun is lower than 6° below the horizon.

Tourism on Svalbard

Svalbard's nature is very vulnerable, especially due to the permafrost. All vegetation is protected and all traces of human activity up until 1945 is regarded as part of the cultural heritage.

Environmental commitment

Hurtigruten Svalbard and MS Nordstjernen's skilled crew offer life-affirming experiences close to nature's most spectacular landscapes, genuine cultures, exceptional people and amazing wildlife. Preserving these resources in their natural, unspoiled condition is our priority - you will always experience the highest environmental awareness on board and ashore.

Arctic Wildlife

Hurtigruten is a participant in the Norwegian Polar Institute's project to register marine mammals in the Arctic. Gathering this data improves insight of habitat use and seasonal migration patterns and is also used in The Environmental Monitoring of Svalbard.

AECO

Hurtigruten is a full member of the Association of Arctic Expedition Cruise Operators (www.aeco.no) which is an international organization ensuring that tourism in the Arctic is carried out with the utmost consideration for the vulnerable natural environment, local cultures and cultural remains, as well as the challenging environment at sea and on land. This organisation provides Hurtigruten Svalbard as an operator and you as a visitor with guidelines we are committed to follow.

Thank you for helping us conduct respectful, environmentally-friendly and safe tourism in the Arctic.

Leaving no lasting signs of your visit means that you of course must not leave any litter behind, including small items such as cigarette butts.

Do not engrave on rocks or buildings and do not build cairns, rearrange stones or in any other way leave visible signs of your visit.

In addition, we also ask you to watch where you set foot in order to protect the flora and vegetation and avoid path-making.

Avoid stepping on flowers or plant beds if possible.

Do not pick flowers

In some parts of the Arctic flora is protected by law, in others not. But AECO regards all flora as protected and asks you to not pick flowers or other plants.

Do not take anything with you

We encourage you to leave the Arctic as it is. Cultural remains are protected. In addition, we ask you to leave stones, bones, antlers, driftwood and other items where they are.

Do not disturb animals and birds

AECO regards all fauna in the Arctic as protected and will avoid disturbing animals and birds as far as possible. If close to animals and nesting birds, avoid making loud noises and keep conversation low and calm. AECO controls maximum group sizes when making landings and excursions and minimum distances to various wildlife. You will be instructed by your leader. Please help us preserve the wildlife by following the instructions.

Leave cultural remains alone

Cultural remains are protected by law and a zone of 100 metres around the remains is also considered a protected zone. Watch where you are walking and standing. Walk around and not in between objects. Do not take anything with you and do not attempt to touch or rearrange objects.

Take the polar bear danger seriously

Polar bears are potentially dangerous animals, but also vulnerable. It is of the utmost importance that you follow your guide's instructions. For important rules for behaviour in polar bear areas please click the link below.

Respect local culture and local people

When visiting local communities, please remember that you are a guest. Respect people and local cultures. AECO will make every effort to make sure that our visits to local communities have positive and not negative impact. For more information, please click the link below.

Be safe

Travel in Arctic areas may involve various risks. Rule number one is that you must always pay attention to and follow the instructions given by your expedition leader or guide. Never stray from your group.

More information

<https://www.aeco.no/guidelines/>