

BEST OF SVALBARD

SPITSBERGEN & THE POLAR ICE EDGE



This remarkable expedition departs from the far northern settlement of Longyearbyen on the Norwegian Arctic island of Spitsbergen in the famed Svalbard archipelago. We explore the island's northwestern coast, home to dramatic mountain scenery, tidewater glaciers, and some of the Arctic's best wildlife viewing opportunities. On this voyage we also venture to the jumbled edge of the north-polar ice cap in search of polar bears stalking their prey. Here, at the dynamic boundary between implacable ice and bountiful sea, we have a rare opportunity to experience raw nature and incredible events hardly ever seen.



DATES -

2024: Jun 25* | Jul 05**

DURATION - *13 Days | ** 12 Days

EMBARK - Longyearbyen, Svalbard
DISEMBARK - Longyearbyen, Svalbard

SHIP - M/V Sea Spirit

From - \$11,216 Double*

***JUN 25-BOOK BY JAN. 31, 2024**

HIGHLIGHTS

ARCTIC WILDERNESS

The unique Arctic ecosystem of Spitsbergen is almost entirely protected in a network of nature reserves and national parks. Our voyage takes us to Nordre Isfjorden Nasjonalpark, Forlandet Nasjonalpark, and the spectacular Nordvest-Spitsbergen Nasjonalpark. Each has its own claim to Svalbard's magnificent natural history. By land and sea, we encounter a wealth of wildlife—including walrus, Arctic fox, reindeer, and a variety of whales and seals—in one of the High Arctic's most pristine and protected environments. We also encounter a surprising wealth of hardy plant life and striking geology throughout the area.

POLAR BEARS

Svalbard boasts one of the Arctic's highest concentrations of polar bears. They are the world's largest land carnivores and have become a symbol of the imperiled Arctic wilderness. This is one of the best places in the world to view polar bears hunting in their preferred habitat: the pack ice. During our sojourn to the ice edge we hope to come across this majestic creature employing various strategies to catch seals in the ever-shifting labyrinth of the pack ice. But these wide-ranging and opportunistic Arctic nomads can just as well be found at other places and times during our voyage.

HUMAN ENDEAVOR

Our area of exploration is rich with historical sites including early whaling camps, trappers' cabins, deserted coal mining operations, and an abandoned polar research station. It also contains the staging areas for many historic expeditions to the North Pole, including those of Roald Amundsen and Walter Wellman. Modern human endeavor in this area can be experienced at Ny Ålesund, a former mining town that is now home to a multinational community of Arctic researchers. In addition to a museum, gift shop, and post office, visitors to this extreme northern settlement find a famous bust of Amundsen and a historic airship mast.

ITINERARY

Day 1: Oslo, Norway

Welcome to Oslo, which in 2019 was awarded the prestigious title "Green Capital of Europe". We've arranged a comfortable stay for you at an Oslo Airport hotel so that you're conveniently close for your included flight to Longyearbyen on Day 2.

Day 2: Embarkation in Longyearbyen

Today you have a flight to Longyearbyen (regular airline flight), the administrative center of Svalbard and starting point of our Arctic expedition! At the Longyearbyen airport, you will be greeted by our staff and transferred to the pier where we will warmly welcome you aboard the deluxe expedition vessel M/V Sea Spirit. Get settled in your spacious suite and explore the ship that will be your comfortable home during the extraordinary adventure to come. Once underway, a full schedule of events kicks off with informative briefings and introductions from your expedition staff.



Day 3-11: Exploration of West Spitsbergen

The goal for this voyage is a circumnavigation of Spitsbergen, the largest island of the Svalbard archipelago. Along the way, we hope to experience the many facets of this incredible High Arctic territory. Our exact schedule and route will be shaped by weather and ice. We also expect there will be enough sea ice around to support ice-dependent animals such as polar bears and walrus.





During this voyage, we expect to encounter significant sea ice concentrations in the enormous Northwest Svalbard Nature Reserve. In this remote and isolated region, ice can persist very late into the summer, giving it a truly polar character. This reserve covers the rugged northwestern parts of Spitsbergen and the entirety of Nordaustlandet, the second largest island in Svalbard. Here we find the massive Austfonna ice cap, part of which meets the sea along the 45-kilometer ice cliff known as Bråsvellbreen—one of the great wonders of the Arctic world. The polar desert environment supports little in the way of vegetation but hosts prodigious numbers of seabirds at breeding sites such as the spectacular sea cliffs of Alkefjellet. The probability of encountering polar bears and walrus in this icy wilderness is very high.



Also on our route is Northwest Spitsbergen National Park, the crown jewel of Svalbard's scenic wonders. Here we find deep fjords flanked by serrated mountain peaks and immense tidewater glaciers calving icebergs into turquoise waters. The whole area is alive with migratory Arctic seabirds. On this voyage, we are just in time to witness the return of millions of murres, guillemots and little auks to the small islands, mountainsides and sea cliffs where they breed within the park. This is also a great area to encounter marine mammals, including various kinds of whales and Arctic seals. Set among this incredible scenery and wildlife activity, we also find evidence of Svalbard's earliest sealers and whalers.

Human habitation along our route can be found at Ny Ålesund, a former mining town and airship base that is now home to an international community of Arctic researchers. This is one of the world's most northerly settlements where we find a gift shop and a post office. We also visit a famous airship mast that was a starting point of the North Pole expeditions by Umberto Nobile and Roald Amundsen. This place played an important part in the history of polar exploration.



The ambitious Svalbard and Polar Ice Edge route offers a comprehensive view of the Arctic's many faces. Every day offers something new and exciting. We will not miss a single opportunity to encounter amazing Arctic wildlife, to witness incredible polar scenery, and to walk in the footsteps of historic expeditions that came before.



Day 12: Disembarkation in Longyearbyen, Svalbard

After breakfast we say farewell in the town of Longyearbyen, where we started. **June 25 Date Spends the night in Longyearbyen. Flight to Oslo on Day 13.**



2024 RATES PER PERSON Double Occupancy	TRIPLE CLASSIC	MAIN DECK	CLASSIC	SUPERIOR	DELUXE BALCONY	PREMIUM BALCONY	OWNER SUITE
2024: June 25	\$9,595	\$13,195	\$13,995	\$14,295	\$15,995	\$17,495	\$22,295
BOOK BY JAN 31, 2024	\$8,156	\$11,216	\$11,896	\$12,151	\$13,596	\$14,871	\$18,951
2024: July 05	\$9,195	\$12,795	\$13,595	\$13,895	\$15,595	\$17,095	\$21,895

RATES INCLUDE

One pre-voyage Oslo hotel night; one night Longyearbyen post-cruise hotel night-June 25 Only; round-trip air Oslo-Longyearbyen-Oslo; Group transfer to the ship on day of embarkation; Shipboard accommodation; All meals on board throughout the voyage; Tea and coffee station 24 hours daily; All scheduled landings/excursions (subject to weather and ice conditions); Leadership throughout the voyage by our experienced Expedition Leader & Expedition Team; Branded Poseidon Expeditions parka; Rubber boots for shore landings for the time of the cruise; Welcome and Farewell cocktails; All port fees; Wi-Fi; Group transfer to airport or central location upon disembarkation; Pre-departure materials; Digital Voyage Log.

RATES DO NOT INCLUDE

International Airfare; Visa and passport fees (if applicable); Luggage and trip cancellation insurance; Soft drinks and alcoholic beverages other than those for special events and celebrations; Personal expenses such as laundry and telecommunication charges; Emergency Evacuation Insurance to a minimum benefit of USD 200,000; Staff gratuities.



Reservations & Information
1-855-EXPLOR1 (397-5671)

Email - info@explorcruises.com

www.explorcruises.com

