This extraordinary expedition to Franz Josef Land is as unique and authentic as the place itself. Starting in Longyearbyen in the Norwegian territory of Svalbard, we cross the icy, wildlife-rich Barents Sea to the Russian High Arctic. In Franz Josef Land we discover unparalleled landscapes, wildlife, and history in one of the wildest and most remote corners of the Arctic.

**DATE:** 2019 - Jul 19 – Aug 02*  |  Aug 01-14+ | Aug 13-28+

**DURATION:** 14 & 15 DAYS

**EMBARKATION:** Longyearbyen

**DISEMBARKATION:** Longyearbyen

**SHIP:** M/V Sea Spirit

**FROM:** 2019: *$13,595 (15 Days)
+$13,395 (14 Days)
2020: $13,895 (14 Days)
$12,506 (Book by July 31, 2019)
**Day 1: Arrive Longyearbyen**
Transfer to your included hotel.

**Day 2: Embarkation in Longyearbyen**
In the afternoon we welcome you aboard the expedition ship M/V Sea Spirit; transfers from the hotel are included. Explore the ship and get comfortable in your home-away-from-home for the extraordinary adventure to come. The long days of summer sunlight illuminate our surroundings as we slip our moorings and sail into a true wilderness where wildlife abounds. The scenery as we sail through Isfjorden on our first evening is spectacular and there is already the possibility of marine mammal encounters.

**Days 3-4: Across the Barents Sea**
From Isfjorden we proceed straight to Franz Josef Land across the Barents Sea.

Presentations and workshops by our expert staff prepare us for what lies ahead. In these far northern latitudes, it is possible to encounter sea ice even in summer. Along the way, we’ll remain vigilant for sightings of ice-dependent marine mammals such as the elusive bowhead whale, various Arctic seal species, and the majestic polar bear.

**Days 5-11: Exploration of Franz Josef Land**
This is expedition cruising at its most authentic. As such, our route and exploration opportunities in Franz Josef Land are heavily dependent on weather and sea ice. Our experienced captain and expedition leader decide our best route and continually adjust plans as opportunities warrant in this wild and remote corner of the Arctic.

Between obligatory initial and final calls at the Russian polar station Nagurskoye in Cambridge Bay we are free to explore the many waterways and islands of this unique Arctic wilderness.

The archipelago, part of the Russian Arctic National Park since 2012, is a nature sanctuary. Polar bears and other quintessential High Arctic wildlife—such as walruses and some rare whale species—can be spotted anytime, anywhere in and around Franz Josef Land. Scree slopes and cliffs around the islands host enormous nesting colonies of seabirds such as guillemots, dovecies, and kittiwakes. We’ll take advantage
of the 24-hour daylight to exploit every opportunity for wildlife viewing.

Franz Josef Land is dominated by glaciation, which covers 85% of the archipelago. Immense tidewater glaciers and glittering icebergs provide a stunning backdrop to our voyage. Franz Josef Land is also home to some interesting geological features, such as the mysterious stone spheres on Champ Island. Collectors of geographical extremes may take note that Cape Fligely on Rudolf Island is the northernmost point of land in the Eastern Hemisphere.

Franz Josef Land also offers visitors the opportunity to walk in the footsteps of famous polar explorers at well-preserved historical sites. The journals of explorers such as Julius von Payer, Benjamin Leigh Smith, Frederick George Jackson, and Fridtjof Nansen come alive at Cape Norway, Cape Flora, Eira Harbour, and Cape Tegetthoff. Memorials, monuments, crosses and the remains of dwellings are testimony to incredible historical events that are further illuminated by our expert lecturers.

Tikhaya Bukhta is currently a Russian Arctic National Park ranger station occupying Soviet-era research buildings and was also a major base for polar expeditions. Nearby the fascinating columnar basalt cliffs of Rubini Rock are home to thousands of nesting seabirds.

Our primary focus during this expedition is the exploration of the Russian archipelago of Franz Josef Land. However, the number of days spent there depends on ice conditions. Final daily programs are subject to change and the decision of the captain and expedition leader.

Days 12-14: Back to Svalbard
Following our week of exploration in Franz Josef Land, we cross back through the bountiful waters of the Barents Sea and then along the coastal islands of the Svalbard Archipelago. From panoramic open decks, enjoy Arctic landscapes and wildlife sightings. Bountiful inshore and offshore waters are home to walrus and a wide variety of whales.

The crossing also gives our expedition team the opportunity to offer a final presentation or two in the Oceanus Lounge.
Rates per person

RATES INCLUDE:
Transfer to hotel; overnight accommodation; 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 conditions); Leadership throughout the voyage by our experienced Expedition Leader & Expedition Team; Rubber boots for shore landings for the time of the cruise; Welcome and Farewell cocktails; All port fees; Group transfer to airport or central location upon disembarkation; Pre-departure materials; Digital Voyage Log.

RATES DO NOT INCLUDE:
Airfare; Visa and passport fees. For this trip Russian visa is required. See your country’s Russian consulate or embassy for details; 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 150,000; Staff gratuities.

NOTE: Special Pre- and Post- Tours are available to complement this itinerary. We can customize a program for you.