

INTO THE NORTHWEST PASSAGE | OCEAN ALBATROS



INTRODUCTION


Undertake an incredible expedition into the Northwest Passage. The Greenland and Canadian Arctic is host to a plethora of dramatic sights and experiences unique to this incredible region. Departing from West Greenland's Kangerlussuaq you will cruise west to the Inuit land of Nunavut on Baffin Island. You will have the unique opportunity to visit small settlements home to Inuit communities which have inhabited the area for millennia. It was from this region that the Inuit migrated to Northwest Greenland 1000 years ago and established the basis for the modern Greenland community. It is here you will keep a sharp eye for the unique wildlife of the region including polar bears, narwhal and bowhead whales as well as a number of hardy Arctic seabirds.

From Baffin Island you will sail into Lancaster Sound, the start of the Northwest Passage. You will visit Qaanaaq, the northernmost town in Greenland, home to just 600 people. Further along your route you will stop at the communities of Upernavik, Ilulissat and Uummannaq.

This expedition from Greenland to Canada truly combines the best of incredible and isolated sites and intimate community voyages in one unique expedition experience.

Note: Return flights are included from Reykjavik to Greenland.

ITINERARY

TRIP CODE
ACABIN
DEPARTURE
22/08/2023
DURATION
14 Days
LOCATIONS
Greenland and Canada


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DAY 1: Iceland to Kangerlussuaq

In the afternoon, we board our chartered flight in Keflavik, Iceland, bound for Kangerlussuaq in Greenland. Upon arrival to Kangerlussuaq (Søndre Stromfjord), we will be transported to the small port located west of the airport, where our ship Ocean Atlantic, will be anchored. Zodiacs will transfer us the short distance to the ship, where you will be checked in to your stateroom. After the mandatory safety drill, you will enjoy a dinner as Ocean Atlantic ‘sets sail’ through the 160-kilometer Kangerlussuaq fjord



DAY 2: At Sea Toward Baffin Island

We now have a day at sea, where the ship is heading across Davis Strait to Baffin Island in the Canadian territory of Nunavut. During our crossing, there are good opportunities to relax in the ship's library, participate in the series of lectures held by Albatros Expeditions’ lecturers and look for seabirds and whales on our course to the southwest. The west coast of Greenland is favored by mild waters of the Gulf Stream, whereas the Baffin Island current along Baffin Island's shores is cold. The officers on the bridge will keep an eye out for the icebergs, flowing down "Iceberg Alley" from the big glaciers in Greenland and Arctic Canada.



DAY 3: Qikiqtarjuaq, Baffin Island

Overnight we have approached Cape Dyer, where the United States established one of their many DEW (Distant Early Warning) stations that surround the Arctic continental American. Cape Dyer itself is a towering edge towards the Davis Strait of about 800-meter elevation. The cliff and the station could very well be our first view of Arctic Canada (if you’re awake!). Like its Greenlandic named counterpart Qeqertarsuaq, Qikiqtarjuaq means “the big island”. The town with around 600 inhabitants lies on an island outside of Baffin’s east coast. The area is known for their many whales, and the Bowhead whale (also known as the Greenland right whale or Arctic whale) which is only found in polar waters, is often observed in congregations here.



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DAY 4: Isabella Bay and Ninginganiq

We follow the Baffin Island east coast further north to Isabella Bay, which is designated a Bowhead whale sanctuary, so if we haven't had any sightings yet, the chances are very good with hundreds of whales feeding here each summer. The Ninginganiq marine habitat around Isabella Bay is since 2010 a protected National Wildlife Area. This is an important habitat for a lot of marine mammals and seabirds, apart from the Bowhead whales. The Inuktitut word "Ninginganiq" translates roughly into "the place where fog sits". We hope to avoid this foreboding name as we journey into the bay and keep a watchful eye for the excitingly abundant fauna. Eastern Arctic Canada is the territory of Nunavut. The North Eastern area that includes Ellesmere, Devon and Baffin Island is known as the Qikiqtaaluk region. It covers an area of nearly 1 million square kilometers, which is roughly half of Greenland. The desolate landscapes offer us beautiful views that can stretch for hundreds of kilometers over the glacially scarred landmasses.



DAY 5: Sam Ford Fjord

The sheer magnitude of vertical rocks on each side of the Sam Ford Fjord, make it worth a side step. For many rock climbers these steep granite walls are pilgrimage objects. However, we are not adventuring in here for climbing, but much more for the natural beauty of the fjord and the dark waters that are home to narwhals and seals. The isolated fjord was created by glaciers and some of the cliffs rises to 1500 meters above sea level. In this amazing wilderness area, we also hope to spot many migratory birds.



DAY 6: Mittimatalik, Pond Inlet

Pond Inlet, which in the local Inuit language is named Mittimatalik is a town of 1600 inhabitants, of which most are Inuit. We take a stroll through the town and we will do well to notice the building styles and culture, as we will compare these to what we see later in Greenland. The polar Arctic climate allows for only short summers. Still visitors like us come here to experience the spectacular views with mountains, glaciers and icebergs floating along. After our visit we head back to our ship for lunch and head north through the Eclipse Sound dividing Baffin Island and Bylot Island.



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DAY 7: Lancaster Sound

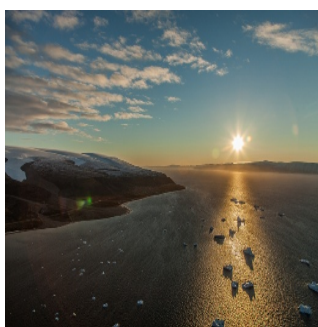
Today we cruise further north into the gateway to the Northwest Passage, Lancaster Sound.

Depending on the ice situation and the weather, we will make our way into the entrance of the passage. The idea of a short cut through the North West to the Pacific Ocean was alive for hundreds of years before it was finally deemed too difficult. A few icebreaking tanker ships from Canadas northern oil fields are the only commercial ships navigating the route. During the day we will cruise along the eastern coast of Devon, which is the largest uninhabited island in the world. We will continue north towards Ellesmere Island, which is the third largest island in Arctic Canada. All migrations of the Inuit to Greenland have crossed over Ellesmere Island and Smith Sound. Our course will break east and set straight for Greenland's western coast, as we wave our goodbyes to the Canadian coasts and waters. Smith Sound and its northern continuation, the Kennedy Channel have strong currents, acting as an outlet for polar pack ice and icebergs from the Arctic Ocean. Our bridge officers will of course keep a vigilant watch as we approach Greenland.



DAY 8: Qaanaaq

During the night we will have traversed Smith Sound and we arrive at Greenland's northwest corner. Entering Inglefield Bay, we pass some of Greenland's biggest bird cliffs and are again in habituated areas. The Captain anchors Ocean Atlantic off Qaanaaq, the only proper town in northwest Greenland. The town was founded in 1953, when the Americans built their base near the original trading post of Thule. All Inuit were transferred to this new place. Today, some 600 people live in Qaanaaq, which is supported weekly by Air Greenland flights and twice a year by cargo ship. The town was founded in 1953, when the Americans built their base near the original trading post of Thule. All Inuit were transferred to this new place. Today, some 600 people live in Qaanaaq, which is supported weekly by Air Greenland flights and twice a year by cargo ship.



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DAY 9: At Sea

Having left Qaanaaq in the evening, we pass the American Thule Base as well as Meteor Island and settlement of Savissivik during the night. The Melville Bay is an exciting and adventurous place to travel through. Until modern times, yearlong sea ice and plenty of calving glaciers into the bay isolated North Greenland, and it was only through the adventurous dogsledding expeditions and tireless work of Knud Rasmussen and his friends at the beginning of nineteen hundred that the Thule Inuit came into contact with the Greenlanders further south. The language of the Northern Inuit is still different from the rest of Greenland.



DAY 10: Upernavik

The Upernavik territory covers an area nearly the size of Great Britain. In the town itself and the ten smaller settlements in the area, inhabits 3000 people, mostly Inuit hunters. Upernavik is home to the world's northernmost open air museum with well-preserved buildings from the colonial period. Today, Upernavik is a mix between the hunter culture of old and the new wave with high-tech fishing. You can equate the old and new with the dog sleighs that exist alongside the modern snowmobiles. Even this far north the modern times are catching up. The city itself was founded as a Danish colonial station, but the surrounding areas and small villages history go back more than 4500 years. This was when groups of hunters and gatherers travelled along the coasts of Alaska, Canada and ultimately Greenland. Leaving Upernavik behind us we pass Svartenhuks darkly colored hills, we keep a lookout for the whales these waters are famous for.



DAY 11: Uummannaq

When you wake up this morning, you will find yourself almost 600km north of the Arctic Circle, and in one of Greenland's most beautiful and sunny regions. The ship has reached Uummannaq, situated on a small island. The impressive 1,175m heart-shaped mountain has given the town its name dominates the view (Uummannaq means 'place where the heart is'). There will be time to explore the city before heading back to the ship for lunch.



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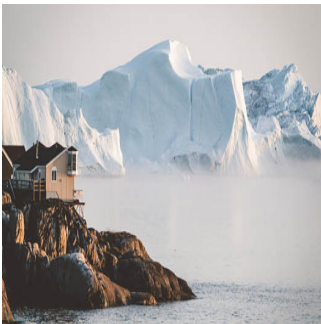
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DAY 12: Ilulissat

Ilulissat is one of the most scenic located towns in Greenland. The name simply means ‘icebergs’ in Greenlandic, and the town’s nickname is rightly ‘the Iceberg Capital of the World’. Just south of town, Ilulissat Icefjord expels gigantic icebergs into the cold waters of Disko Bay. These impressive frozen structures are born some 30km deeper into the fjord by the enormous Sermeq Kujalleq Glacier. This 10km wide glacier is the most productive outside of Antarctica. Whereas most glaciers only calve at a rate of approximately a meter/three feet a day, the Ilulissat glacier moves forward at a rate of 25 meter per day, producing more than 10% of all icebergs in Greenland. These facts, together with the fjord’s unforgettable scenery, have secured the Ice fjord a place on UNESCO’s World Heritage List. During the visit you will have the opportunity to join a boat trip to the Ice fjord (optional excursion). The journey takes about two and a half hours in total, a great opportunity to take a closer look at the amazing ice-sculpted scenery. If a hike or a trip by boat does not present enough excitement, there is also an opportunity to arrange a flight excursion in fixed wing aircrafts over the Ice fjord (optional excursion).



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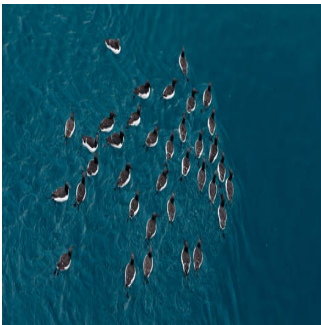
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DAY 13: At Sea

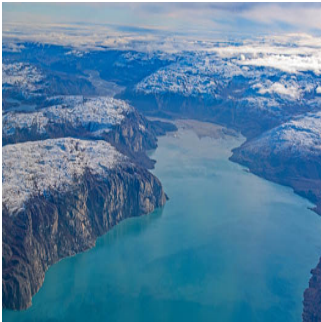
The last day will be at sea getting glimpses of sea birds migrating south. Our lecturers onboard will make inspiring and enriching presentations about Greenland’s history, nature, wildlife and climatology. Enjoy the captain’s farewell drink and a slideshow with all the memories and highlights from our voyage made by the onboard Photographer this evening.



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DAY 14: Kangerlussuaq to Iceland

During the night, we will have completed our passage through the 160-kilometer/100 mile Kangerlussuaq Fjord. After breakfast aboard the ship, we will bid farewell to the ship's staff and the Zodiac boats will shuttle us to shore. Due to Kangerlussuaq's military history and present-day role as an important air travel hub, Kangerlussuaq remains fairly isolated from Greenland's rich cultural traditions, in comparison to other regions. While you still find cultural experiences when visiting Kangerlussuaq, the most impressive attraction is the surrounding nature, which is just beckoning to be explored. Your arctic adventure and time in Greenland concludes as we board the flight from Kangerlussuaq to Keflavik Airport, Iceland.



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INCLUSIONS & DETAILS

Accommodation	Cabin on board ship
Inclusions	<p>Cabin accommodation on board vessel All meals whilst on board Charter flight Reykjavik-Kangerlussuaq-Reykjavik Guiding and lectures by experienced expedition crew All scheduled landings and excursions by zodiac Landing fees Pre and post cruise and ferry transfers</p> <p>EXCLUSIONS International Flights All items of a personal nature Customary gratuities for staff/crew Any pre or post cruise travel extensions Travel insurance</p>
Difficulty Rating	2 (light adventure)
Single Surcharge	Available upon request. Please contact us for more information.
Notes	Please note this itinerary is subject to change depending on weather and sea conditions.
Price Dependent upon	Departure date, seasonality and availability.

SUSTAINABILITY

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

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

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

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

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

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