

THE ARCTIC - NORTHERN LIGHTS EXPLORER | GREG MORTIMER



INTRODUCTION


BOOK AND SAVE: Up to 10% off select cabins and departures & receive an Air Credit of up to \$2200 AUD per person!**

This incredible adventure is designed for travellers seeking the famous Northern Lights. Shorter days in the high latitudes means darkening evening skies, so on this voyage we stay close to the coastlines of the Arctic Circle, skirting around the Norwegian and Greenland seas, and exploring remote islands and villages of the region. As night falls, we look skywards hoping to catch the magic of the northern lights as their vibrant colours dance across the sky.

Scientifically known as the aurora borealis, this spectacular natural phenomenon offers a surreal light display as vibrant hues of blue, green, pink and violet appear in the night sky. On this 22 day cruise, you'll explore the Arctic highlights of Norway, Jan Mayen, Greenland, and Iceland with plenty of time to look for the lights. However, during the days you'll also enjoy spectacular Arctic experiences like the famous Lofoten Islands, take in thrilling zodiac rides throughout the Norwegian coastline, and discover the Icelandic Westfjords region, known for its huge fjords and the soaring Dynjandi waterfall.

***Save up to 10% on selected departures and cabins. Discounts are subject to availability and are available until 30 Jun 24 unless withdrawn prior. Discounts are not combinable with any other promotions except back-to-back voyage or loyalty discounts. Discounts and pricing are subject to change and may be withdrawn or varied at any time. Price based on triple share cabin.*

**Air credit of AUD \$2,200 p/p valid on selected cabins, departures and dates and is combinable with in market discounts, Not combinable with any other offer. Promotion is limited capacity and only available for a limited time until sold out or withdrawn or until 30 Jun 24.*

TRIP CODE
ACAEGMNL
DEPARTURE
08/09/2024
DURATION
19 Days
LOCATIONS
Norway, Jan Mayen, Greenland, Iceland


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PLEASE NOTE: Pricing is subject to change and availability at the time of booking. Contact us for more information.

ITINERARY

DAY 1: Arrive Kirkenes, Norway


Having made your way to Kirkenes, you will be met by a representative and transferred to our group hotel. Upon arrival, kindly remind hotel check-in staff to provide you with Aurora Expeditions cabin tags for your luggage. Please clearly label the tags with your name and ship cabin number. This evening, enjoy a light refreshment as you meet your fellow expeditioners at a Welcome Reception and Pre-Embarkation Briefing. Afterwards, dine at your leisure (dinner not included).



DAY 2: Embarkation

This morning, please ensure your cabin luggage is fitted with cabin tags clearly labelled with your name and cabin number. Your luggage will be collected from your hotel and transferred directly to the port for clearance and delivered to your cabin ahead of your arrival on board. Please keep any valuables or personal items with you throughout the day. After a leisurely breakfast, check-out of your room before commencing an excursion of Kirkenes and surroundings. Transfer to the pier for embarkation in the late afternoon, when you will have time to settle into your cabin before attending our mandatory safety briefings, and enjoy the thrill of departure as we ‘throw the lines’ and set sail. This evening, get to know your fellow expeditioners, friendly expedition team and crew at the Captain’s Welcome Dinner to celebrate the start of a thrilling adventure.



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DAY 3: Norwegian Coast: Days 3-6

Over the next few days we explore parts of Norway’s remarkable 1,000-kilometre (600-mile) coastline. Starting in North Cape, in the very north of the country, we make our way south, stopping in the Lofoten Islands and visiting mesmerising Mount Torgghatten, famous for the hole through its centre. The spectacular northern lights is a natural phenomenon that is most commonly seen in the sky above the Arctic Circle, between late autumn and early spring. As we are near North Cape in northern Norway, keep a close watch in hope of witnessing this dazzling spectacle in the night sky. The North Cape is located at a latitude of 71° 10’ 21 and is Europe’s northernmost point. Here we enjoy a short walk, visit the North Cape Hall and perhaps sample some local treats. Enjoy a Zodiac cruise through spectacular Trollfjord, a gorge flanked by steep mountains and so narrow that it can only be accessed by small ships. In the Lofoten Islands, voted by National Geographic as one the of the most beautiful destinations in the world, we stroll through picturesque villages dotted with red and white fishers’ huts, surrounded by soaring granite peaks. Visit the Lofoten Seafood Center and learn about the impressive cod fisheries and perhaps sample some local seafood. Crossing south of the Arctic Circle, we visit the Vega archipelago, which became a UNESCO World Heritage Site in 2014. Vega Island is fantastic for birdwatching and here eider ducks are the main attraction, where they are raised for their down, which at one point accounted for one third of the islanders’ income. The islanders still make houses for the birds to nest in and in return, the ducks provide valuable down when they and their chicks leave the nests to continue their lives at sea. The archipelago reflects a traditional way of life that has not changed for more than 1,500 years. On nearby Torget Island, we plan to land and hike to Torgghatten, a fascinating rock formation with an equally interesting legend describing the hole in the mountain as having been created by a troll’s arrow.



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DAY 7: at Sea

Enjoy the crossing to Jan Mayen, accompanied by seabirds as we search for whales. Enjoy informative talks from our team of experts, get to know your fellow expeditioners, stay active in the gym or treat yourself to a massage in the wellness centre. Remember to look to the skies at night and hope for sightings of the northern lights.



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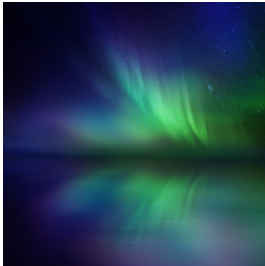
DAY 8: Jan Mayen

The approach to Jan Mayen is spectacular. The huge Beerenberg volcano is the world’s northernmost active volcano, last erupting in 1985. The northern part of the island is a great place to look for whales and dolphins, and contains impressive glaciers, some of which reach the sea. If the weather is friendly, we will try to land at Kvalrossbukta, a relatively sheltered bay on the island’s west coast. This is one of the landings used to supply the Norwegian weather station at Olonkinbyen, a settlement situated on the eastern side of the island. We hope to land in front of the station at Olonkinbyen, so as to visit before embarking on a three-hour hike (weather permitting) back across the island to where the ship will be waiting for us in Kvalrossbukta, and our trusty Zodiacs will transport us back to the ship.



DAY 9: At Sea

Our series of onboard lectures continue as sail towards the wild coast of East Greenland. You will learn about sea ice, glaciers, the unique geology found in East Greenland and daring tales of European exploration. We are also in the prime zone to view the northern lights, so glance up to the skies and you might just see more than shimmering stars.



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DAY 10: East Greenland: Days 10-13

In the coming days, a host of choices are available to us, and depending on ice and weather conditions, the east coast of Greenland is ours to explore. The members of our experienced Expedition Team, who have made countless journeys to this area, will use their expertise to tailor our voyage to suit the day-to-day conditions. This allows us to make best use of the prevailing weather, ice conditions and any opportunities for wildlife encounters. We generally attempt up to two landings or Zodiac excursions per day, including cruising along spectacular ice cliffs, following whales feeding near the surface. Be prepared to experience ice - and lots of it! East Greenland contains some of the Arctic's most impressive scenery. Deep fjords and narrow channels, flanked by sharp ice-clad peaks soaring up to 2,000 metres (6,562 feet), and glaciers birthing gigantic icebergs that drift throughout the fjord system, combine to create breathtaking scenes. The tundra landscape is home to musk oxen, arctic hares and reindeer. Throughout the area there are ancient Thule archaeological sites, historical trappers' huts, and the cabins of present-day Inuit hunters. A highlight is a visit to the Inuit village of Ittoqqortoormiit, the most isolated and northernmost permanent settlement in the region, with approximately 450 inhabitants. The community has an excellent museum, gift shop, an abundance of Greenlandic sled dogs and provides the opportunity to meet the friendly locals. Explore Scoresbysund, the world's largest fjord system and a favourite hunting ground of the local Inuit. Massive glaciers flow into this fjord, the birthplace of hundreds of majestic Greenland icebergs. It is a spectacular place that simply needs to be seen to be believed. North of Scoresbysund lie Kong Oskar and Kaiser Franz Josef fjords, two of the most significant fjord systems in Greenland, each one encompassing several smaller fjords and sounds. Thanks to the fertile volcanic soil and the surrounding mountains offering protection from strong winds, the area is rich in wildlife. You may spot everything from musk oxen and arctic foxes to mountain hares, and even reindeer, near the fjord. Look skyward and you could catch a glimpse of birds, including the glaucous gull, black-legged kittiwake, northern fulmar, common raven and common eider. We will attempt to enter Kaiser Franz Josef Fjord, a remote and rarely visited fjord system with countless opportunities for exploration, located within the Northeast Greenland National Park. Cruising through Kong Oskar Fjord, we marvel at the geological beauty of the mountains. We will then head south along the coast of Liverpool Land, with our passage dependent on ice conditions. We stretch our legs on hikes across tundra in search of ancient graveyards and summer villages occupied 3,000 years ago by Inuit. We may see musk oxen, arctic hares and reindeer grazing. The maze of calm, interconnecting waterways in this area provides excellent opportunities for sea kayaking. We will see ring seals, perhaps catch a glimpse of the elusive narwhal, and maybe even a polar bear hunting on pack ice.

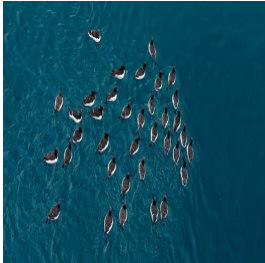


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DAY 14: At Sea

Crossing the Denmark Strait to Iceland, search for whale blows and photograph the many seabirds that trail our ship in the ever-present arctic winds. The dark night skies promise more opportunities to experience the northern lights.



DAY 15: Iceland: Days 15-18

Over the coming days, we explore the Westfjords region, which features outstanding landscapes with jaw-dropping views of dramatic fjords carved by ancient glaciers, sheer, table-top mountains that plunge into the sea, and pristine north Atlantic vegetation. The region features attractive towns such as as Isafjordur, the famous Dynjandi waterfall, and spectacular fjords that are ideal for kayaking, hiking and birdwatching. In genuine expeditionary style, we keep our itinerary flexible to allow for spontaneity. We plan to visit Hornstrandir peninsula, one of Iceland’s remotest and most pristine regions, which is filled with deep and dramatic fjords, towering bird cliffs, stunning natural beauty and opportunities for wildlife encounters. Enjoy the bountiful silence and magnificent landscapes seen by the few adventurers that make their way here. In Húsavík, we hope to have magical encounters with the many whales that visit this part of Iceland, known as the country’s whale-watching capital.



DAY 19: Disembark in Reykjavik, Iceland

During the early morning, we cruise into Reykjavik and disembark at approximately 8.00 am. Farewell your expedition team and fellow passengers as you continue your onward journey. Transfer to Keflavik airport or to your centrally located hotel. Note: We do not recommend booking flights departing prior to 12.00 pm on the day of disembarkation, as we may experience delays at the conclusion of the voyage.



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INCLUSIONS & DETAILS

Accommodation	Cabin on board ship
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Inclusions

INCLUSIONS

Transfer from airport to hotel on arrival Day 1
 Welcome reception/pre-embarkation briefing on Day 1
 One night's hotel accommodation including breakfast, on Day 1
 Mandatory pre-embarkation health screening and COVID test on Day 2
 Transfer from pier to airport or hotel on Day 19
 On-board accommodation during voyage including daily cabin service
 All meals, snacks, tea and coffee during voyage
 Beer, house wine and soft drinks with dinner
 Captain's Welcome and Farewell receptions including four-course dinner, house cocktails, house beer and wine, non-alcoholic beverages
 All shore excursions and Zodiac cruises
 Educational lectures and guiding services provided by Expedition Team
 Complimentary access to onboard expedition doctor and medical clinic (initial consultation)
 One 3-in-1 waterproof polar expedition jacket
 Complimentary use of Muck Boots during the voyage
 Comprehensive pre-departure information
 Port surcharges, permits and landing fees
 Gratuities for ship's crew

EXCLUSIONS

International or domestic flights - unless specified in itinerary
 Transfers - unless specified in itinerary
 Airport arrival or departure taxes
 Passport, visa, reciprocity and vaccination fees and charges
 Travel insurance or emergency evacuation charges
 Hotels and meals - unless specified in the itinerary
 Optional excursions and optional activity surcharges
 All items of a personal nature, including but not limited to alcoholic beverages and soft drinks (outside of dinner service), laundry services, personal clothing, medical expenses, wi-fi, email or phone charges

Difficulty Rating

2 (light adventure)

Single Surcharge

Available upon request, contact us for more details.

Notes

Prices are based on per person, twin share* (unless otherwise stated for triple/quad cabins)
 Prices are correct at time of publishing but are subject to change at any time.
 Itinerary is subject to change depending on weather and ice conditions

Price Dependent upon

Departure Date, Fuel Surcharges, Cabin Category, Currency Fluctuations, Seasonality & Availability.

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SUSTAINABILITY

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