



Svalbard Explorer Expedition Cruise

AMAZING LANDSCAPES AND WILDLIFE NEAR THE TOP OF THE WORLD

June 10 – 20, 2022

Svalbard remains uncharted territory for most North Americans. Situated far above Norway, this remote High Arctic archipelago is a vast wilderness area of ice sheets, cliffs, tundra and mountains, whose northern borders and channels are firmly clenched by the solid sheet of sea ice that forms each winter. It is inhabited only by that High Arctic wildlife adapted to its rigours, and here that wildlife thrives.

On this exclusively chartered expedition cruise, we course the archipelago's rugged coastlines and inlets with a special interest in Spitsbergen, the largest island. We'll admire and experience Svalbard's spectacular landscapes from our vessel and through a combination of Zodiac cruises and walks, ever watchful for wildlife and for spontaneous opportunities for discovery. Polar Bears find a stronghold here, and Svalbard is the best place in the world to see them on ice during the summer months. Atlantic Walrus and Svalbard Reindeer can also be seen well, along with a variety of other terrestrial and marine mammals. The bird life is exquisite, with the gorgeous Red Phalarope, King Eider and Ivory Gull being standouts among a variety of other sea and land birds getting on with breeding activities. The tundra flora will be awakening as well. Wildlife and scenery photographic opportunities abound!

We'll sail on a customized itinerary upon the *MV Polarfront*, a small (12-passenger) vessel that gives us maximum maneuverability and provides the highest degree of comfort without losing that 'expedition feel' that Quest travellers enjoy. This is a high value and high impact experience for just 12 passengers. If you love big, wild spaces, please join us on this exclusive journey!

Why travel
to Svalbard
with us?

Atlantic Walrus



- 🦅 Photographing a Polar Bear on ice
- 🦅 Witnessing seabirds swirling overhead
- 🦅 Contemplating walrus at a haul-out
- 🦅 Sharing the tundra with reindeer and ptarmigans
- 🦅 Cruising spectacular ice-laden channels



TOUR LEADERS

Dr. Martyn (Marty) Obbard is an emeritus research scientist and the former resident bear biologist with the Ontario Ministry of Natural Resources, and adjunct professor at Trent University (Peterborough, Ontario). His field work focused on Polar Bears and American Black Bears. He is a member of the IUCN-Species Survival Committee's Polar Bear Specialist Group and is a former Chair of the Canadian Federal/ Provincial/ Territorial Polar Bear Technical Committee.

A 2nd leader to be announced!

Detailed Itinerary

Friday, June 10: Meet in Longyearbyen

Overnight: Radisson Blu or similar

Meals: Welcome Dinner

Saturday, June 11: Embarkation

This morning we will embark our vessel. Depending on the schedule we may have some time beforehand to wander in search of local bird life such as Purple Sandpipers or Red Phalaropes. Remember: we have 24 hours of sunlight at this time of year, so there is plenty of time to enjoy the sights before us. Once embarked and settled, we'll have a facilities and safety orientation as we prepare to explore these wonderful northern lands! Later, we'll enjoy a welcome cocktail as we anticipate days ahead!

Overnight: M/V Polarfront

Meals: Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner

Sunday, June 12 – Sunday, June 19: Exploring the Svalbard Archipelago

We will spend these eight days exploring the archipelago in-depth. Our final sail plan will depend very much on ice conditions, which can vary from one year to the next due to the current season's weather conditions and, on a smaller scale, due to wind conditions.

Among the many locales we'll seek out known haul-outs for Atlantic Walrus which, because they are not hunted in Svalbard, display a lackadaisical attitude towards people. As we cruise, we'll watch for Polar Bears hunting, travelling or possibly lounging on land-fast or sea ice! We'll also be watching for their prey, such as Bearded Seals and Ringed Seals, which we may see resting upon the ice. Any seal carcasses may be attended by numerous Glaucous Gulls and quite possibly the ghostly-white Ivory Gull! There are several seabird nesting cliffs in Svalbard, and we should see Black-legged Kittiwakes, Thick-billed Murres and Dovekies among other species.



On land, we may look for the Svalbard Reindeer, an endemic subspecies that is quaintly small compared to reindeer/caribou elsewhere in the world; keen eyes can watch for the cryptic Rock Ptarmigan (Svalbard subspecies) and Snow Buntings on the tundra. Waterfowl include Common and King Eiders, Pink-footed Geese and Barnacle Geese, which famously breed high on cliffs and then coax their young to fling themselves off the cliffs to flatlands below. Nervous geese may signal the presence of another coveted animal, the Arctic Fox!

Over these days, we have opportunities to get "just the right" type of wildlife photographs. Plus, there will be a barrage of landscape photo opportunities all along! On our final evening aboard, we'll enjoy a special cocktail and Farewell Dinner as we reminisce on a most memorable journey.

Overnight: M/V Polarfront

Meals: Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner

Monday, June 20: Disembarkation

Today after breakfast, we'll say a fond farewell to the *M/V Polarfront* crew and disembark at Longyearbyen, where we will catch our homebound flights.

Meals: Breakfast



Ivory Gull



King Eiders © Tony Beck



Arctic Fox



M/V Polarfront

Tour Details

Tour Cost (per person): US\$13500

Including all taxes and gratuities

Single Supplement: Space aboard this vessel is limited.

Assuming availability, the supplement to guarantee single accommodations aboard is 50% of the cabin cost.

Group Size: 12 participants

What's Included:

- Services and meals as listed in the itinerary
- 9-night cruise aboard the *M/V Polarfront* based on double occupancy
- Gratuities for services provided by Quest
- Services of your on-board Quest naturalists Marty Obbard and a second Quest leader
- Wine aboard the vessel with dinner

Not Included:

- International airfare from your home to Longyearbyen
- Fuel surcharges on the boat or flights (if applicable)
- Meals not listed in the itinerary
- Airport transfers
- Phone calls and items of a personal nature
- Additional transport required due to any emergency situation

Payment Details:

A deposit of US\$2000 per person is required to reserve your space on this tour. A 2nd payment of US\$2000 is due February 26, 2021. A 3rd payment of US\$2000 is due December 10, 2021. The balance is due 90 days prior to departure.



What to Expect

Joining Instructions

This tour begins in Longyearbyen in Svalbard on June 10. All travellers arriving on the tour start date should make their way to our group hotel where they can meet their Quest leaders for dinner at 6 PM. The tour concludes at disembarkation time in the morning of June 20. The time is yet to be determined. Please do not book flights until we advise you.

Level of Activity: Moderate

You will be getting in and out of Zodiacs for our Zodiac rides and for our landings, with assistance from the crew. When walking we'll move at a leisurely pace, with frequent stops, on ground which is sometimes rough/rocky and hilly. Sturdy hiking shoes or boots are strongly advised. A trekking pole is also useful for extra balance. If you have any concerns about being able to participate in this trip, please contact us for further information.

Weather

We'll be visiting Svalbard at the start of the High Arctic summer. We'll enjoy 24 hours of daylight, but throughout most of the expedition, prepare for temperatures between -5°C to 5°C. Wind chill can be an important factor, especially on the ship deck, so we recommend dressing in many layers. A mix of sun and cloud can be expected throughout; rain and snow are possible.

Travel Documents

You will need a passport for this expedition. Please ensure it is valid for six months beyond your date of return. Canada and USA passport holders do not require visas to visit Norway.



Our Vessel

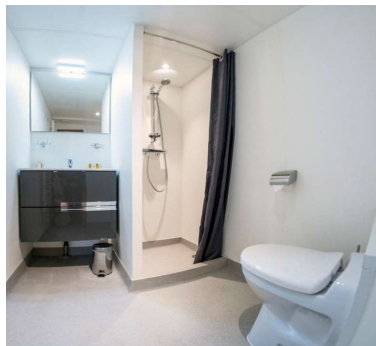
We have chartered the **M/V Polarfront** exclusively for our Quest group. Built in 1974-1975, she originally served as a Norwegian weather ship maintained by the Norwegian Meteorological Institute. The last working weather ship in the world, she was retired in 2010, and found new life in 2017 when she was refurbished for expedition travel in the High Arctic. She is 55 metres long and sails at maximum speed of 10 knots. She accommodates 12 passengers and 12 crew members. Her home port is Marseille, France, and she features:

- Eight bright and spacious cabins with private en-suite bathrooms
- Great observation deck space with multiple vantage points
- Exquisite French gastronomy!
- A comfortable lounge with library stocked with a variety of Arctic titles
- Anti-roll stabilization
- 2 Zodiacs
- A fitness room featuring a treadmill, rowing machine and exercise bike
- A sauna and plunge pool
- 2 double catamaran-paddleboats

Cabin 4



Sauna



Cabin 11 Head



Salon

The cabins feature:

- One or two lower beds (some twin beds may be joined)
- Private en-suite bathrooms with stand-up showers
- Porthole windows
- Shelving and drawer-unit storage
- Seating area
- Sink with filtered water
- Mirror(s)
- Warm blankets and bedding
- Bath towels
- Reading light
- Hooks

Additional Info

Extend your Stay

If you are interested in exploring more of this region, we would be happy to design a personalized extension for you either before or after this tour. Please let us suggest some options, based on your time available, budget and interests.

Terms and Conditions

For additional information about our terms and conditions, please refer to your booking form, the current brochure or our website. All participants booking with Worldwide Quest are covered by the terms of the Ontario Travel Industry Act (Worldwide Quest International, Ontario - License # 2667946).

Cancellation Policy

All payments are non-refundable, however you may transfer your initial deposit for any land tour to another tour 90 days or more prior to your scheduled departure date. Initial deposits for cruises are non-refundable and non-transferable. Your second payment and your final payment are non-refundable and non-transferable. If you cancel within 90 days prior to trip departure, all associated trip costs are non-refundable. The tour price is quoted as a package. No partial refunds or credits will be given for services not used. In the event of a cancellation, you must notify Worldwide Quest immediately and in writing.

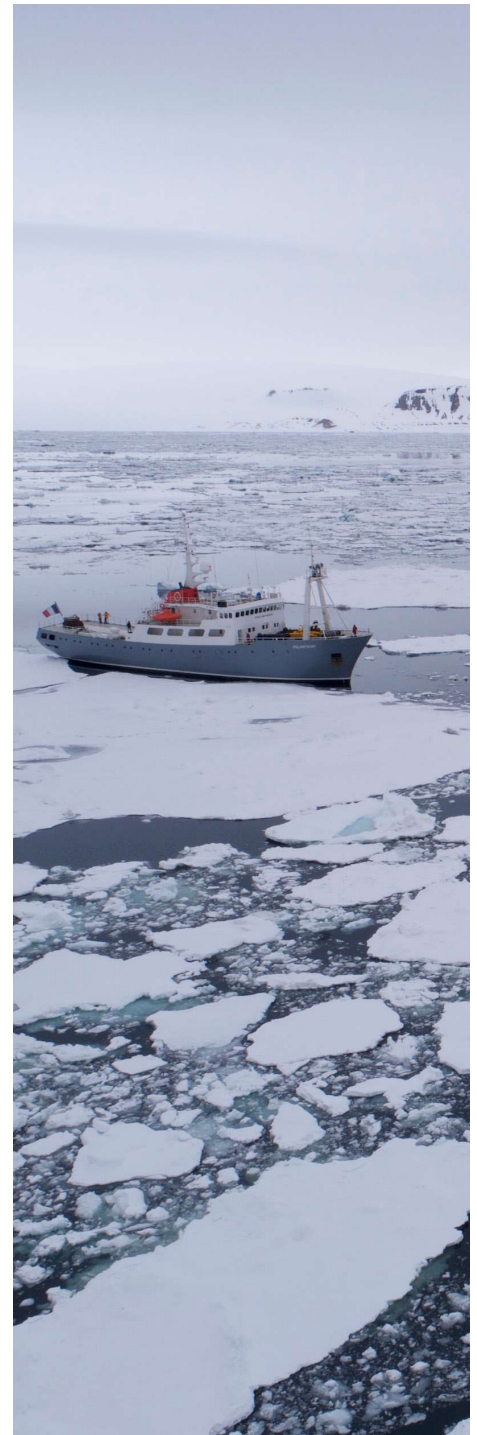
Travel Insurance

We urge you to ensure that you have adequate cancellation and medical insurance in place, should an unexpected event cause you to cancel or interrupt your trip or should the tour not be operable per our terms and conditions. We will offer you Manulife insurance coverage. Medical insurance including emergency medical evacuation coverage is mandatory on all our tours.



Worldwide Explorers Club

Travel twice with us and you become a member of the Worldwide Explorers Club. Earn 5% off all your subsequent, catalogue-advertized group tours. The bonus is non-transferable and cannot be used in conjunction with any other discount or credit. Note that some exceptions may apply. Members also get access to special offers and exploratory tours!



How to Book

Please contact the Worldwide Quest office for more information and to secure your booking.

1-800-387-1483 | 416-633-5666 | travel@worldwidequest.com



TICO#: 2667946

The Quest Nature Tours Experience

We aim to contribute to nature conservation by providing our travellers with the chance to experience wild spaces and learn about wildlife in natural habitats. We're delighted to welcome back our many repeat travellers who enjoy our unique programs, our expert leaders and our style of travel. We're equally delighted to introduce our programs to a growing number of Quest first-timers who enjoy learning about the wildlife and natural environments we share. Our tours are all about exceptional and educational nature experiences, camaraderie and fun. We're small and we plan to keep it that way. **We focus on the elements we call the Quest Essentials:**

Small Groups. Our groups are typically in the size range of 8 – 16 participants. On our daily excursions we may divide into even smaller groups, so that you can be with fewer than eight others as you explore. Our small group size allows us to be attentive and quiet, giving us greater opportunity to observe wildlife. Our logistics are flexible. We use smaller vehicles and vessels to limit our environmental impact. All our activities, such as talks, meals and gatherings are enjoyable and focused.

Expert Leaders. Every Quest tour is led by one of our team of expert Canadian naturalists. They are knowledgeable, congenial and extraordinarily capable. Their objective is to ensure that our Quest travellers get the most out of the nature experience. A local naturalist also accompanies all tours outside North America. Each is a highly trained expert with exceptional knowledge of the flora and fauna of his or her local region. Local guides help us to find and identify wildlife and share their knowledge of the habits of the creatures we encounter as well as the dynamics of the environment as a whole.

More time exploring. Our tours are carefully conceived and executed to maximize your time in the field. Our daily itineraries are full, but not exhausting, and we build in ample opportunities for rest. There is nothing routine about our days. While we travel with a goal and destination in mind, we always give priority to field observations by choosing routes that allow us to maximize wildlife viewing along the way and modifying our itinerary as necessary and possible.

All taken care of. From the moment you call our office, we'll take care of all the details from pre-departure information to post-tour species compilations. Virtually everything is included in the tour cost: accommodations, meals, transportation, activities and gratuities. We travel off the beaten path without sacrificing comfort. Our meals can be simple but are always of good quality. And we place the focus on where it should be: discovering our natural world.

We invite you to call us, email us or visit us in our Toronto office and let your travels begin...

1-800-387-1483 | travel@worldwidequest.com

