

Realm of the Polar Bear - XVRPNX

8 days: Longyearbyen to Longyearbyen

What's Included

- 7 nights aboard the MS Expedition
- Zodiac excursions with our expert expedition team
- Lectures and educational programs
- Longyearbyen airport transfers on arrival day
- Waterproof boots supplied for men's USA sized 8-14 & women's USA sized 3-9
- Arctic destination guide book

The information in this trip details document has been compiled with care and is provided in good faith. However it is subject to change, and does not form part of the contract between the client and G Adventures. The itinerary featured is correct at time of printing. It may differ slightly to the one in the brochure. Occasionally our itineraries change as we make improvements that stem from past travellers, comments and our own research. Sometimes it can be a small change like adding an extra meal along the itinerary. Sometimes the change may result in us altering the tour for the coming year. Ultimately, our goal is to provide you with the most rewarding experience. Please note that our brochure is usually released in November each year. If you have booked from the previous brochure you may find there have been some changes to the itinerary.

VERY IMPORTANT: Please ensure that you print a final copy of your Trip Details to review a couple of days prior to travel, in case there have been changes that affect your plans.

VALIDITY: Valid for all trips departing January 1st, 2013 - December 31st, 2013

Itinerary



What's Included

7 nights aboard the MS Expedition. Zodiac excursions with our expert expedition team. Lectures and educational programs. Longyearbyen airport transfers on arrival day. Waterproof boots supplied for men's USA sized 8-14 & women's USA sized 3-9. Arctic destination guide book.

Highlights

Spend time on deck searching for polar bears and whales, cruise through breathtaking fjords and admire massive glaciers, experience the midnight sun, learn about Arctic history and ecology from our expert guides, brave the Arctic waters and take a polar plunge, enjoy the silence of the Arctic tundra

Dossier Disclaimer

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Itinerary Disclaimer

While it is our intention to adhere to the route described below, there is a certain amount of flexibility built into the itinerary and on occasion it may be necessary, or desirable to make alterations. The itinerary is brief, as we never know exactly where our journey will take us. Due to our style of travel and the regions we visit, travel can be unpredictable. The Trip Details document is a general guide to the tour and region and any mention of specific destinations or wildlife is by no means a guarantee that they will be visited or encountered. Aboard expedition trips visits to research stations depend on final permission.

Additionally, any travel times listed are approximations only and subject to vary due to local circumstances.

Important Notes

Please note: While it is our intention of adhere to the route described above , there is a certain amount of flexibility built into the itinerary and on occasion it may be necessary, or desirable to make alterations. On the first day of your tour, your Expedition Leader will give you an expedition overview.

Group Leader Description

A carefully chosen team will lead our voyage. Our expedition ships boast an international team of professional naturalists and lecturers. Their goal is to provide an informed and balanced interpretation of the destination, accomplished through stimulating lectures, day-to-day briefings, and informal discussions. Your lecturers and Expedition Leader will cover all aspects of the voyage including ornithology, marine biology, geography, geology, history and the environment, as well as practical things like photography. The expedition staff work conscientiously with you on deck and in the field, improving your observational skills to allow you to experience all that the destination has to offer. Their strong sense of ethics and ecological knowledge make for stimulating and mindful conversation whether onshore or at the dinner table. The Expedition Staff will pilot the Zodiac landing craft used for shore landings and Zodiac cruises; they are experienced drivers who operate the Zodiacs in a responsible manner.

Group Size Notes

Max 134 on board the MS Expedition

Meals Included

All meals included aboard the MS Expedition.

Meals

Onboard our expedition ships you'll find a diversity of gourmet international cuisines prepared and catered by professional chefs; all meals are included in the price of your expedition. Dining is casual, tables are unassigned and the dining room is capable of seating the entire passenger compliment at one time. There is always a selection of different meals available, and vegetarians will find plenty of options. Special dietary requirements can be accommodated with advance notice, please advise us at time of confirmation. Coffee, tea and water are all provided free of charge. All other beverages, alcoholic and non-alcoholic are not included and can be purchased in the dining room, pub, or in the lounge.

Transport

MS Expedition, Zodiac, local bus.

Local Flights

Your local flights from Oslo to Longyearbyen are not included in this tour. We recommend arriving at least 1 day prior to the sailing of the ship to guarantee your arrival. While flight delays are not common sometimes they do happen.

Solo Travellers

We believe single travellers should not have to pay more to travel so our group trips are designed for shared accommodation and do not involve a single supplement. Single travellers joining group trips are paired in twin or multi-share accommodation with someone of the same sex for the duration of the trip. Some of our Independent trips are designed differently and single travellers on these itineraries must pay the single trip price.

Accommodation

Aboard the MS Expedition in quad-, triple-, twin-share cabins, or suites (all with en suite bathrooms and porthole or window) for 7 nights. Please note that all cabins consist of twin-size berths and are ocean-facing. Suites have one queen-size bed.

Joining Instructions

Meeting Point:

Radisson Blu Polar Hotel Spitsbergen, 4:00 p.m. transfer to M/S Expedition Road 500

P.O. Box 554

9171 Longyearbyen

Telephone: +47 7902 3450

G Adventures is happy to offer you a complimentary airport transfer if you are arriving on Day 1 of the tour or have booked pre-night accommodation through G Adventures.

Joining Instructions with complimentary transfer:

Upon arrival into Longyearbyen airport please collect your luggage and look for a G Adventures representative who will direct you to the bus. Please make sure you have advised your booking agent of your arrival flight details into Longyearbyen so we are expecting you. Be sure to keep all your important documents (i.e. passport) and medication in your hand luggage, as your main luggage will be transferred separately to the ship or hotel.

Joining Instructions without complimentary transfer:

The most cost effective way to travel from the airport to the city is by local bus that services all Longyearbyen hotels at a price of approximately 50 NOK. If you would like to take a taxi, they are available at the airport or by calling one of two taxi companies at either +47 7902 1305 or +47 7902 1375.

On Day 1 of the tour please make sure you drop your checked luggage off at the meeting point between 9:00 am - 1:00 pm. A local representative will be in the luggage storage room. They can provide general information about the town or your embarkation process. All passengers will be transferred to the ship as a group for embarkation at 4:00 pm. Please ensure that for embarkation you have your passport accessible (not in your luggage which is being transferred separately to the ship).

If for some reason you cannot arrive at the meeting point, please make your own way to the Port of Longyearbyen no earlier or later than 4:00 pm. Embarkation time is set for 4:00 pm and passengers will not be able to board the ship before that time due to refueling, provisioning, and preparing the ship for your stay.

On embarkation day, you may have to board the ship via Zodiac. You should bring clothing suitable for cold and wet conditions. Waterproof pants are recommended. Once aboard, you will find your luggage stored in your assigned cabin, please ensure that all your luggage is accounted for on arrival.

Emergency Contact

Should you need to contact us during a situation of dire need, it is best to first call either the G Adventures Local Representative (if one is listed below) or our G Adventures Local Office. If for any reason you do not receive an immediate answer, please leave a detailed message and contact information, so they may return your call and assist you as soon as possible.

CONTACT NUMBERS

G Adventures Local Representative (Longyearbyen, Norway)

Barbara Fogden: +47 9500 6076

If you are unable for any reason to contact our local office, please call the numbers listed below, which will connect you directly with our 24 hour Sales team, who will happily assist you.

Toll-free, North America only: 1 888 800 4100

Calls from UK: 0844 272 0000

Calls from Germany: 01805 70 90 30 00

Calls from Australia: 1 300 796 618

Calls from New Zealand: 0800 333 307

Outside North America, Australia, New Zealand, Germany and the UK: +1 416 260 0999

Finishing Point Instructions

DEPARTURE DAY - Disembarkation

On departure day, we will offer transfers to Longyearbyen Airport for all passengers with flights scheduled on that day.

We are pleased to offer an early morning disembarkation and transfer to the airport for those passengers with flights departing Longyearbyen around 0400-0500 (dependent on airline schedules).

For those passengers disembarking at our regular time of 0800, you will be transferred to either the airport or the Radisson Blu Polar hotel, depending on the time of your flight. Those transferred to the hotel will have an opportunity to explore the town center on their own, and then be transferred to the airport later in the day as per flight schedules. Transfer times will be confirmed, and communicated onboard prior to departure. Luggage storage at the Raddison Blu Polar hotel will be available until time of departure.

What to Take

Most airlines allow one checked bag and two carry-on per person. To avoid any problems on check-in and with possible excess baggage charges, please consult the airline for specific restrictions.

Dress on board is informal. Plan to bring comfortable, casual clothing for all activities. Bring wind and waterproof outer layers. Beware of tight clothing that leaves no room for trapped air, which is an excellent insulator. Wool, silk and some of the new synthetic fibers, like polar fleece, retain heat better than cotton. When packing, we suggest that you do not weigh yourself down with too many clothes or too much gear. Select informal, practical attire that can be worn in layers. The most important item that you will need to bring on your voyage is a parka.

Weather conditions during the period, July to August

- Average temperature approx. 5°C
- Daylight around the clock
- Cold wind is usual
- Snow-covered areas at North and east Spitsbergen
- The ground is often wet because of melting snow

Checklist

GENERAL EXPEDITION CHECKLIST

ACCESSORIES:

Binoculars

Camera and Accessories

- Memory card
- Extra battery
- Something to protect your camera from water

Plug adaptor

- Onboard is 220AC electrical outlets with European 2 pin round holes as well as 110 volt shaving sockets for electric razors only

Sunglasses

Sunblock

At sea distractions

- Personal entertainment
- Laptop computer
- Books/games/movie

Water bottle

PERSONAL ITEMS:

Personal toiletries

Personal medication, vitamins

If you are prone to seasickness please consult your doc and bring medication

- Homeopathic and natural options

DOCUMENTATION:

Money (cash/travelers checks)

Credit Card

Visas

Passport

Airline tickets

Travel insurance documents

Trip details information

ONBOARD CLOTHING:

Comfortable and informal clothing onboard

Non-slip footwear for wet decks

BOOTS FOR ZODIAC LANDINGS:

Complementary used waterproof boots will be supplied for the following sized:

- Men's USA size 8-14
- Women's USA size 3-9

Guest must bring their own if they are:

- Men's USA size 7 or smaller
- Men's USA size 15 or larger
- Women's USA size 2 or smaller
- Women's USA size 10 or larger

Rubber, waterproof boots that are just below your knees (12-16" high or 30-41cm) with a strong, ridged non-skid sole are essential for wet landings via Zodiac. You usually have to step from the Zodiac into water, which can be up to 1 ft or 30 cm high on most landings. Do not bring heavy, cumbersome boots that make it difficult to walk. Do not bring boots with metal cleats as they cannot be used for the landings. Try out your boots before your voyage.

TRIP SPECIFIC CHECKLIST

OUTDOOR CLOTHING:

The goal is to dress for many different temperatures and weather conditions. We recommend bringing clothing in layers as the weather can vary between warm and sunny to very cold and snowing.

Waterproof parka

Waterproof pants

Warm hat

Gloves

Scarf

Warm socks to be worn inside wellington boots

Fleece

Long underwear

OPTIONAL CLOTHING:

Ski goggle for wet Zodiac rides

Walking poles

Laundry

Aboard the expedition ship laundry facilities are provided at a nominal charge.

Visas

All countries require a valid passport (with a minimum 6 months validity). Contact your local embassy, or consulate for the most up-to-date visa requirements, or see your travel agent. IT'S YOUR RESPONSIBILITY TO HAVE THE CORRECT TRAVEL DOCUMENTATION.

Detailed Trip Notes

Experience Counts

Accompanying the voyage is our dedicated and experienced staff of expedition leaders, naturalists and lecturers who share with us their knowledge, enthusiasm and commitment to the environment. Our ship is manned by officers and crew, all highly experienced in ice navigation.

Environmental Policy

We are dedicated to minimizing the impact of our expedition on wildlife and sensitive natural habitats. We operate environmentally responsible cruise and expeditions and follow all internationally agreed regulations of conduct ashore. We are all privileged visitors – and committed to the future of these extraordinary, icy realms.

Safety First

Although expedition cruising is adventurous by nature, the safety of our passengers and staff is paramount. Our ship is equipped and maintained to cope with the most challenging conditions and is manned by experienced and conscientious officers, crew and expedition staff. The Zodiac landing craft used for shore landings are rugged and versatile and are operated by experienced drivers in a responsible manner. Onboard you will be fully briefed on safety issues and our environmental policy and you will receive appropriate and detailed briefings before every landing.

Expedition Staff and Lecturers

A carefully chosen team will lead our voyage. They are chosen not only for their local knowledge and wealth of experience but also for their great love of polar regions. With formal lectures, as well as informal briefings and discussions, your lecturers and Expedition Leader will cover all aspects of the voyage including ornithology, marine biology, geography, geology, history and the environment, as well as practical things like photography.

Tips for Travellers

We are all privileged visitors to these extraordinary, icy realms. As a traveller, it is your responsibility to help ensure your impact on the Arctic's flora and fauna is minimal. The following are excerpts from the GUIDANCE FOR VISITORS TO THE ARCTIC:

Respect wildlife

Do not feed, touch, or handle birds or seals, or approach or photograph them in ways that cause them to alter their behavior. Special care is needed when animals are breeding or molting. Keep a minimum distance of 5 meters (15 feet) from all wildlife.

Respect vegetation

Do not damage plants, by walking or landing on extensive moss beds or lichen-covered scree slopes. They are fragile and take generations to grow.

Respect the environment

Do not collect or take away biological or geological specimens or artifacts as souvenirs, and do not dispose of litter or garbage on land.

Take photos with care

Keep low as you will appear less threatening to animals and it will also yield better photographs. Do not try to make an animal react for a photograph. If an animal's behavior changes you are too close.

Stay Safe

Take note of, and act on, the advice and instructions from your leaders, and do not stray from your group.

Spending Money

Every traveller is different and therefore spending money requirements will vary. Some travellers may drink more than others while other travellers like to purchase more souvenirs than most. Please consider your own spending habits when it comes to allowing for

drinks, shopping and tipping. Please also remember the following specific recommendations when planning your trip.

Money Exchange

Before and after the cruise:

Credit cards and debit cards are very useful for cash advances. Visa cards are the most widely accepted cards. While ATMs are widely available, there are no guarantees that your credit or debit cards will actually work in Norway. Check with your bank. You should be aware that to purchase products or services on a credit card a fee of 5%-10% usually applies. Do not rely on credit or debit cards as your only source of money. A combination of US dollars cash, US travellers cheques and credit cards is best. Always take more rather than less, as you don't want to spoil the trip by constantly feeling short of funds.

While on board the MS Expedition, USD cash & travellers cheques, and Visa, MasterCard, and American Express, are accepted to clear incidental bills at the end of the cruise by the ship's Purser (ie. bar bills, laundry etc.).

Departure Tax

Usually included in international air ticket that you have purchased.

Tipping

Although it may not be customary to you, it is of considerable significance to the people who will take care of you during your travels. It is an expression of satisfaction with the persons who have assisted you on your expedition. The industry standard and suggested amount is USD \$10 - 15 per person per day spent on board. Of course, tipping is a personal choice and the suggested amount is set only as a guideline. The money is collected by the Hotel Manager at the end of the voyage and distributed amongst the crew and Expedition Staff.

Health

Please note inoculations may be required for the country visited. It is your responsibility to consult with your travel doctor for up to date medical travel information well before departure.

Please consult your doctor for up-to-date medical travel information well before departure. We require all passengers traveling on any one of our expeditions to review our medical questionnaire. The questionnaire can be found online at:

www.gadventures.com/online_medical_form.

Passengers with preexisting medical conditions are required to submit a medical form signed by a physician. It is very important that we are advised of any special meal requirements, food allergies, or prescribed medication when you confirm your tour. The ship is equipped with a small infirmary with typically required medications and limited equipment. The ship's doctor is available for visits during the day and is available 24 hours per day for emergencies.

In case of an emergency, please bring with you a signed and dated letter from your physician (to be given our doctor on board, as well as for any medical authorities in case of an emergency) stating any health problems and dosage requirements. International health regulations do not currently require any inoculations for the countries that you will visit on our voyages to the Antarctic. We suggest that you confer with your own physician to be sure your routine immunizations, such as tetanus, diphtheria and hepatitis A, are up-to-date before traveling. Older travelers, in particular, may wish to consider preventive measures against influenza and pneumonia.

Safety and Security

Many national governments provide a regularly updated advice service on safety issues involved with international travel. We recommend that you check your government's advice for their latest travel information before departure. We strongly recommend the use of a neck wallet or money belt while travelling, for the safe keeping of your passport, air tickets, travellers' cheques, cash and other valuable items. Leave your valuable jewellery at home - you won't need it while travelling. Many of the hotels we use have safety deposit boxes, which is the most secure way of storing your valuables. A lock is recommended for securing your luggage. When travelling on a group trip, please note that your CEO has the authority to amend or cancel any part of the trip itinerary if it is deemed necessary due to safety concerns. Your CEO will accompany you on all included activities. During your trip you will have some free time to pursue your own interests, relax and take it easy or explore at your leisure. While your CEO will assist you with options available in a given location please note that any optional activities you undertake are not part of your itinerary, and we offer no representations about the safety of the activity or the standard of the operators running them. Please use your own good judgment

when selecting an activity in your free time. Although the cities visited on tour are generally safe during the day, there can be risks to wandering throughout any major city at night. It is our recommendation to stay in small groups and to take taxis to and from restaurants, or during night time excursions.

Protests and Demonstrations- Protests and demonstrations, even those that are well intended, have the potential to turn violent with no warning. Counter protests can also turn violent. Action by security forces to disperse demonstrators and protesters may occur at any time. If you are in an area where demonstrators or protesters are gathering, avoid the temptation of staying for a good photo opportunity and leave the area immediately.

Water based activities have an element of danger and excitement built into them. We recommend only participating in water based activities when accompanied by a guide(s). We make every reasonable effort to ensure the fun and adventurous element of any water based activities (in countries with varying degrees of operating standards) have a balanced approach to safety. It is our policy not to allow our CEOs to make arrangements on your behalf for water based activities that are not accompanied by guide(s).

Swimming, including snorkeling, is always at your own risk.

We take all prudent measures in relation to your safety. For ways to further enhance your personal safety while traveling, please visit:

www.gadventures.com/travel-resources/safety/

Medical Form

Our small group adventures bring together people of all ages. It is very important you are aware that, as a minimum, an average level of fitness and mobility' is required to undertake our easiest programs. Travellers must be able to walk without the aid of another person, climb 3-4 flights of stairs, step on and off small boats, and carry their own luggage at a minimum. Travellers with a pre-existing medical condition are required to complete a short medical questionnaire, which must be signed by their physician. This is to ensure that travellers have the necessary fitness and mobility to comfortably complete their chosen trip. While our CEOs work hard to ensure that all our travellers are catered for equally, it is not their responsibility to help individuals who cannot complete the day's activities unaided. Please refer to the physical ratings in this Trip Details document for more information.

Please note that all passengers traveling to Antarctica are required to fill out this questionnaire.

The medical questionnaire can be found online at:

www.gadventures.com/medical-form.

Travel Insurance

Travel Insurance: Travel insurance is compulsory in order to participate on any of our trips. When travelling on a group trip, you will not be permitted to join the group until evidence of travel insurance has been sighted by your CEO, who will take note of your insurance details. When selecting a travel insurance policy please bear in mind that all clients must have medical coverage and that we require a minimum coverage of USD 200,000 for repatriation and emergency rescue. We strongly recommend that the policy also covers personal liability, cancellation, curtailment and loss of luggage and personal effects. If you have credit card insurance we require proof of purchase of the trip (a receipt of credit card statement) with a credit card in your name. Contact your bank for details of their participating insurer, the level of coverage and emergency contact telephone number.

Planeterra-The G Adventures Foundation

Through our commitment to responsible tourism we have developed the Planeterra Foundation, a non-profit organization dedicated to making a positive difference in the lives of people and communities around the world through support of international charities, local organizations and community projects in the places that we visit on our tours. G Adventures matches all individual donations and pays all administration costs, which means that 100% of each donation is doubled and goes directly to support our projects. For more information about Planeterra and the projects we support, or to make a donation, please visit www.planeterra.org

Planeterra Dollar-A-Day Program

Our Dollar-A-Day Program provides travellers with the opportunity to help us give back to the people and places visited on our tours by donating one dollar per day for the duration of their tour. 100% of these proceeds will go directly to support our Planeterra projects.

To participate in this program please indicate at the time of booking that you would like to participate in G Adventures' Dollar-A-Day program, either by clicking the check box online, or by advising your G Adventures specialist or travel agent. (Note: Donation will be

charged in the currency of your booking)

Associated Planeterra Project

Planeterra supports the BearHealth Research Project:

At the end of the Arctic season, funds raised from the expedition ship's on board auctions are donated to the BearHealth Project. BearHealth is a circumpolar research project aimed at identifying region specific health effects of persistent organic pollutants (POP's) and climate change in polar bears.

BearHealth is a research project made of 15-20 researchers and students participating from universities and institutions in Norway, Denmark, Canada and Russia. The study will involve the recording of biological variables; such as sex, age, body mass and length. Some polar bears will also be fitted with satellite tracking transmitters that will allow the researchers to follow their habitat use. Because of threats caused by global warming and pollution, there is a worldwide concern about the health and well-being of polar bears. This project is aimed at providing both the public and the scientific community with a better understanding of the fragility of Arctic environments and ecosystems in relation to human impact factors.

For more information about this project and/or to make a donation please visit our website at www.planeterra.org or contact us at info@planeterra.org

Feedback

After your travels, we want to hear from you! Your feedback information is so important to us that you'll receive a special discount code for free online prints and we'll give you 5% off the price of your next G Adventures trip if your feedback is completed on-line within 30 days of finishing your trip. Please visit <http://www.gadventures.com/evaluations>

Newsletter

Our adventure travel e-newsletter is full of travel news, trip information, interesting stories and contests. To avoid missing out on special offers and updates from G Adventures, subscribe at www.gadventures.com/newsletters/

Stay current on how our company invests in our global community through our foundation – Planeterra. Sign up for [Planeterra's monthly news](#) to learn more about how to give back and support the people and places we love to visit.

Travel Forum - The Watering Hole

Be sure to stop by [The Watering Hole](#), our adventure travel forum. If you're interested in meeting others booked on your upcoming trip, check out the [Departure Lounge](#) section of our forum and introduce yourself. Otherwise, just drop in at anytime to share some travel tips, ask questions, meet other travellers and quench your thirst for travel. Our forum is located at wateringhole.gadventures.com.