

EXPLORE!

Spitsbergen, Greenland and Iceland - M/S Spitsbergen
14 days

Norway, Spitsbergen - Trip code SPNP



Spitsbergen, Greenland and Iceland - M/S Spitsbergen

Sail from the Arctic Crown of Norway to the remote coastline of Greenland and onto the land of fire and Ice. Your expedition begins in Norway's Arctic capital of Longyearbyen. You will cruise through the magnificent Northwest Spitsbergen National Park, home to big inland glaciers, alpine landscape and a spectacular contrast of lush areas, rocky ridges and glaciers that plunge into the sea. Kongsfjorden and Magdalenefjorden impress with their dramatic landscapes and at 78° N, you will find the year-round community of Ny Ålesund. As we start sailing along the coast of Greenland, the splendid isolation of the journey begins to take hold. Once in the fjords of North East Greenland, your sense of distance, size and shape of landscapes will be challenged. These are the largest fjords in the world. The surrounding alpine landscape, with hanging glaciers and dramatic vertical granite walls, stretches as far as the eye can see. All along our route, we will go ashore to explore the wilderness, enjoying walks on untouched territory, completely undisturbed by man. Our last call in North East Greenland is the most isolated town in Greenland; Ittoqqortoormiit, where up to nine months of the year, the town is cut off from the outside world. Our local guide will show you the sights, including a visit to the museum and the church as you discover this unique settlement on foot. We end our voyage exploring the west region of Iceland, often called The Saga land. This varied coastline is dotted with towns and villages, mountains, bird cliffs and hiking trails and will offer some unique experiences to end our voyage.

Trip highlights

ACCOMMODATION GRADE:

Premium

Our premium accommodation is hand-picked and chosen for its character, location or local importance. These properties have excellent facilities and a higher level of comfort and service. They provide the perfect wind down after an active day.

TRIP PACE:

Relaxed

You can enjoy easy-going activities and experiences on these Relaxed pace tours, with opportunities to absorb the sights and immerse yourself in the local surroundings, but still come home feeling relaxed and refreshed.

Itinerary

Itineraries on some departure dates may differ, please select the itinerary that you wish to explore.

DAY 1 - Oslo to Longyearbyen

Your Arctic adventure starts with an evening flight from Norway's capital, Oslo. Before departure, you can spend some time exploring this fjord-side city surrounded by forests, lakes and hills. Oslo offers a varied architecture, top-notch restaurants and endless shopping possibilities. The contrast will be significant when you arrive in Longyearbyen a couple of hours later. On arrival, you will be transferred to your hotel.



Accommodation: Hotel in Longyearbyen (or similar)



Premium Hotel



Single room available



Meals Provided: None

DAY 2 - Longyearbyen

Spend the morning exploring Longyearbyen and its surroundings, before embarkation in the afternoon. Longyearbyen is a Norwegian settlement often referred to as the capital of Svalbard. This is a lively small town, situated amid some incredible Arctic landscape. Barentsburg is a Russian settlement with an exotic collection of Russian artefacts and architecture and is very different to Longyearbyen. The museum, library and newly opened brewery function as meeting points and a research station is under construction. See a colourful folklore show and visit the hotel and museum. Experience a different side of Svalbard - a little piece of Russia in the Arctic. You will board your expedition vessel in the late afternoon.



Accommodation: M/S Spitsbergen (or similar)



Premium Boat



Single room available



Meals Provided: Breakfast, Lunch & Dinner

DAY 3 - Northwest Spitsbergen National Park

The first national park we visit covers the northwest corner of Svalbard. The area is characterised by enormous inland glaciers and a landscape of contrasts with lush pastures and barren moraines. We continue into Kongsfjord and Magdalene fjord, offering spectacular scenery and a wealth of history. At 78° N, we visit Ny-Ålesund, the starting point for numerous expeditions towards the North Pole. Today it is a year-round settlement which reaches up to 120 inhabitants during the summer months. There are a few

small tourist shops here but the town is mostly renowned for its advanced High Arctic research stations.



Accommodation: M/S Spitsbergen (or similar)



Premium Boat



Single room available



Meals Provided: Breakfast, Lunch & Dinner

DAY 4 - At Sea

There are approximately 3,000 polar bears within the Svalbard Archipelago - far more than the human population and amongst one of the largest polar bear concentrations on Earth. That said, polar bears are solitary animals with no set colony or living area and they roam to wherever they can expect to find food. While there are no guarantees of sighting these top predators, the more eyes scouting through binoculars or keeping a watchful eye on deck, the better the chance of spotting the King of the Arctic. The polar bear is a marine mammal, so we are most likely to spot one close to or even in the water. We will be particularly observant whenever close to drift ice, as polar bears can often be seen using ice floes as a platform when at sea.



Accommodation: M/S Spitsbergen (or similar)



Premium Boat



Single room available



Meals Provided: Breakfast, Lunch & Dinner

DAY 5 - Northeast Greenland National Park

As we arrive in the largest national park in the world, the splendid isolation of this journey begins to take hold. Apart from some abandoned trapping stations, a weather station and the traditional Sirius sled patrol, there are no traces of humans here. Within the borders of North East Greenland National Park there are only about 30 souls that overwinter. In the very short summer season when the waters around are not frozen, only 500 expedition guests visit the park. Once inside the fjords of North East Greenland, your sense of distance, size and shape of landscapes will be challenged.



Accommodation: M/S Spitsbergen (or similar)



Premium Boat



Single room available



Meals Provided: Breakfast, Lunch & Dinner

DAY 6 - Northeast Greenland National Park

These are the largest fjords in the world and the scenery is simply breath-taking. The alpine landscape, with hanging glaciers and vertical granite faces, reach as far as the eye can see. Over the next few days, we will be looking out for picturesque scenery, wildlife and interesting landing sites as we travel through this unspoilt wilderness. Sailing into dramatic fjords like Kaiser Franz Josef Fjord or Alpefjord is an unforgettable experience and the majority of our landings are performed as pure wilderness expeditions.



Accommodation: M/S Spitsbergen (or similar)



Premium Boat



Single room available



Meals Provided: Breakfast, Lunch & Dinner

DAY 7 - Northeast Greenland National Park

Walking over lush tundra may lead to opportunities to see muskox grazing nearby, as well as a chance to spot other wildlife such as arctic fox, hare and wolf and a variety of sea birds.



Accommodation: M/S Spitsbergen (or similar)



Premium Boat



Single room available



Meals Provided: Breakfast, Lunch & Dinner

DAY 8 - Northeast Greenland National Park

We will call on the very isolated research station, Danmarkshavn with a year-round population of just eight people. We might also come across the Sirius Patrol - part of the Danish Navy who supervise the park using traditional methods, like mushing dogs. Before the Danes acquired sovereignty of this region, the area was initially claimed by the Norwegians.



Accommodation: M/S Spitsbergen (or similar)



Premium Boat



Single room available



Meals Provided: Breakfast, Lunch & Dinner

DAY 9 - Northeast Greenland National Park

One of the places that we will attempt a landing is Myggbukta or Mosquito bay, where the legendary Governor of North East Greenland had his base. Originally a Norwegian whaling, radio and meteorological station, its Norwegian operation was short-lived and later handed over to the Danish and re-named as King Christian X Land. You will learn more about the history of the places we explore through the on-board lectures and shore briefings, given by our expert guides and lecturers.



Accommodation: M/S Spitsbergen (or similar)



Premium Boat



Single room available



Meals Provided: Breakfast, Lunch & Dinner

DAY 10 - Northeast Greenland National Park

We have one final day to explore this unspoilt wilderness, catching our last glimpse of rarely-visited glaciers, bays and inlets before we head across the Denmark Strait to Iceland.



Accommodation: M/S Spitsbergen (or similar)



Premium Boat



Single room available



Meals Provided: Breakfast, Lunch & Dinner

DAY 11 - Ittoqqortoormiit

In Ittoqqortoormiit you can visit the museum, church and a photo exhibition, or you can explore the settlement on your own. The trappers living in this town are the only people that are allowed to hunt within the Northeast Greenland National Park. You will probably see drying animal skins and their trusty dog sleds sitting outside their houses.



Accommodation: M/S Spitsbergen (or similar)



Premium Boat



Single room available



Meals Provided: Breakfast, Lunch & Dinner

DAY 12 - At Sea

As we leave Greenland, we sail towards the western coast of Iceland. There will be more informative lectures on board and some time to reflect on our voyage and to prepare for our return to civilisation.



Accommodation: M/S Spitsbergen (or similar)



Premium Boat



Single room available



Meals Provided: Breakfast, Lunch & Dinner

DAY 13 - Stykkisholmur

As we reach the west region of Iceland, you will quickly understand why this area is known as the Sagaland. Take your time to explore Stykkishólmur's diversity with lava and rock formations, glaciers, volcanic activity and hot and cold springs. Participate in a range of exciting excursions such as kayaking and hiking.



Accommodation: M/S Spitsbergen (or similar)



Premium Boat



Single room available



Meals Provided: Breakfast, Lunch & Dinner

DAY 14 - Reykjavik

Iceland's capital offers visitors a rich urban life. Relatively close to Reykjavik you will find glaciers, waterfalls, geysers and mountains. Reykjavik itself hosts fine restaurants, museums and shops and it is well worth extending your time here if you can. We will arrive in the morning hours and this is where our voyage ends.



Meals Provided: Breakfast

Polar information

Ship information

Named after the Arctic crown of Norway - the archipelago of Spitsbergen - the M Spitsbergen was built in 2009 and has recently undergone a complete reconstruction in 2015-16. The ship features high standards throughout and public areas and cabins are comfortable and spacious - offering a peaceful haven at the end of a busy day exploring the Arctic wilderness. There is ample outdoor deck space to view the passing scenery, or you can keep a watchful eye from the bright and airy lounge area with its large picture windows. Cabins are well equipped, all en-suite, and there are a variety of cabin types to choose from. The ship also offers some extra amenities such as a Jacuzzi and fitness room. The Scandinavian design is fresh and modern and the ship's manoeuvrability and optimal size, allows for easy navigation in polar waters.

What's included?



Included meals

Breakfast: 13
Lunch: 12
Dinner: 12



Transport

MS Fram
Zodiac



Trip staff

Expedition Crew
Naturalist(s)



Accommodation

12 nights premium boat
1 nights premium hotel

Trip information

Country information

Norway Trips

Climate

Seasonal Climate Despite the northern latitudes the climate in Norway is not extreme, due to the affects of the North Atlantic Drift. Between May and September is the best time to visit this region, with summer temperatures reaching the high teens and rain a regular feature year round along the coast. North of the Arctic Circle the sun does not set between the middle of May and the end of July, so you can expect to encounter the midnight sun during this period.

Time difference to GMT

+1

Plugs

2 Pin Round

Religion

Lutheranism

Language

Norwegian

Spitsbergen Holidays & Tours

Climate

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Time difference to GMT

+1

Plugs

2 Pin Round

Clothing

Pack comfortable, casual clothing for all activities. Wind and waterproof outer layers are essential, and a jacket is provided in the cost of the cruise. Beware of tight clothing that leaves no room for trapped air, which is an excellent insulator. Wool, silk and some of the new synthetic fibres, like polar fleece, retain heat better than cotton. Parkas A wind and waterproof jacket is provided as part of the cost of your holiday. Gloves Keeping your hands warm and dry can be a challenge. Thin polypropylene gloves can be worn underneath warm outergloves. This allows you some protection from the cold when removing your gloves to operate your camera etc. We strongly recommend that you bring more than one pair of gloves, in case one gets wet (or lost). Hat/Cap Warm, woollen hat/cap to protect your ears, as well as a scarf, neck gaiter or other face protection, such as a balaclava. Trousers Water-resistant trousers of coated nylon or, even better, Gore-Tex® are essential for your comfort. They can be worn over your regular clothes to keep you warm and dry. We suggest that you purchase trousers a few sizes larger than you normally wear as you will be wearing them over other clothing. Gore-Tex® or similar fabrics are excellent for keeping out wind and water without trapping excess heat. Rain gear and Gore-Tex® products can be found in any outdoor sport clothing store. In addition to your waterproof trousers, warm ski pants are suggested if you have them. Warm trousers such as jeans, corduroys etc are also good. Socks Warm wool socks worn over a thin pair of silk, polypropylene socks should provide enough warmth and insulation for your feet. Bring several pairs of socks, since you will inevitably get your feet wet. Outer Clothing Woollen, knit or cotton sweaters/tops, polar fleece tops (medium weight), several cotton turtlenecks and T-shirts for layering on and off the ship. Underclothing Thermal underwear is highly recommended as it will keep you warm without adding bulk. Most polar travellers prefer a lightweight version.

Footwear

Waterproof boots are available on-board, free of charge. Ensure that you take good walking boots with you and comfortable trainers or grip-type shoes, for relaxing on the ship and for when out on deck.

Luggage

20kg

Luggage: On tour

One main piece of baggage and daypack. Remember you are expected to carry your own luggage so don't overload yourself.

Equipment

Sunglasses and sun cream Personal toiletries A refillable water bottle Books/reading material Camera and memory cards (and something to protect the camera when out in the elements) Seasickness remedy Walking poles

Tipping

Local crew

Tipping is collected at the end of the voyage and is divided among the crew. Tipping is a very personal matter and the amount you wish to give is at your discretion, but as a generally guideline, we suggest US\$12 per person per day.

Country Information

Norway Trips

Food and drink

The costs for meals may vary depending upon location, type of restaurant and number of courses eaten and so the prices given are an average guide. Local restaurants located off the beaten track may be less expensive, whereas an upmarket restaurant located in the centre of a major city may charge more.

Dinner price
£35.00 - 40.00

Beer price
£6.00 - 8.00

Water price
£2.00 - 3.00

Foreign Exchange

Local currency

Norwegian Krona

Recommended Currency For Exchange

Take Norwegian Krona with you

Where To Exchange

Recommend you buy some Norwegian Krona before departing the UK (or whilst in transit in Oslo).

ATM Availability

ATMs are available in Myre and at Oslo and Evenes Airports.

Credit Card Acceptance

Credit cards are generally accepted at many hotels and optional excursions may be paid for by credit card.

Travellers Cheques

Not recommended.

Spitsbergen Holidays & Tours

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Transport, Accommodation & Meals

Transport Information

MS Fram, Zodiac

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Cabins

Lead-in prices are based on the use of inside category cabins. Category one cabins are based on twin share, with one upper and one lower bed. They are comfortable with a private toilet, shower and TV. The MS Spitsbergen has a number of different cabin categories, many of which are outside facing, with two beds (apart from superior cabins and suites, which have double beds). Some cabins have portholes and others, larger windows and sitting areas. All cabins are twin share, but we can also offer single occupancy at a supplement, if you are travelling alone. Call us for details on the cabin choice to fit your requirements.

Ship dining

On-board the ship all meals are included in the price of your expedition; a buffet breakfast and lunch, and set menu dinner; it's free seating for breakfast and lunch, and assigned for dinner. Vegetarians and some special dietary requirements can be accommodated with advance notice, please advise us at time of confirmation. Coffee and tea are provided free of charge. All other beverages, alcoholic and non-alcoholic, are not included and can be purchased in the bar.

Essential information

FCO Advice

We strongly recommend that you check your government's travel advisory for up-to-date information and advice about your destination: safety and security, entry requirements, health, local laws and customs. For UK Foreign and Commonwealth Office advice [click here](#).

For more information from Explore about travel advice, [click here](#)

Under 18 immigration guidance

Please note that some countries require proof of parental consent when travelling overseas with under 18s. Please check requirements with the relevant embassy or consular office well in advance of travel if this applies to your party.

Essential Information

Once your booking has been confirmed we guarantee the price will not increase, whatever the circumstances. Before booking please ensure you have read our important tour pricing information. [Booking Conditions](#)

Visa Information

Entry visas NOT required by UK, AUS, NZ, USA, CAN Citizens. Other nationalities should consult the relevant consulate. All visa information is subject to change. You should confirm all visa related issues with the relevant Embassy prior to departure.

If you do require assistance in obtaining a visa then you may consider applying through Explore's recommended visa service in the UK, Travcour. See www.travcour.com to download the relevant visa application for your trip, if applicable (UK citizens only), along with details of how to apply for your visa through Travcour. The Team at Travcour will be happy to answer specific questions relating to visa applications, please call them directly on 0208 5431846.

Booking conditions

Before booking your Explore trip, please ensure that you read both our Essential Information and Booking Conditions.

Transfers

[Find out more about Trip Transfer Terms and Conditions before you book.](#)

Booking a land only package with Explore

Customers who have chosen to book on the 'Land Only' arrangements of our tour, please ensure that you have checked your tour specific 'Joining Instructions' prior to booking your own travel arrangements. Your joining instructions can be found below in the dates and prices information.

You may also be eligible for the Free Explore Transfer.

Joining Tour Abroad

Customers booked on the 'Land Only' arrangements will now receive a Free Transfer, provided you arrive and depart on the tour only itinerary start and end dates. The transfers will be from the Explore designated airport or train station to the joining point of your tour, and then back from the ending point to the designated airport or train station. The exception to this rule is customers who are booked on a tour where the joining and ending point is at the designated airport or train station.

Free transfers are not available for Self-Guided, Tailormade or Tours for Churches customers.

If you are not eligible for the Free Transfer then you will need to make your own way through to the joining and ending point. On a majority of our tours Explore will be able to provide a private transfer at an additional cost. Please ask for a quote at the time of booking.

For more information regarding the Explore Free Transfer [click here](#)

Insurance

It is a condition of booking with Explore that you have adequate valid travel insurance. It is your responsibility to arrange appropriate travel insurance and ensure you have read and understood the full terms and conditions of your travel insurance policy to ensure that you are covered for all activities you intend to undertake whilst on the tour, including all optional activities. Your Insurance Policy must fully cover you for medical expenses and emergency repatriation to your home country. Please ensure

your policy includes medical emergency helicopter evacuation in the event of illness or injury and covers the entire duration of your holiday. If you are trekking at altitude please ensure that there is no upper altitude limit which may limit or exclude cover for your trip. Medical and repatriation insurance cover is not mandatory for UK residents who are travelling on trips within the United Kingdom.

Read more information about what travel insurance is required.

Flight information

Explore offers a wide range of flexible flying options to make joining and leaving our trips easy. [Read more about them here.](#)

Flight Information

You are able to book this tour on a 'land only' basis or as a 'flight inclusive' package. Your flight inclusive package will be fully protected by the Civil Aviation Authority (CAA) ATOL protection scheme.

Booking a flight inclusive package with Explore

We have a good selection of flights not only from London but from many regional airports around the UK allowing us to compare fares between scheduled carriers as well as low cost and charter airlines. Our dedicated flights team will match the best flight options to your arrival and departure airport.

On our website we display a UK flight inclusive package guide price which is generally based on a London departure. To avoid paying supplements or to secure your preferred flight option, we recommend booking as early as possible, especially for peak travel dates.

Norway Trips

Vaccinations

The above is not an exhaustive list. Further information regarding vaccinations and travel health advice can be found by following the NHS and NaTHNaC links at <http://www.explore.co.uk/Travelhealth/> and from your local healthcare provider.

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