

EXPLORE!



Northern Norway and Franz Josef Land - M/S Spitsbergen

NORWAY, SPITSBERGEN - TRIP CODE SPFJ

POLAR

Why book this trip?

Remote Franz Josef Land has always been a magnet for hardy adventurers. Now you can set foot on the ice where great explorers like Fridtjof Nansen and Hjalmar Johansen spent the winter. Watch for polar bears wandering in their natural environment and feel the cool Arctic air heading down from the North Pole, just a few miles away.

- Great chance of sighting walrus and polar bears as we sail north of the 80th parallel
- Enjoy a Russian experience in the port of Murmansk
- Opportunity to visit the North Cape



INCLUDED MEALS
 Breakfast: 14
 Lunch: 13
 Dinner: 13



TRIP STAFF
 Expedition Crew
 Naturalist(s)



TRANSPORT
 M/S Spitsbergen
 Zodiac



ACCOMMODATION
 14 nights premium boat



TRIP PACE:
 Relaxed

Itinerary

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

DAY 1 - Arrive Tromso, embark the MS Spitsbergen

Your Arctic adventure begins in Tromso, a starting point for many expeditions and trapper adventures. Spend time exploring Tromso, before embarking the MS Spitsbergen in the afternoon. Take the Fjellheisen Cable Car to the top of the Floyfjellet and enjoy breathtaking views of the city and fjords. For inspiration, you should also visit the Polar Museum and learn more about the history of the early explorers in this region.



ACCOMMODATION:
 M/S Spitsbergen (or similar)

Grade: Premium Boat



MEALS PROVIDED : NONE

DAY 2 - Soroya

Spend some time ashore on beautiful Soroya, the fourth largest island in Norway. Soroya has a great deal of wilderness and very few inhabitants. We will step ashore to visit one of the roadless fishing settlements or if weather permits, do some hiking in this relatively easy terrain, taking in some fantastic views along the way.





ACCOMMODATION:
M/S Spitsbergen (or similar)



Grade: Premium Boat



MEALS PROVIDED: BREAKFAST, LUNCH & DINNER

DAY 3 - Murmansk, Russia

Welcome to Russia. Murmansk is a young city, founded in 1916 and is the largest city found north of the Arctic Circle. The origins of Murmansk lie in the need for a northern sea port and it is the marine industry that still dominates today. We will make a short stop here before we head to sea, towards Franz Josef Land.



ACCOMMODATION:
M/S Spitsbergen (or similar)



Grade: Premium Boat



MEALS PROVIDED: BREAKFAST, LUNCH & DINNER

DAY 4 - At Sea

Our Expedition Team will prepare you for our landings ahead with a series of on-board lectures which will offer the chance to learn more about the history and wildlife of Franz Josef Land.



ACCOMMODATION:
M/S Spitsbergen (or similar)



Grade: Premium Boat



MEALS PROVIDED: BREAKFAST, LUNCH & DINNER

DAY 5 - At Sea

Keep a lookout for the first ice floes, as we sail further north. During your days at sea, you will have time to enjoy the ship facilities and relax in the Panorama Lounge, overlooking the Arctic vista.



ACCOMMODATION:
M/S Spitsbergen (or similar)

Grade: Premium Boat



MEALS PROVIDED: BREAKFAST, LUNCH & DINNER

DAY 6 - Exploring Franz Josef Land

We will spend five days exploring the world's northernmost archipelago. This is expedition sailing at its most authentic, as we discover rare beauty in the footsteps of great explorers of the past like Fridtjof Nansen. The final route and landing sites in this beautiful region, are heavily dependent on elements and our experienced captain will take advantage of the conditions at hand and seize opportunities to explore this frozen wilderness.



ACCOMMODATION:
M/S Spitsbergen (or similar)

Grade: Premium Boat



MEALS PROVIDED: BREAKFAST, LUNCH & DINNER

DAY 7 - Exploring Franz Josef Land

Fridtjof Nansen first arrived in Franz Josef Land to overwinter in September 1895. Cape Flora earns its name from the fertilization provided by thousands of sea birds that nest on the cliffs. This is an area with many Brunnichs guillemots and Black-legged kittiwakes. A frenzy of noise and activity can be heard and seen in the cliffs overhead - a fantastic site for both amateur and avid birdwatchers.



ACCOMMODATION:
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Grade: Premium Boat



MEALS PROVIDED: BREAKFAST, LUNCH & DINNER

DAY 8 - Exploring Franz Josef Land

At Bell Island, we find the remains of the oldest building on Franz Josef Land which was left by a British expedition in 1880. The island was named by the English explorer Benjamin Leigh Smith for its bell-shaped mountain and was among one of his first landing sites, during his 1880 expedition.



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Grade: Premium Boat



MEALS PROVIDED: BREAKFAST, LUNCH & DINNER

DAY 9 - Exploring Franz Josef Land

In Tikhaya Buchta on Hooker Island, a team of meteorologists from the Russian Sedov polar station had to survive from the beginning of the Second World War until 1945, all by themselves. The station was founded in 1929 and it was from here that meteorological observations were conducted to survey the ice cover, oceans and wildlife. The station eventually closed as a Polar research base in 1957 and today, houses the national Park Russian Arctic and Open-air Museum.



ACCOMMODATION:
M/S Spitsbergen (or similar)

Grade: Premium Boat



MEALS PROVIDED: BREAKFAST, LUNCH & DINNER

DAY 10 - Exploring Franz Josef Land

It is likely that the Pomors or Norwegian sealers knew of Franz Josef Land, but the first recorded landing amongst the 192 islands which make up the archipelago, was made in 1873 from the sailing vessel Admiral Tegetthoff. They found wide beaches, steep cliffs with nesting sea birds attended by arctic foxes, polar bears and walrus. We hope to find much of the same during our time here. The exact sequence and choice of landings will be decided by the captain, ensuring that we make the most of the ice and weather conditions so that we maximise our time on land.



ACCOMMODATION:
M/S Spitsbergen (or similar)

Grade: Premium Boat



MEALS PROVIDED: BREAKFAST, LUNCH & DINNER

DAY 11 - Crossing the Barents Sea

Willem Barents was an explorer searching for the Northeast Passage. For the next two days we will cross the sea named after him. As we sail across the Barents Sea, it is a chance to relax after all the recent activity and enjoy the ship facilities.



ACCOMMODATION:
M/S Spitsbergen (or similar)

Grade: Premium Boat



MEALS PROVIDED: BREAKFAST, LUNCH & DINNER

DAY 12 - Crossing the Barents Sea

Enjoy informative talks from the Expedition Team as we head back south, setting a course for Murmansk.



ACCOMMODATION:

M/S Spitsbergen (or similar)

Grade: Premium Boat



MEALS PROVIDED: BREAKFAST, LUNCH & DINNER

DAY 13 - Return to Murmansk

We return to Murmansk and will have a full day to explore the city further. Overlooking the port, is a huge memorial to Russian soldiers and beyond, is the Saviour on the Waters church - part of a memorial complex which is dedicated to the memory of Murmansk's seamen. Just below the complex, is part of the ill-fated submarine Kursk.



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Grade: Premium Boat



MEALS PROVIDED: BREAKFAST, LUNCH & DINNER

DAY 14 - Skarsvag

Skarsvåg claims to be the world's northernmost fishing village. Join the optional excursion to the North Cape and feel what it's like to stand at the end of the Earth. At the plateau, you can learn more about the North Cape and see a panoramic film that takes you through the four seasons in this breathtaking scenery.



ACCOMMODATION:
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Grade: Premium Boat



MEALS PROVIDED: BREAKFAST, LUNCH & DINNER

DAY 15 - Arrive Tromso

Every great explorer's voyage comes to an end. We have travelled where very few have before, to the very top of the globe and just a few hundred miles from the Geographical North Pole. You will disembark the ship after breakfast - enjoy some time in Tromso, before your onward flight home.



MEALS PROVIDED : BREAKFAST

Trip information

Country information

Norway

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	Plugs	Religion	Language
+1	2 Pin Round	Lutheranism	Norwegian

Spitsbergen

Climate

Between May and September is the best time to visit this region, with summer temperatures reaching a maximum of 5 degrees centigrade. 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	Plugs
+1	2 Pin Round

Budgeting and packing

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.

Norway

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.

Lunch price	Dinner price	Beer price	Water price
£18.00 - 25.00	£35.00 - 40.00	£6.00 - 8.00	£2.00 - 3.00

Foreign Exchange

Local currency	Recommended Currency For Exchange
Norwegian Krona	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

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	Beer price	Water price
£35.00-40.00	£6.00-8.00	£2.00-3.00

Foreign Exchange

Transport, Accommodation & Meals

Transport Information

M/S Spitsbergen, Zodiac

Ship description

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.

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.

Price Guarantee

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 and Passport Information

Norway: Entry visas NOT required by UK, AUS, NZ, USA, CAN Citizens. Other nationalities should consult the relevant consulate.

Russia: All nationalities require a single entry visa in order to enter Russia. As part of the visa requirements you will need to obtain a Russian Travel Voucher and Authorisation from the local Russian authorities. Explore will request this on your behalf approximately 8 weeks prior to departure. Please allow a minimum of 5 working days for the travel voucher and authorisation to be processed. Due to the visa processing times, Explore are unable to accept bookings within one month of travel.

For British passport holders: All applicants must present themselves in person to the Russia Visa Processing Centre in London, Manchester or Edinburgh, on the day of application, to provide biometric information (fingerprints). There is currently no appointment system in place for this new process, so applicants will be seen on a first come, first serve basis. It is likely this will mean lengthy queues and waiting times. The biometric process is not optional, and any applicant who refuses to provide their fingerprints will automatically be refused a visa. This information is not stored and applicants will therefore need to travel to the Processing Centre each time a visa is required. In the event an application is rejected due to inaccurate or incomplete information, fingerprints must be resubmitted as part of the revised application. For more information regarding this process - we recommend contacting the Russian Embassy direct, their website is <http://rusemb.org.uk/visa/>

It is essential that you provide Explore with the correct passport information at the time of booking, as this will be required in order to request the travel voucher and letter of invite, as well as pre-book any applicable train tickets. Corrections and amendments will incur additional charges, so please double check that the information we have for you is up to date and correct, this includes your passport number, full name as per passport (including middle names), date of birth and place of birth; if customers renew or reissue their passports from the details initially given to Explore, train tickets must be cancelled and purchased again, which involves extra costs and may result in customers being in differing train carriages to the rest of the group. If you intend to renew your passport please let Explore know at the point of

booking and please ensure that you have the new passport no later than 8 weeks prior to travel.

You will be required to enter a reference number and a confirmation number on your visa application. These can be found at the top of your authorisation letter under the heading 'Voucher Number'. The 6 digit long number is the reference and the 4 digit number is the confirmation number.

In order for Explore to provide the necessary documentation to support your visa application (i.e. your visa authorisation), all pre and post tour accommodation must be booked through Explore and not booked independently.

Please ensure that your passport has a minimum of 6 months validity from the date of return to your home country.

All visa information is subject to change regularly, so please check with your local consulate for the most up to date advice for the countries you are visiting. All other nationalities should check with the Russian embassy.

For nationalities that require proof of their travel insurance through Explore as part of their visa application, please contact us for a copy of this.

If you do require assistance in obtaining a visa then you may be able to apply 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.

It is your responsibility to ensure that you are in possession of a full passport, with the correct validity for your chosen destination.

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 complimentary transfers will be arranged from the Explore designated airport or train station to your trips joining point, and then back from the

ending point to the designated airport or train station. Generally the airport or station that Explore have selected will be the one that is closest to the town or city where the trip starts, or the one nearest to the joining point. It will be either an airport or train station but not both.

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, Polar, 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. The cost of many of our Polar Voyages will exceed the capped amount covered by standard insurance premiums and you will be required to pay an additional premium to cover the full value of your trip. Please ensure that you are covered for the full amount of your holiday cost, as insufficient cover could invalidate a claim under the policy. 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

Vaccinations

Please check the latest requirements with your travel clinic or doctor prior to departure. 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 Explore Travel Health and from your local healthcare provider. Visa and vaccination requirements are subject to change and should be confirmed by you before travelling.

Spitsbergen

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.



**AWARD WINNING
EXPLORE LEADERS**



**PRICE GUARANTEE
PROMISE**



**AIRPORT
TRANSFERS**