



Scotland, Norwegian Fjords & Spitsbergen - Expedition

ARCTIC, NORWAY, SPITSBERGEN, UNITED KINGDOM - TRIP CODE ENS

POLAR

Why book this trip?

Set sail from Scotland, enjoying its beautiful isles en route to the Norwegian fjords and the remote shores of Svalbard. On this dazzling 15-day odyssey across the Norwegian Sea, walk across the glaciers that carved these stunning landscapes, explore subarctic islands by Zodiac in search of polar bears, and walk through history at UNESCO-protected sites on the coast of Norway.

- Sail beneath Norway's dramatic fjords - enjoy incredible glaciers and mountain scenery
- Enjoy UNESCO - protected sites - such as Skara Brae and the Lofoten Islands
- Get a taste of the high Arctic - travel to the heart of Spitsbergen and the land of the polar bear



INCLUDED MEALS
 Breakfast: 14
 Lunch: 13
 Dinner: 14

TRIP STAFF
 Expedition Crew
 Naturalist(s)

TRANSPORT
 Expedition 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 - Join trip in Edinburgh

Arrive in Edinburgh, Scotland's Royal capital and home to an extraordinary range of medieval and classical Georgian architecture. You will need to make your own way to the downtown hotel. Please make sure that you arrive here by 1pm, as luggage will be transferred separately to the ship. You will have a few hours to explore central Edinburgh before meeting back at the hotel at 3 pm to join the group transfer to the Port of Leith. The Expedition will depart in the evening, sailing down the Firth of Forth.



ACCOMMODATION:
 Expedition (or similar)

Grade: Premium Boat



MEALS PROVIDED: DINNER

DAY 2 - Orkney Islands

Visit historic and mystical sites by coach on this remote island. Explore the Standing Stones of Stenness, the intriguing Ring of Brodgar, and the village of Skara Brae. There are few places in the world that offer as much as the Orkneys. Only six miles off the coast of Scotland, the islands are famous for their

abundant marine bird life and dramatic coastal scenery. Enjoy an afternoon to explore the ancient history of the people of these Scottish Isles.



ACCOMMODATION:
Expedition (or similar)

Grade: Premium Boat



MEALS PROVIDED: BREAKFAST, LUNCH & DINNER

DAY 3 - Shetland Islands

Continue northwards to the remote Shetland Islands. Opt to visit Jarlshof or join the Puffin Bus to focus on puffins and seabird photography at Sumbrugh Head (weather dependent). Enjoy additional time to explore Lerwick. The Shetland archipelago is an engaging mix of Scotland and Scandinavia blessed with spectacular coastlines, varied and abundant birdlife and a number of archaeological sites that date back thousands of years.



ACCOMMODATION:
Expedition (or similar)

Grade: Premium Boat



MEALS PROVIDED: BREAKFAST, LUNCH & DINNER

DAY 4 - Olden Fjord

Cruise into the Olden Fjord before a short bus ride to the Birksdal area. Enjoy a moderate hike to Briksdalbreen glacier or take a trolley ride with a shorter walk to make it to the glacier lake. On the longer hike, for the first 20-30 mins the grade is uphill (moderate to strenuous) but the footing is easy. If you'd rather not make the trek, hop on the trolley to take you most of the way. As you approach, you'll need to walk the last quarter mile to reach the glacier lake but the views are worth the effort !



ACCOMMODATION:
Expedition (or similar)

Grade: Premium Boat



MEALS PROVIDED: BREAKFAST, LUNCH & DINNER

DAY 5 - Geiranger Fjord

Sail deep into one of Norway's most beautiful and most visited fjords. Enjoy a coach tour to Dalsnibba, soaking up the views at this UNESCO World Heritage site. For the more adventurous, opt for a 10km mountain hike exploring the area and taking in incredible views of the fjord from above. The fjord is 15 km long, surrounded by spectacular mountains, lush green trees, waterfalls, and several farms. Have a camera ready for some spectacular photo opportunities.



ACCOMMODATION:
Expedition (or similar)

Grade: Premium Boat



MEALS PROVIDED: BREAKFAST, LUNCH & DINNER

DAY 6 - Trondheim

We continue on to Trondheim, a modern city surrounded by beautiful forests and mountains and is home to the remarkable Nidaros Cathedral. Built over the burial site of Saint Olav, the king of Norway in the 11th century, Nidaos Cathedral is the traditional location for the consecration of the king of Norway. Choose between taking an afternoon hike to the Sverresborg Folk Museum, or enjoy a city tour including the Folk Museum and the elaborate Cathedral, built between 1070 and 1300.



ACCOMMODATION:
Expedition (or similar)

Grade: Premium Boat



MEALS PROVIDED: BREAKFAST, LUNCH & DINNER

DAY 7 - Torghatten and Vega

The rugged coastline of central Norway features some of the world's most beautiful scenery. The captain will liaise with local Norwegian pilots to determine our best landing options. Our aim is to visit Torghatten, one of the most bizarre rock formations in Norway and a significant local landmark. We will also try to cruise by ship and Zodiac, through the Treana archipelago, comprising of over a thousand tiny islands. Our on-board photography expert will be on hand to ensure that you make the most of the photographic opportunities found in this area. In the afternoon, we will head to the quaint and picturesque Vega Island, a listed UNESCO site. You will have time to wander through the picturesque fishing villages and appreciate the slow pace of life found here. This region is also renowned for its eider down harvesting.



ACCOMMODATION:
Expedition (or similar)

Grade: Premium Boat



MEALS PROVIDED: BREAKFAST, LUNCH & DINNER

DAY 8 - Svartisen and Vikingen

Today we visit Svartisen and Vikingen, where we will enjoy beautiful glaciers and a globe sculpture which marks Vikingen as a point directly on the Arctic Circle. Svartisen is Norway's second largest glacier and water collected here is used for hydropower. Here, we hope to enjoy a scenic walk up to a glacier before continuing onto Vikingen. Our last stop of the day will be Sanna, a remote island that offers great walking opportunities and a chance to see some sea eagles.



ACCOMMODATION:
Expedition (or similar)

Grade: Premium Boat



MEALS PROVIDED: BREAKFAST, LUNCH & DINNER

DAY 9 - Lofoten Islands

The Lofoten archipelago is an enchanting area of picturesque villages, backed with jagged peaks which are perched by the sea. Go ashore via coach on the island of A, where cod fishing is still a major part of

the economy. There will be a chance to visit the Torrfiskmuseum (Stockfish museum) before a bus tour across the Lofoten Islands to Svolvær. We will stop here for photos and other interest points along the way, including the Viking Museum at Bostad. In the evening, stay on deck as you cruise into one of Norway's most famous fjords, the short yet dramatic Trollfjord. Search the cliffs on your continuing quest to spot trolls.



ACCOMMODATION:
Expedition (or similar)



Grade: Premium Boat



MEALS PROVIDED: BREAKFAST, LUNCH & DINNER

DAY 10 - Explore Tromsø

Today we arrive in Tromsø. Explore this northern haven and be sure to visit the Arctic Cathedral, whose unique architecture is evocative of snow and icebergs and its stained glass windows are among the largest in Europe. Tromsø, the capital of northern Norway, is known as the 'Gateway to the Arctic' since so many Arctic expeditions originated from here. Choose between hiking on the mountain top overlooking Tromsø, or wandering through the city's streets before taking a cable car to the mountain top. Enjoy a delicious lunch of traditional open-faced sandwiches while gazing over the city. Everyone will have the chance to visit some of the major sites, including the Polar and Tromsø Museums and weather permitting, enjoy a stunning view from a cable car.



ACCOMMODATION:
Expedition (or similar)



Grade: Premium Boat



MEALS PROVIDED: BREAKFAST, LUNCH & DINNER

DAY 11 - At Sea

Sail past Bear Island. Even from afar, Bear island offers spectacular views, with thousands of bird species such as fulmars, kittiwakes, guillemots and gulls. Weather permitting, there may be an opportunity to explore mist-shrouded Bjørnøya by Zodiac - a birdwatcher's paradise. The weather is temperamental, so the option of a landing is not guaranteed.



ACCOMMODATION:
Expedition (or similar)



Grade: Premium Boat



MEALS PROVIDED: BREAKFAST, LUNCH & DINNER

DAY 12 - Hornsund

Explore the natural beauty of Hornsund and take advantage of the spectacular photo opportunities, as we explore by Zodiac. This scenic archipelago is made up of deep fjords, mountains and massive ice sheets. Keep your eyes peeled for walruses, seals, reindeer, Arctic foxes and of course, polar bears.



ACCOMMODATION:
Expedition (or similar)



Grade: Premium Boat



MEALS PROVIDED: BREAKFAST, LUNCH & DINNER

DAY 13 - Hornsund and Bellsund, Svalbard

Soak up the sights and sounds of Svalbard. Our focus is searching for wildlife, with a variety of sea and land mammals, as well as birdlife, calling this region home. Our flexible itinerary and experience allows us to take the best advantage of ice and weather conditions. Each season we attempt to discover new landing sites to explore, thus enhancing your expedition experience. Shore walks and Zodiac adventures bring us up close to mystical landscapes, icebergs, and of course the magical wildlife.



ACCOMMODATION:
Expedition (or similar)



Grade: Premium Boat



DAY 14 - Svalbard

Today, we will have a full day to enjoy this glacial wilderness. We will cruise by Zodiac amongst ice floes, where we may encounter some lounging walrus with their young. If we're lucky, we may also catch a glimpse of an Arctic fox roaming the tundra, whilst we head out on a shore landing. At all times, we will of course keep our eyes peeled for the King of the Arctic, the mighty polar bear.



ACCOMMODATION:
Expedition (or similar)

Grade: Premium Boat



MEALS PROVIDED: BREAKFAST, LUNCH & DINNER

DAY 15 - Trip ends in Longyearbyen

The trip ends after breakfast on board the ship at approximately 8am.

There are no activities planned today, so you are free to depart at any time and you will receive a complimentary transfer at the end of your trip. For those on morning flights, a transfer will take you directly to Longyearbyen Airport (LYR). For those on later flights, you will be transferred to the luggage storage point at the Radisson Blu Polar Hotel and given time to explore the town, before being transferred to the airport later in the day to meet onward flight schedules. Transfer times will be confirmed and communicated on board the ship, prior to disembarkation. Luggage storage at the Radisson Blu Polar Hotel will be available until the time of departure.

Due to restrictive airline schedules of flights departing Longyearbyen, we are pleased to offer an early morning disembarkation and transfer to the airport for any passengers with flights departing Longyearbyen around 2.30am (depending on airline schedules).



MEALS PROVIDED: BREAKFAST

Trip information

Arctic

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

United Kingdom

Climate

The UK has a temperate but very variable climate. In general the summers are warm with July and August being the warmest. The winters are cool and the lowest temperatures are recorded during January and February. Whatever the season it is advisable to be prepared for rain!

Time difference to GMT	Plugs	Religion	Language
0	3 Pin Flat	Christian	English

Budgeting and packing

Clothing

Parkas

These will be provided by the ship operator. Please register your size with us before travel and we will arrange for your parka to be available in your cabin on arrival.

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

Complimentary, used waterproof boots will be supplied onboard. However, guests might want to bring their own if they are the following sizes due to the limited quantities onboard:

- men's UK size 12 & 13 1/2
- women's UK size below three & seven and above

Guests must bring their own if they are:

- men's UK size six 1/2 or smaller
- men's UK size 13 1/2 or larger
- women's UK size two or smaller
- women's UK size nine 1/2 or larger

These are rubber, waterproof boots that are just below your knees with a strong, ridged non-skid sole. You usually have to step from the Zodiac into icy water up to 30 cm high on most landings. Do not bring heavy, cumbersome boots that make it difficult to walk or boots with metal cleats as they cannot be used for landings. For maximum warmth, wear loose-fitting boots and two pairs of socks. Try out your boots before the voyage.

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
Personal First Aid

Tipping

Local crew

Tipping is of considerable significance to the people who will take care of you during your travels. It is an expression of satisfaction. The 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 among the crew and Expedition Staff. The Officers choose not to participate in the tipping pool.

Arctic

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.

Foreign Exchange

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

United Kingdom

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
£10	£18	£4	£0.8

Foreign Exchange

Local currency	Recommended Currency For Exchange
Pounds Sterling.	Carry a combination of UK Sterling cash, ATM and credit cards.

Where To Exchange

Your tour leader will advise you on arrival.

ATM Availability

ATM's are widely available in main towns.

Credit Card Acceptance

Widely accepted.

Travellers Cheques

Can be exchanged at most banks and post offices.

Transport, Accommodation & Meals**Transport Information**

Expedition, Zodiac

Ship description

At a nimble 105 metres (345 ft) in length, with a capacity to hold 132 guests, the Expedition is an ideal vessel to ply polar waters. The ship is large enough to provide stability, speed, spacious cabins and ample public space, yet she is small enough to manoeuvre in remote areas and get you close to the action. Ship stabilizers ensure a smooth ride in rough waters, such as the infamous Drake Passage enroute to the Antarctic, allowing you to enjoy more of your time at sea. A fleet of ten zodiacs allows passengers to get out and actively explore the remote shores of our destinations. The Expedition is a speedy vessel. A top speed of 16 knots means you'll spend less time getting from A to B, and more time to explore your surroundings.

Cabins

The lead-in prices on our website are based on outward facing, category one cabins on the lower deck. Category one cabins are triple or quad share. They are comfortable with a private toilet and shower, and porthole. The Expedition has a number of different cabin categories, ranging from quads, twins and suites - all are outside facing, with two beds (apart from the suites which have queen size beds). Some cabins have larger windows, depending on your cabin grade. We can also offer single occupancy at a supplement which will be subject to availability at the time of booking. A full layout of the deck plan can be found under the Polar Ships section on our website. Your confirmed cabin type will appear on your Booking Confirmation which will be sent on receipt of your deposit payment.

Essential Information**Government Travel Safety 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, Commonwealth & Development 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

All visa information is subject to change. You should confirm all visa related issues with the relevant Embassy prior to departure.

For Norway entry visas are not required for UK, AUS, NZ, CAN, USA citizens. Other nationalities should consult the relevant consulate.

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 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.

Arctic

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

United Kingdom

Vaccinations

Nothing compulsory, we recommend protection against tetanus, diphtheria, polio and hepatitis A. 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. Visa and vaccination requirements are subject to change and should be confirmed before departure.

Polar information

Ship information

At a nimble 105 metres (345 ft) in length, with a capacity to hold 132 guests, the Expedition is an ideal vessel to ply polar waters. The ship is large enough to provide stability, speed, spacious cabins and ample public space, yet she is small enough to manoeuvre in remote areas and get you close to the action. Ship stabilizers ensure a smooth ride in rough waters, such as the infamous Drake Passage enroute to the Antarctic, allowing you to enjoy more of your time at sea. A fleet of ten zodiacs allows passengers to get out and actively explore the remote shores of our destinations. The Expedition is a speedy vessel. A top speed of 16 knots means you'll spend less time getting from A to B, and more time to explore your surroundings.

Reviews
