

# EXPLORE!



## Why book this trip?

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This voyage combines Spitsbergen and Greenland, with a taste of Iceland. Enjoy Spitsbergen's rugged east coast, crossing a major polar bear migration route as we search out bears on the moss-laden tundra. While crossing the icy waters of the Greenland Sea, our onboard experts will share their knowledge of the region's plants, animals and history, preparing you for your landings. Greenland's remote east coast shows off the immensity of the icecap, fantastic icebergs and a fairytale landscape of granite spires rising 1000 m above exquisite fjords. Enjoy the local culture and look forward to a warm welcome as we visit remote Inuit settlements along the way.

- **Experience complete wilderness** - in remote Northeast Greenland
- **Arctic highlights** - experience three Arctic regions in one voyage
- **Sail to the Land of Ice and Fire** - Iceland



**INCLUDED MEALS**  
 Breakfast: 14  
 Lunch: 13  
 Dinner: 14



**TRIP STAFF**  
 Expedition Crew  
 Naturalist(s)



**TRANSPORT**  
 M/V Greg Mortimer  
 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 - Arrival Kirkenes

Arrive in Kirkenes, Norway and join a pre-arranged half day excursion or activity prior to boarding the MV Greg Mortimer late afternoon. Airport transfers will be included if arriving on preferred flights into Kirkenes. You'll have time to settle into your cabin before our important briefings.



**ACCOMMODATION:**  
 M/V Greg Mortimer (or similar)

**Grade: Premium Boat**



**MEALS PROVIDED: DINNER**

### DAY 2 - At Sea

Over the next two days at sea, enjoy informative and entertaining lectures from our expert expedition team including naturalists and historians before reaching Svalbard's southeast coast.





ACCOMMODATION:  
M/V Greg Mortimer (or similar)



Grade: Premium Boat



MEALS PROVIDED: BREAKFAST, LUNCH & DINNER

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### DAY 3 - At sea

More informative lectures on board, as we edge closer to Svalbard.



ACCOMMODATION:  
M/V Greg Mortimer (or similar)



Grade: Premium Boat



MEALS PROVIDED: BREAKFAST, LUNCH & DINNER

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### DAY 4 - East coast of Svalbard and Hinlopen Strait

As the Greg Mortimer passes between Spitsbergen and the smaller islands of Barentsøya and Edgeøya, we cross a major polar bear migration route and the beautiful fertile plains of Sundeneset. The spongy ground is richly covered with bright green mosses, a variety of delicate and colourful flowers, particularly the yellow marsh (bog) saxifrage, various mushrooms, fungi, clear bubbling streams and small tarns. Tiny (micro) flowers such as Mouse Ears grow in Spitsbergen creating faerie like mossy rock gardens. We look for polar bears hunting on pack ice and we may explore this beautiful terrain on foot, marvelling at the contrast between the colourful soft ground and the barren, rocky terrain from further north. Reindeer antlers lie scattered along the ground.

If conditions allow we will pass through the narrow Hinlopen Strait. The strait is flanked by creamy coloured slabs of rock that are rich in fossils. We may visit Alkefjellet in the Strait, where a series of one-hundred-metre-high dolerite towers are home to nearly a million nesting Brünnich's guillemots - the penguins of the north - that occupy every available nook and cranny. Elsewhere we seek out eider ducks and geese, and hope to spot walrus, Arctic fox and the beautiful ivory gulls.



ACCOMMODATION:  
M/V Greg Mortimer (or similar)



**Grade: Premium Boat**



MEALS PROVIDED: BREAKFAST, LUNCH & DINNER

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### **DAY 5 - Cross the Greenland Sea**

As we cruise west across the Greenland Sea - the main outlet of the Arctic Ocean - we may encounter whales feeding in the productive waters of the north. Sightings of fin whales are common and blue whales have been seen in more recent years. As we begin to approach Greenland we will likely encounter the East Greenland pack ice, and if we are lucky we will see polar bears hunting for prey. The strong icy currents have isolated East Greenland from the Polar Basin, attracting large numbers of fish, seals and whales. Climatic conditions and the concentration of ice in the vicinity often create thick morning fog that vanishes with the onset of the midday sun. Our experts will inform and entertain us with fascinating discussions on plants, animals, ice, and early explorers like Nansen, Andree and Scoresby.



ACCOMMODATION:  
M/V Greg Mortimer (or similar)



**Grade: Premium Boat**



MEALS PROVIDED: BREAKFAST, LUNCH & DINNER

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### **DAY 6 - Cross the Greenland Sea**

Conditions permitting, we may even have the opportunity to make our first landing on the Greenland coast, if the weather allows. This stretch of coastline is ripe for exploration, with its many secrets locked in place by drift ice for up to eight months each year. Home to polar bear, snowy owl and musk ox, it's the world's largest national park, covering 972,000 square kilometres; most of which is inland ice and the rest a composite fjord landscape.



ACCOMMODATION:  
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**Grade: Premium Boat**



MEALS PROVIDED: BREAKFAST, LUNCH & DINNER

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### **DAY 7 - East Coast of Greenland and Kaiser Franz Joseph Fjord system**

We will attempt to enter Kejsler Franz Josef Fjord, a remote and rarely visited fjord system with countless opportunities for exploration that lies within the North East Greenland National Park. Ashore, cosy trappers' huts beckon from across the tundra, where musk ox, Arctic fox and eider ducks roam. These are just some of the delights found in this area.



ACCOMMODATION:  
M/V Greg Mortimer (or similar)

Grade: Premium Boat



MEALS PROVIDED: BREAKFAST, LUNCH & DINNER

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### **DAY 8 - East Coast of Greenland and Kaiser Franz Joseph Fjord system**

Landing sites may include Cape Humboldt, a beautiful bay on Ymer Island. There is a good chance to take a tundra walk and witness musk oxen graze. We

will also keep a lookout for Arctic fox and ptarmigan. Cruising through Kong Oskar Fjord, we will marvel at the geological beauty of the mountains. We will then head south

along the coast of Liverpool Land, with our passage dependent on ice conditions.



ACCOMMODATION:  
M/V Greg Mortimer (or similar)

Grade: Premium Boat



MEALS PROVIDED: BREAKFAST, LUNCH & DINNER

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### **DAY 9 - East Coast of Greenland and Kaiser Franz Joseph Fjord system**

In Scoresbysund, the world's biggest fjord, the vast Greenland icecap sweeps down in massive glaciers that calve explosively, creating giant icebergs. Sydkap in Scoresby Sund offers good walking and delightful views across the sound.



ACCOMMODATION:  
M/V Greg Mortimer (or similar)

Grade: Premium Boat



MEALS PROVIDED: BREAKFAST, LUNCH & DINNER

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### **DAY 10 - East Coast of Greenland and Kaiser Franz Joseph Fjord system**

Near Rode Island, our Zodiacs weave through a maze of grounded icebergs, some more than 30-metres high, sculpted with deep green tunnels and aquamarine lakes.



ACCOMMODATION:  
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Grade: Premium Boat



MEALS PROVIDED: BREAKFAST, LUNCH & DINNER

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### **DAY 11 - Scoresbysund and Volquart Boons Coast**

These days will be expeditionary days, exploring the East Greenland coast. Much of the region is uncharted territory and depending on weather and timing we'll venture south exploring the bays and fjords, looking for new points of interest and places to land. At Ittoqqortoormiit, we'll enjoy a warm welcome from the Inuit people who are happy to share their culture, relaying stories of old.



ACCOMMODATION:  
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Grade: Premium Boat



MEALS PROVIDED: BREAKFAST, LUNCH & DINNER

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## DAY 12 - Scoresbysund and Volquart Boons Coast

Scoresbysund offers many opportunities for walking cruising and kayaking so we will spend our days exploring the land, the ice and the sea.



ACCOMMODATION:  
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Grade: Premium Boat



MEALS PROVIDED: BREAKFAST, LUNCH & DINNER

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## DAY 13 - Scoresbysund and Volquart Boons Coast

Sail south along the Blossville Coast, search for musk ox and narwhals and marvel at the mountain scenery that dominates the skyline. If weather permits, we head for Romer Fjord, a deep waterway with stunning mountain views.



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Grade: Premium Boat



MEALS PROVIDED: BREAKFAST, LUNCH & DINNER

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## DAY 14 - Sail the Denmark Strait towards Iceland

As we sail across the Denmark Strait towards Iceland, there will be plenty of time to reflect on our rich experiences, whilst enjoying the flying antics of northern fulmars and black-backed gulls. If we are lucky, we may also spot dolphins, orcas and other whales, as we enter their feeding grounds.



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Grade: Premium Boat



MEALS PROVIDED: BREAKFAST, LUNCH & DINNER

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### **DAY 15 - Arrive Reykjavik**

Arrive early morning in Reykjavik. After breakfast, bid farewell to your fellow expeditioners before your coach transfer to downtown Reykjavik or the airport. Due to departure flight schedules out of Reykjavik, we recommend that passengers stay overnight in Reykjavik before continuing with your onward international travel arrangements.



MEALS PROVIDED: BREAKFAST

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## **Trip information**

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### **Country information**

Arctic

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### **Budgeting and packing**

#### **Optional activities**

The following excursions and/or activities are usually available and may be arranged locally. Estimated costs are provided below for guidance only, are on a per person basis unless shown otherwise, and may depend on the number of participants. Prices quoted are correct as of the date these tour notes were originally issued but may change at any time due to currency fluctuations. Please note: These activities are booked and paid for direct with the supplier and do not form part of your Explore holiday contract.

Whilst landings are included in the cost of your trip as per the outline itinerary, some departures aboard the MV Greg Mortimer have additional optional excursions which can be pre-booked with the ship operator directly. These will be charged at an additional fee, depending on the excursion and we recommend booking these in advance to ensure availability. Please speak to a member of our Polar team who will advise you on the booking process.

### **Clothing**



## Parkas

A complimentary parka is provided for you on board the ship and is yours to keep after the voyage. It has a comfortable wind-resistant inner jacket, which is detachable from the waterproof outer shell, and is designed to be worn over your essential base layers.

## 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 waterproof boots will be supplied on-board. However, if you have extra small or large feet, you are advised to bring your own. Also ensure you take good walking boots and trainers for relaxing.

## 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

Insect repellent

Personal toiletries

A refillable water bottle  
Books/reading material  
Camera and memory cards  
Seasickness remedy

## 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 \$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.

## 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

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## Transport, Accommodation & Meals

### Transport Information

M/V Greg Mortimer, Zodiac

### Ship description

The MV Greg Mortimer is a 104-metre ship, purpose-built in 2019 for expedition travel. Capable of negotiating the strongest winds and waves, the vessel is being built to world-class polar standards and has been designed in close consultation with expedition specialists. The MV Greg Mortimer is limited to just 120 passengers and guests can enjoy some added comforts such as spacious stateroom cabins, a large mud room with easy boarding access and a hydraulic viewing platform, offering unobstructed views of the wildlife. Other features include a library, Wellness Centre with a gym, sauna and spa and a multimedia room for keen photographers wishing to edit their photos after a day of exploration. As a modern and custom-designed ship, this vessel is at the cutting edge of nautical technology and will ensure a comfortable and safe passage through polar waters.

### Cabins

The lead-in prices on our website are based on triple outward facing, Stateroom cabins. All staterooms have private bathrooms, ample storage, with twin beds. Many of the stateroom categories, have floor to

ceiling windows that offer prime observation opportunities around the clock. Additionally, there are private balconies in most of the staterooms, allowing you to watch the world float past and take in the salty air of the open ocean. 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.

## Ship dining

Meals are served in the large, spacious dining room with an open seating arrangement, perfect for swapping stories with your extended expedition family. A range of courses is offered at each meal time and you can enjoy a variety of house wines, beers and soft drinks which are included with your evening meal. Complimentary coffee, tea and snacks are available throughout the day and any additional drinks can be purchased at the fully-stocked bar.

On the last day of your trip, the team on the MV Greg Mortimer will provide a special farewell four-course

## Food and drink

Here are the average costs of drinks, in USD, on board - please bear in mind, they are subject to change:

Bottle of wine - from \$12

Bottle of beer - from \$3

Spirits (gin, whisky, vodka, port, rum) - from \$5

Cocktails - from \$5.50

Soft drinks (fizzy, fruit juice and water) - from \$2.50

There is no internet access on board our ships, however you can pay to send and receive emails (no attachments). On the Polar Pioneer, the prices start from approximately 20 US cents per one kilobyte.

Wi-fi access is available for laptops, with an email account set up for US\$5, with the same downloadending fees.

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## 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.

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](http://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.

## Arctic

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### Polar information

#### Ship information

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