

# EXPLORE!

**West and Southern Greenland to Iceland - M/S Fram**  
18 days

Greenland, Iceland - Trip code FRGI



## West and Southern Greenland to Iceland - M/S Fram

Join us for a very exciting expedition in polar waters and experience Arctic highlights as well as the heart of Greenland - in the area of Disko Bay.

From Iceland, we continue to rarely visited southern Greenland, and then onwards to the highlights of Disko Bay. Greenland's arctic wilderness offers some of the most spectacular and unspoilt scenery found on earth. It is the largest island on the planet, and its frozen coastline has witnessed the birth of some of nature's most breathtaking creations. Here the struggle for survival has imbued local culture with a healthy respect for the environment.

See this unique interaction of man and nature first hand, as we sail through a landscape rich in culture, history and spectacular wildlife, towards the northern lands of the midnight sun. This expedition was designed to introduce you to the amazing variety of Greenland; from wonders of nature, to small villages and larger towns. Experience Greenland's fascinating culture, historical sites from the Viking era, and enjoy the beautiful Ilulissat Icefjord.

### Trip highlights

- ★ Experience true wilderness - enjoy amazing birdlife on Iceland
- ★ Greenland scenery - explore some of the most spectacular and unspoilt scenery on Earth
- ★ Visit historical sites - from the Viking era
- ★ Discover the heart of Greenland - villages, islands and spectacular fjords
- ★ Visit - Iceland Southern Greenland and Disko Bay in one voyage

#### 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 - Reykjavik

Reykjavik is the world's northernmost capital city. Norwegian settlers named the place Reykjavik, meaning Smoky Bay, after the columns of steam that rose from the hot springs in the area. The surroundings offer fantastic natural beauty with geysers, mountains, glaciers and geothermal baths, that are well worth exploring before embarking on the MS Fram.



**Accommodation: M/S Fram** (or similar)



Premium Boat



Single room available



Meals Provided: Dinner

### DAY 2 - Stykkisholmur

As we reach the west region of Iceland, you will 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 Fram** (or similar)



Premium Boat



Single room available



Meals Provided: Breakfast, Lunch & Dinner

## DAY 3 - Denmark Strait

We leave Iceland behind and sail across the Denmark Strait to reach Greenland. The Denmark Strait connects the Greenland Sea to the Ermingier Sea and this crossing was used by the Vikings to migrate from Iceland to South Greenland some 1,000 years ago. The Denmark Strait was also a WWII battleground, the British naval ship - the HMS Prince of Whales - fought the largest German battle ship, the Bismarck, which was attempting to reach the North Atlantic in order to attack the allied merchant marine.



**Accommodation: M/S Fram** (or similar)



Premium Boat



Single room available



Meals Provided: Breakfast, Lunch & Dinner

## DAY 4 - Denmark Strait

We use our time at sea for our informative lectures and to learn more about the history, wildlife and geology of the areas we will be exploring.



**Accommodation: M/S Fram** (or similar)



Premium Boat



Single room available



Meals Provided: Breakfast, Lunch & Dinner

## DAY 5 - Prins Christian Sound

Prince Christian Sound, located nearly at the tip of the huge island, separates mainland Greenland with Sangmissoq and other islands of the Cape Farewell Archipelago. We sail through this narrow channel and enjoy some spectacular scenery. The sound itself is around 100 km long and very narrow, sometimes only 500 metres wide. This long fjord system is surrounded by steep mountains, some of which are more than 1,200 metres high. Enjoy the sight of glaciers calving icebergs straight into the ocean from the deck. If the channel is blocked with ice, we will sail around Nunap Isua, more commonly known as Cape Farewell.



**Accommodation: M/S Fram** (or similar)



Premium Boat



Single room available



Meals Provided: Breakfast, Lunch & Dinner

## DAY 6 - Uunartoq and Qaqortoq

Come ashore on the uninhabited island of Uunartoq. This small island is blessed with natural hot springs warm enough to bathe in. Scattered around the island are a number of pools fed by hot springs bubbling up from the ground below, keeping the water temperature at a balmy 34-38 degrees, even during the freezing winter. The springs are set in a completely natural environment in the middle of a grassy field, surrounded by mountain peaks and drifting icebergs. Soak in the warm water and enjoy the beautiful natural surroundings. Many consider Qaqortoq to be one of the most beautiful towns in Greenland with its array of colourful houses. The excursions on offer here include an informative visit to the only tannery in Greenland, a guided city walk, or a 'kaffemik' which will involve meeting the locals and sharing a traditional open-house coffee.



**Accommodation: M/S Fram** (or similar)



Premium Boat



Single room available



Meals Provided: Breakfast, Lunch & Dinner

## DAY 7 - Igaliku and Hvalsey

Igaliku is one of the most beautiful villages in Greenland and is the oldest sheep farming settlement on the island. Here, you will find tall mountains covered by snow during summer, lush flower-filled valleys and of course, sheep! Sandstone houses give a distinct character to the area, as does the stunning view to the Igaliku fjord. Experience the tranquillity and peace of this historic settlement. Christianity was introduced to Greenland at the turn of the last millennium, with the first bishop being appointed in 1124. The impressive episcopal residence Garðar was established shortly after that date in Igaliku. A cathedral was built, the biggest of all churches in Greenland in the Middle Ages. For many years, the bishop's palace was a focal point for the Norsemen and visitors from Iceland and Norway. The ruins of the cathedral and the bishop's palace have been renovated during recent years and today make up an attractive relic of the Viking period. Igaliku's 27 inhabitants are very proud of their community and are eager to guide you through the village.

In Hvalsey, you will find some of the best-preserved ruins from the Norse period; Hvalsey Church was probably built in the 14th century. Erik the Red's relatives established the farmstead late in the 10th century. In 1408, a wedding at the site's church is the last documented event to occur during the Norse settlement of Greenland. We use our PolarCirkel boats to go ashore, to give you the chance to explore the area for yourself.



**Accommodation: M/S Fram** (or similar)



Premium Boat



Single room available



Meals Provided: Breakfast, Lunch & Dinner

## DAY 8 - Qassiarsuk

In Qassiarsuk you will find green fields dotted with white sheep, lush vegetation and busy farmsteads; all this forms a colourful

contrast to the icescapes at sea. Qassiarsuk is also where Viking Erik the Red built his Brattahlíð estate in 982 A.D. He was banished from Iceland and escaped to the land he called Greenland. Erik settled in Qassiarsuk because the area was considered the most fertile place in Greenland when he arrived. Join a guided walk through the settlement, where you will learn more about the history of the region. You can visit the reconstruction of Erik's longhouse and the church that Erik's wife Tjodhildur made him build. The walk will include a visit at the town's current church. This is also a great area to try optional activities such as kayaking, hiking, or exploring the town on foot.



**Accommodation: M/S Fram** (or similar)



Premium Boat



Single room available



Meals Provided: Breakfast, Lunch & Dinner

## DAY 9 - Ivittuut

The abandoned mining town of Ivittuut is a stronghold for musk oxen. The settlement was built on top of the so-called Norse Middle settlement. More than a thousand years ago, Vikings settled the area with about twenty farms. It is the smallest and least well known of the Norse settlements on Greenland and no written records of its residents have been found. This is why archaeologists believe it was the last one established, and the first to be abandoned. We might meet some of the hunters who return to seek shelter in the old houses by the sea.



**Accommodation: M/S Fram** (or similar)



Premium Boat



Single room available



Meals Provided: Breakfast, Lunch & Dinner

## DAY 10 - Nuuk Fjord

Nuuk Fjord is sometimes overlooked in favour of its more glacial neighbours to the north, but this intricate water system is the second largest in the world, packed with inlets and islands open for exploration by ship. As we cruise this fjord, refreshing waterfalls and probable summer sightings of faithful humpback whales keep eyes and cameras entertained. The solitude and scenery provide a perfect backdrop for hiking. The deep waters of the fjord teem with flavourful cod and redfish, delivering a bounty for both fishing and eating. Like a pot of gold at the end of a rainbow, the Narsap Sermia glacier flows directly into the fjord, filling the headwaters with much sought-after icebergs, while wildflowers and herbs coloured in rich orange, yellow, purple and green tones, paint the idyllic landscape.



**Accommodation: M/S Fram** (or similar)



Premium Boat



Single room available



Meals Provided: Breakfast, Lunch & Dinner

## DAY 11 - Nuuk

Nuuk is the oldest town in Greenland and is situated at the mouth of one of the largest and most spectacular fjord systems in the world. Today this is where old and new traditions meet. Being the capital, Nuuk houses a university, a teachers training college, churches and the Greenland National Museum - home to the mummies from Qilakilsoq. City tours and hikes are amongst the optional excursions offered on this day.



**Accommodation: M/S Fram** (or similar)



Premium Boat



Single room available



Meals Provided: Breakfast, Lunch & Dinner

## DAY 12 - Itilleq

Itilleq means 'in the hollow' and as its name suggests, this small settlement is situated in a hollow, majestically surrounded by high mountains and glaciers. Around 130 people live here, mainly engaged in hunting and fishing. The island has no freshwater and for this reason, Itilleq makes use of a facility for creating freshwater from seawater. The church here has an interesting history - it was built in Thule in 1930 and was moved to Itilleq in 1963. Itilleq can truthfully be called the Arctic Circle Village, as the Arctic Circle is indeed found only 200 metres to the south.



**Accommodation: M/S Fram** (or similar)



Premium Boat



Single room available



Meals Provided: Breakfast, Lunch & Dinner

## DAY 13 - Camp Frieda

Today, we will visit a location near Saqqaq situated approximately 70°N, that was without an official name until 2013. The place has special significance to Friederike Bronny, one of the Expedition leaders who works on board the ship. As a young geology student, she spent a year in a tent in this small valley and also visited the spot several times later as an Expedition Leader. A few years ago, the MS Fram was planning to land here and the captain needed to inform the local authorities. Unfortunately, this particular site didn't have a name, so the on-board captain announced over the radio that on their ship they refer to this location as 'Camp Frieda' after their Expedition leader. Soon after, the local authorities confirmed that from that moment on, Camp Frieda would be the official name of this position.



**Accommodation: M/S Fram** (or similar)



Premium Boat



Single room available



Meals Provided: None

## DAY 14 - Ilulissat

Ilulissat is set in the stunning scenery of the Ilulissat Icefjord and was added to the UNESCO World Heritage List in 2004. Just outside of the town, at the mouth of the fjord, you can often see enormous icebergs that have run aground. They originate from the Jakobshavn Glacier, one of the most productive glaciers in the Northern Hemisphere. These mighty icebergs are unique, no two are alike and their colours are astonishing, with mixtures of white and blue to shades of orange and red, when the iceberg surface is struck by the midnight sun. The sounds of crackling and rumbling echo from one end of Ilulissat to the other, as the icebergs move through the water. Optional shore excursions include hikes, an historic town walk, or a boat tour to the Icefjord.



**Accommodation: M/S Fram** (or similar)



Premium Boat



Single room available



Meals Provided: Breakfast, Lunch & Dinner

## DAY 15 - Disko Bay

Qeqertarsuaq is the only town situated on the volcanic island of Disko. Take a stroll around the settlement on your own, or explore the region further on one of our optional excursions; enjoy a guided tour of the town, a spot of kayaking, or cruise amongst the ice on a boat tour. If you like archaeology and history, a visit to the local museum is a must.



**Accommodation: M/S Fram** (or similar)



Premium Boat



Single room available



Meals Provided: Breakfast, Lunch & Dinner

## DAY 16 - Sisimiut

Sisimiut is situated 40 km north of the Arctic Circle and the name translates as the people living in a place where there are fox dens. This is the second largest town in Greenland, a modern settlement that maintains ancient traditions. Our optional shore excursions include hikes, boat trips and sightseeing. You can also watch local artists sculpt jewellery and crafts from bone, leather and metal, or taste Greenlandic specialities in a local restaurant.



**Accommodation: M/S Fram** (or similar)

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Premium Boat

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Single room available

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Meals Provided: Breakfast, Lunch & Dinner

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## DAY 17 - Kangerlussuaq

As we reach Kangerlussuaq, your expedition comes to an end. After debarkation, you will be able to enjoy a final excursion to the Greenland Ice Sheet. This vast icy wasteland stretches 1,500 miles north and reaches heights of up to 3,200 metres above sea level. The road to the edge of the Ice Sheet boasts beautiful natural scenery ranging from Arctic desert and tundra, with low growing shrubs, to hilly terrain, offering breath-taking views over the landscape. You will be transferred to the airport for your flight to Copenhagen which departs late in the evening.

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Meals Provided: Breakfast, Lunch & Dinner

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## DAY 18 - Copenhagen

You arrive in the Danish capital early in the morning and may even have the time to explore wonderful Copenhagen, before your onward flight home.

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Meals provided : None

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# Polar information

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### Ship information

The MS Fram is a comfortable vessel for your polar exploration with modern amenities such as a fitness room, Jacuzzi and sauna. The ample indoor and outdoor public spaces are designed to ensure you enjoy the passing scenery and wildlife sightings; each table in the restaurant has scenic views and the observation lounge has panoramic windows. There's also a selection of shore excursions to choose from, allowing you to experience as much of the polar wilderness as possible.





## What's included?



### Included meals

Breakfast: 16  
Lunch: 16  
Dinner: 17



### Transport

M/S Fram  
Zodiac



### Trip staff

Expedition Crew  
Naturalist(s)



### Accommodation

16 nights premium boat

## Trip information

### Country information

#### Greenland

#### Iceland

##### Climate

Iceland has a cool and temperate climate and, despite its location just south of the Arctic Circle, its northerly latitude is counteracted by the warm waters of the North Atlantic Drift which encircles the island. Temperatures in winter can fluctuate between about 10°C and -10°C and precipitation in the form of rain, sleet or snow is to be expected at any time. Days will be short, with daylight often only guaranteed between about 11 am and 4 pm in December. The best time for seeing the Aurora Borealis is October to March. Summer is generally cool with average temperatures for June and July around 12 - 15 degree centigrade in Reykjavik, although is known to be warmer in other parts of the country. In June and July you can enjoy continuous daylight and see the Midnight Sun, whilst late spring and early autumn offer long twilights.

##### Time difference to GMT

0

##### Plugs

2 Pin Round

##### Religion

## Language

Icelandic

# 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, there are many optional excursions available on your voyage that 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

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 for a small charge. 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

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

### Greenland

#### 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

### Iceland

#### 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

£18.00 - 24.00

##### Beer price

£4.00 - 6.00

##### Water price

£2

#### Foreign Exchange

##### Local currency

Icelandic Krona (ISK).

##### Recommended Currency For Exchange

Both GBP and USD are readily exchanged at banks and post offices.

##### Where To Exchange

Both GBP and USD are readily exchanged at banks and post offices

##### ATM Availability

Cash can be drawn on credit cards from ATM's in Reykjavik and at the airport.

##### Credit Card Acceptance

Most shops and restaurants take credit cards.

##### Travellers Cheques

Can be exchanged at banks and post offices.

## Transport, Accommodation & Meals

### Transport Information

M/S Fram, Zodiac

### Ship description

The MS Fram is a comfortable vessel for your polar exploration with modern amenities such as a fitness room, Jacuzzi and sauna. The ample indoor and outdoor public spaces are designed to ensure you enjoy the passing scenery and wildlife sightings; each table in the restaurant has scenic views and the observation lounge has panoramic windows. There's also a selection of shore excursions to choose from, allowing you to experience as much of the polar wilderness as possible.

### Cabins

Prices are based on the use of inside, category one cabins on decks 3, 5 and 6. Category one cabins are based on twin share, with one bed and one sofa bed. They are comfortable with a private toilet and shower, fridge and TV. The MS Fram 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.

## 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

No visa is required for citizens of UK, CAN, USA, AUS and NZ. 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 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, 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.

## **Greenland**

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## **Iceland**

### **Vaccinations**

Nothing compulsory; tetanus recommended. 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.

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