Itinerary

11 Day Circumnavigating Svalbard – In the Realm of the Polar Bear

***IMPORTANT NOTE: Any extra nights, optional tours or other amendments, will not be visible on this itinerary.**

Day 1: Oslo ~ Longyearbyen

Your adventure begins with a flight from Oslo to Longyearbyen, the northernmost town in the world. This remote yet vibrant frontier settlement is home to more snowmobiles than people and serves as the gateway to the Arctic wilderness.

Upon arrival, you'll have the opportunity to explore Longyearbyen at your own pace. Wander through its colourful streets, visit a local café, or take in the stunning landscapes surrounding this unique town. In the evening, unwind and enjoy a relaxing night before the next stage of your journey.

MEALS: Nil

OVERNIGHT: 4 Star Hotel, Longyearbyen

Day 2: Longyearbyen - Embark Ship

After breakfast, take the opportunity to explore Longyearbyen, a colourful Arctic town surrounded by stunning wilderness. The town is small and easy to navigate on foot, allowing you to soak in its unique charm at your own pace. As you stroll down the main street, keep an eye out for the Svalbard reindeer, which often wander through town. Unlike other wild reindeer, these ones are surprisingly tame and curious.

Later in the day, before boarding your ship and continuing your Arctic adventure, you'll join an included excursion to learn more about this fascinating polar region. If you'd like to delve even deeper into Longyearbyen's history and landscapes, consider taking part in our optional Pre-Programme for an extended experience.

MEALS: Breakfast, Dinner

OVERNIGHT: MS Spitsbergen or MS Fram

Day 3: Ny-Ålesund

Today, you'll experience the peaceful beauty of Ny-Ålesund and its surrounding fjords, including Krossfjord and Kongsfjord. This remote Arctic settlement is one of the northernmost in the world, offering a rare opportunity to disconnect from everyday distractions. Due to the nearby geodetic station operated by the Norwegian Mapping Authority, Wi-Fi and Bluetooth must be switched off, allowing you to fully

immerse yourself in the stunning natural surroundings.

Once a mining town, Ny-Ålesund is now an important centre for global scientific and climate research. It was also the starting point for Roald Amundsen's historic expedition north in the airship Norge. As you explore, you'll see remnants of its past alongside the modern research stations that continue to study the Arctic today.

The surrounding fjords offer breathtaking glacial landscapes, and we'll take every opportunity to make the most of them. If conditions allow, we'll launch our small expedition boats for a closer look at the towering glaciers, go ashore for a hike, or cruise the icy waters to soak in the rugged beauty of this extraordinary region.

MEALS: Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner

OVERNIGHT: MS Spitsbergen or MS Fram

Days 4-5: Northwest Spitsbergen National Park

Over the next two days, you'll immerse yourself in the untouched Arctic wilderness of Northwest Spitsbergen National Park. This breathtaking region is home to towering mountains, vast glaciers, and remote offshore islands. As we navigate through this pristine landscape, we'll keep a lookout for Arctic wildlife, including whales, seals, walruses, and reindeer. If we're particularly fortunate, we might even catch a glimpse of a polar bear from the ship's Observation Deck.

One of the highlights of this area is Kongsfjord, where massive glaciers calve into the sea, creating a dramatic and ever-changing landscape. Throughout our time in the park, we'll take advantage of every opportunity for adventure. If conditions allow, we'll launch our kayaks to paddle among the ice, use our small expedition boats to explore up close, go ashore for guided hikes, or even participate in a meaningful beach clean-up to help preserve this fragile environment.

MEALS: Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner

OVERNIGHT: MS Spitsbergen or MS Fram

Day 6: Attempting the Ice Edge

If conditions allow, today we'll sail north, aiming to cross the 80th parallel and reach the shifting ice edge of the polar ice cap. This remarkable transition zone between open sea and drifting pack ice is constantly changing, creating a breathtaking and surreal Arctic landscape. From the ship, you'll have excellent opportunities to spot wildlife, including seals and walruses resting on the glistening ice floes.

Should conditions permit, we'll lower our expedition boats into the water for an unforgettable close-up experience among the floating ice. However, the ice edge is not a fixed boundary—it moves depending on the season and weather. During the summer months, from May to August, the ice retreats further towards the North Pole, which may make it unreachable for us. If that happens, we'll explore Svalbard's dramatic deep fjords, towering glaciers, and rugged coastal scenery instead.

For those travelling in late July and August, this is also a magical time when Arctic wildflowers bloom, transforming the tundra into a vibrant display of colour.

MEALS: Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner

OVERNIGHT: MS Spitsbergen or MS Fram

Days 7-8: Eastern Svalbard

The next two days will be a true Arctic adventure as we explore the remote and wild landscapes of Eastern Spitsbergen. If sea ice conditions allow, we'll venture into the frozen seascapes of the Eastern Svalbard Nature Reserve, where some of the region's most incredible wildlife can be found.

We have high hopes of spotting the elusive polar bear, often seen roaming the ice in search of food. In the Hinlopen Strait, we'll also be on the lookout for walruses and large colonies of seabirds, including Brünnich's Guillemots. Depending on conditions, we may travel south to Freemansundet and Kapp Lee or use our small expedition boats to reach the remote islands of Edgeøya and Barentsøya.

In true expedition style, our route will be flexible, adapting to the weather and ice conditions. Be ready for adventure—whether it's exhilarating landings, guided hikes, or peaceful kayak trips in the icy waters. If ice blocks our passage through the Hinlopen Strait, we'll instead explore the dramatic fjords, mighty glaciers, and stunning landscapes of western Svalbard, ensuring just as much excitement and discovery.

MEALS: Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner

OVERNIGHT: MS Spitsbergen or MS Fram

Days 9-10: South Spitsbergen National Park

As our expedition cruise continues south, we'll explore the stunning landscapes of Hornsund, one of Svalbard's most breathtaking fjords. The vibrant Arctic vegetation gives way to towering, snow-covered mountains, creating a spectacular backdrop. Keep an eye out from the deck for seals and whales, as well as Mount Hornsundtind, the highest peak in the area. You may also witness glaciers dramatically calving into the sea—a truly unforgettable sight.

Next, we'll journey to the majestic Bellsund, where rugged, snowcapped mountains rise above the coastline. The towering cliffs here are home to vast colonies of seabirds, including auks, guillemots, and Northern Fulmars, while Arctic foxes and Svalbard reindeer roam below. As we explore, you'll also see remnants of early mining settlements and learn about Wanny Woldstad, Svalbard's first female trapper, whose pioneering spirit left a mark on the region's history.

As always in the Arctic, our activities will be shaped by the ever-changing weather conditions. Your Expedition Team will carefully assess the conditions each day to determine the best opportunities for exploration, ensuring an exciting and immersive experience.

MEALS: Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner

OVERNIGHT: MS Spitsbergen or MS Fram

Day 11: Longyearbyen – Disembark Ship ~ Oslo

Your Arctic adventure comes to an end today as we arrive back in Longyearbyen. After an unforgettable journey through Svalbard's breathtaking landscapes, you'll transfer to the airport for your flight home.

As you leave, you'll take with you a deeper understanding of the Arctic—its wildlife, history, polar ice, and the impacts of climate change. More importantly, you'll carry the memories of an incredible expedition filled with unique experiences and awe-inspiring moments.

If you're not quite ready to say goodbye to the Arctic, consider extending your stay with our optional post-programme, giving you more time to explore this remarkable region.

MEALS: Breakfast