

Your expedition cruise in SVALBARD



Dear guest

Thank you for choosing to travel with us. We are as excited as you are about your expedition to Svalbard. This will be a grand adventure exploring the remote Arctic jewel where our Expedition cruises started in 1896.

In this document, you will find important information about things you need to do before you go, what we recommend you pack, the experience when on board, and what to expect with wildlife and landings.

Clicking on the underlined links in the document will take you to our website, where you can find further details. Please make sure that you have an internet connection to do this.

You will receive one more mail from us approximately 2-4 weeks before your departure. This will contain your tickets for your itinerary and flights.

We very much look forward to welcoming you on board. Please feel free to contact us if you have any questions:

Reservations: +1 (866) 552-0371

Email: us.expeditions@hurtigruten.com

Web: hurtigruten.com/expeditions/

Kind regards
Your Hurtigruten team

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Frequently asked questions »

FOLLOW US



BEFORE YOU GO

There are a few mandatory steps to complete before your expedition cruise in Svalbard.

- 1 Fill in and return the Ship Manifest Information Form to Hurtigruten**
- 2 Check your passport**
Please ensure your passport has a minimum of 6 months remaining validity at the end of your cruise.*
- 3 Entry requirements (visa)**
Please make sure that you have the correct visa travel document that is required at the time of your expedition.
- 4 Check your travel insurance**
A comprehensive travel/health insurance policy that also covers medical evacuation is recommended.

For your convenience, we have gathered all required forms and important information about entry requirements on one web page.

[Entry requirements »](#)

Weather and packing

Definitely check the weather forecast at your destination before you leave to ensure you pack the appropriate clothes. Make sure to pack clothes suitable for the weather you're returning home to, as well.



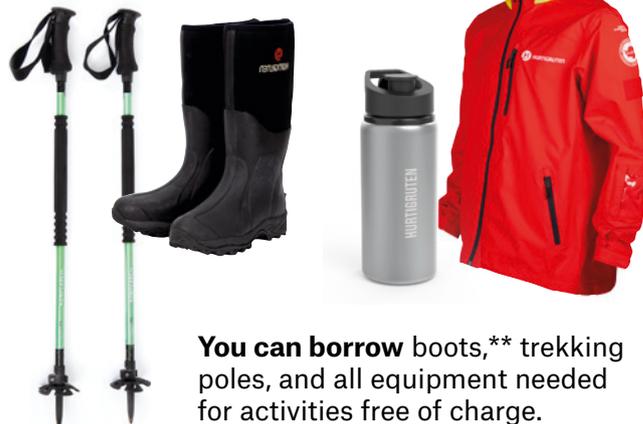
Help protect the pristine Arctic Environment from the threat of non-native species and follow the [AECO biosecurity guidelines »](#) before packing.

We recommend you pack:

- Woolen underlayers and second layers
- Warm socks and gloves
- Polarized sunglasses and sunscreen
- A camera (in a waterproof bag)
- A memory card with a large capacity
- Wind- and water-resistant pants
- A warm hat that covers your ears, and a scarf
- Worn-in walking boots to use outdoors
- A warm winter jacket
- Extra batteries for your camera
- A pair of casual shoes for onboard use

What to bring on your trip to Svalbard »

You will receive a complimentary Helly Hansen expedition jacket and a re-usable aluminum water bottle.**

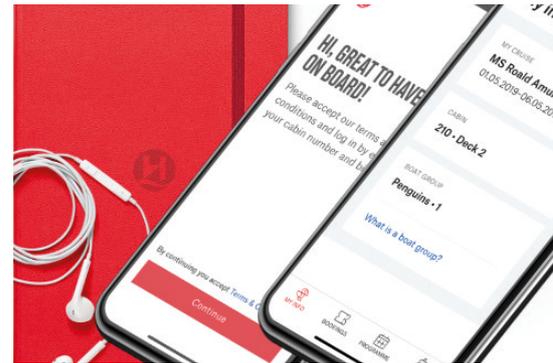


You can borrow boots,** trekking poles, and all equipment needed for activities free of charge.

* In addition, passport validity must be in accordance with national requirements in the country/countries you are traveling to.

** Except on MS Nordstjernen.

PRACTICAL INFORMATION



Hurtigruten App

is your digital travel companion on our expedition ships.

Everything you need to know about your cruise, including your bookings, daily programme, restaurants and services on board, essential information about available excursions is at hand at any time.

It will be possible to log in once you are on board with your date of birth and your cabin number.

[Download the app »](#)

Your adventure is safe with us



We care deeply about your safety, health and wellbeing. This is as true now as it has always been ever since we first began sailing in 1893, perhaps even more so. We've introduced several new procedures throughout all our ships, designed to keep you safe.

Wish to be more prepared?

From laundry and onboard Wi-Fi to prohibited items not allowed on board - here's everything you need to know before your expedition with us.

[Practical information »](#)

Hurtigruten ships have been a fixture on the Norwegian coast since 1893. Today, our ships sail to the Arctic and Antarctica, and many destinations in between. On each ship you will find modern facilities carefully blended with true character.

[Discover our fleet »](#)

[Our safety policy »](#)

YOUR HAVEN TO THE HORIZON

Your expedition ship is your home away from home; casual, comfortable, and complete with everything you need for your adventure and more.

If you pictured an expedition as being on a rusty old frigate with faded décor, prepare to have your expectations blown away. From the get-go, you'll see that life on the ship is relaxed and the atmosphere calm and informal. Each public area of the ship has been designed with your viewing pleasure in mind. As you set foot on exotic shores together, you'll naturally grow closer with your fellow explorers. Enjoy swapping stories in the various seating areas dotted around the ship which usually have great views.



© AGURTXANE CONCELLON

LOVING LOCAL FOOD

Prepare your tastebuds for mouth-watering meals on board.

These will often be inspired by the region's unique flavours and cooking styles. Then add in Signature Seafood Evenings and tastings that really showcase specialties of the local cuisine. Wherever possible, ingredients are sourced at local businesses in the ports we visit, reducing food miles and supporting coastal communities.

You'll also be spoilt for choice with sophisticated plant-based menus of gorgeous 'green' food, potentially healthier for you and for the planet too.



© ANDREAS KALVIG ANDERSON

YOUR ACTIVE ADVENTURE



Small boat cruising

Although your expedition ship is small, there are limits on where it can go due to its size. This is where our small Zodiac boats come in. Enjoy gliding through the water as you take in the stunning views.

Landings

Whenever weather and sea conditions allow, we will attempt landings in our small boats (RIBs). Once ashore, the Expedition Team will guide you on where to go and what to see.

Wildlife watching

Svalbard is a unique habitat for birdlife and mammals. Our Expedition Team will guide you on how to observe the wildlife with the smallest possible impact on their fragile ecosystem. Our guides are equipped with rifles and signal guns to ensure everyone's safety.

Lectures

Our Expedition Team will enhance your knowledge of Svalbard with

specialized lectures. They may also give informal talks and offer impromptu guiding on deck or ashore.

Science Center**»

During your expedition, enjoy full access to the ship's Science Center, a treasure trove of information on our destinations. There are advanced microscopes and other science equipment available. You can also get involved in various Citizen Science projects.

Kayaking*

Weather and ice conditions permitting, kayaking is a great way to get close to Arctic nature. Glide through the water while admiring the glaciers and mountains.

Photography program**

A professional onboard photographer will accompany you on your expedition cruise experience. They'll be on hand with advice on how to maximize the many incredible photo opportunities on your Svalbard

adventure, whatever your equipment and skill level.

Polar plunge

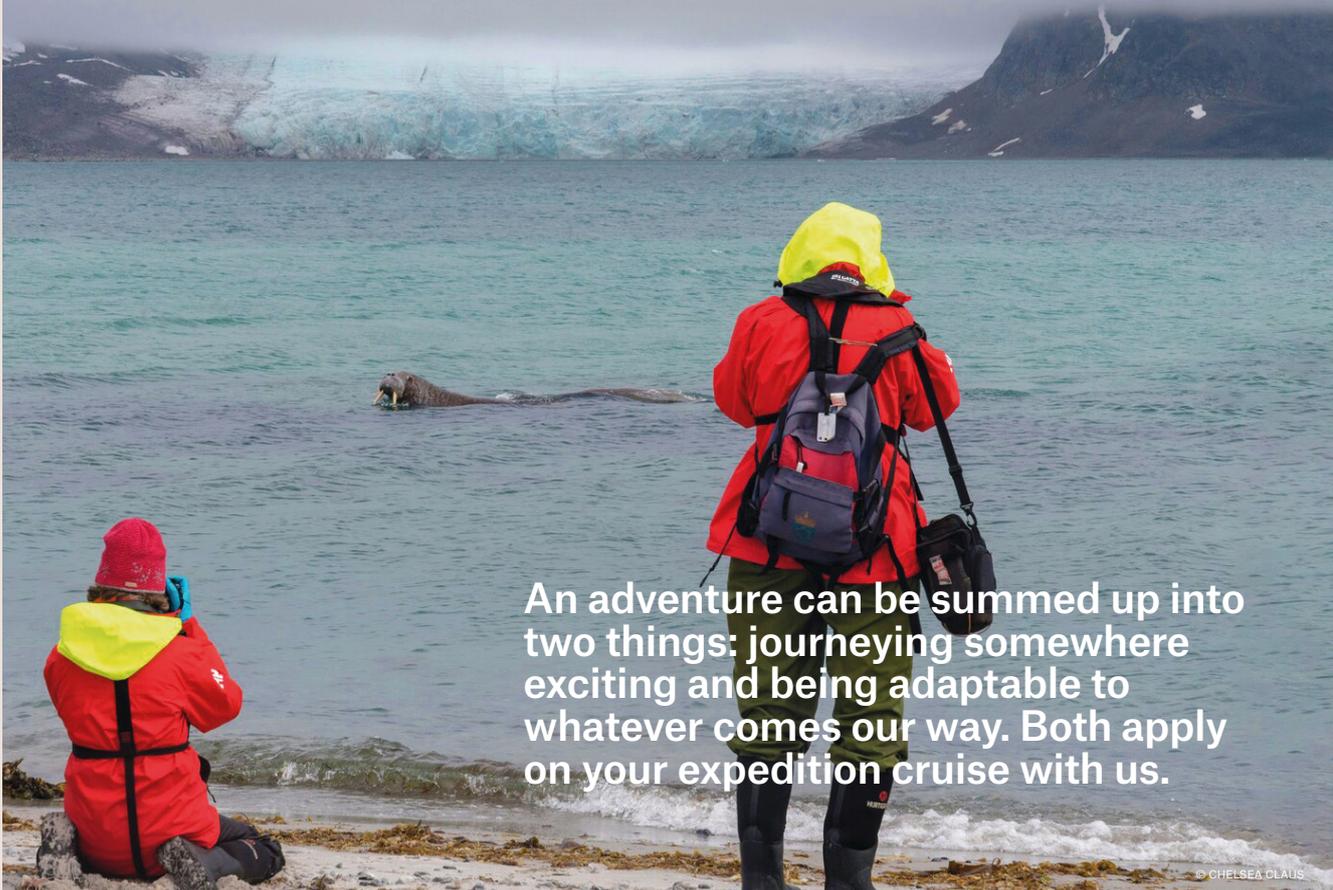
For the brave and bold, there might be an opportunity to dive into the Arctic Ocean at the end of one of the landings. Only a few guests on each expedition ever take up the challenge. Will you?

Experts in exploration

Your Expedition Team are your passionate and knowledgeable hosts. They'll ensure you enjoy exciting and informative experiences safely and sustainably. Experts in their fields and adventurers in their own right, they deliver engaging lectures and talks, organise a variety of onboard activities, accompany you on landings, and take the lead on handpicked hikes.

The Expedition Team »

EXPECT THE UNEXPECTED



An adventure can be summed up into two things: journeying somewhere exciting and being adaptable to whatever comes our way. Both apply on your expedition cruise with us.

When you embark on an expedition with us, you'll be travelling to some of the most remote and pristine places on our planet. It's an adventure to beautiful coastal areas where nature is at its most raw, wildlife roam free, and where the elements rule. And we wouldn't have it any other way.

Open exploration

Itineraries on our expedition cruises are therefore not completely set in stone. This gives us the flexibility of responding to challenging elements and to grasp new opportunities for exploration as they arise. Whether wind or waves block our way or we see whales we want to observe for a while, the option to divert from our

course is an essential and exciting aspect of expedition cruises.

Our plans may sometimes need to be altered slightly or even changed completely, bringing us to places and surprises not originally on our route, but which will still be just as impressive. Certain days on several of our itineraries even have multiple possible sites we can visit. You can trust the ship Captain together with the Expedition Team to pick the best option, based on the conditions on the day.

It is this unpredictability and adaptability that are at the core of any expedition, and what makes it an adventure so different from

a standard cruise. Embark on a journey with us; a journey where you'll embrace pure adventure, become real explorers, and expect the unexpected. Together, we'll create unique and unforgettable experiences, working with nature, never against it.

EXPLORE SVALBARD

Discover some of the highlights and possible sites you might see on your expedition cruise in Svalbard.*

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Longyearbyen

This is the administrative center of Svalbard, named after the American businessman John Munro Longyear, whose company started coal-mining here in 1906. It hosts 2,400 residents from more than 50 different countries.



North West Spitsbergen National Park

Scattered with islandic fjords and beaches, this national park has a long history of exploration and is home to whales, seals, and polar bears.



Eastern Svalbard Nature Reserves

Eastern Svalbard boasts the highest population of polar bears in the archipelago. Here the Arctic Ocean is full of drifting ice, and its frozen seascape changes constantly.



Isfjord

This is the second-longest fjord in Svalbard, which leads to many smaller fjords, forming a lush and beautiful fjord system rich in wildlife and vegetation.



Hornsund

A part of the South Spitsbergen National Park, the steep mountains, breathtaking fjords and rich, colourful vegetation make it one of the most spectacular natural corners of the world.

Did you know?

For **five** months of the year, the sun doesn't set in Svalbard. The midnight sun reigns from mid-April to mid-August.

In **2008**, the Global Seed Vault was opened in Svalbard. It holds copies of most of the world's seeds.

Less than **10%** of the landmass in Svalbard has vegetation and there are no trees.

Zero is the number of cats in Svalbard. Cats are prohibited to protect sensitive birdlife throughout the archipelago.

In **2007**, the largest marine reptile fossil known to science was excavated in Svalbard. Nicknamed "The Monster", the immense pliosaurus measured 50 ft long.

THE GLOBAL SEED VAULT

DISCOVER
with us

In the remote High Arctic archipelago of Svalbard, 1,300 kilometres north of the Arctic Circle, seeds from around the world lie dormant, safe, and secure in a biological Noah's ark.



© FRODE RAMONE (CC)

In case of emergency

Near to the settlement of Longyearbyen lies Platåberget mountain. Locked away in cold, dry rock vaults deep inside this mountain are more than one million different seed samples of crops from all over the world. Able to store up to 4.5 million varieties of crops, this is the world's largest secure seed storage facility, created by the Norwegian Government in 2008.

This all-important seed vault ensures that seeds from trees and plants gathered across the earth are carefully preserved. In the case of natural or man-made disasters on a local, national, or even global scale, trees and plants can be grown once again rather than lost forever. It is truly a Noah's ark for biodiversity, protecting future life on the planet.

So far, there's only been one incident when the back-up seeds at the vault were needed. After an attack on Aleppo in 2015 during the Syrian civil war, the entire seed collection at the International Centre for Agricultural Research in the Dry

Areas was destroyed. The collection consisted of 148,000 seeds. Thankfully, 80% of those seeds had been duplicated and sent to the vault in Svalbard. They were able to be retrieved and grown in the region once again, a fitting testament that shows exactly why the vault is so important.

Picking the perfect location

But you might wonder, why Svalbard? The archipelago's remoteness means that the vault is less vulnerable to human interference, whether through vandalism, conflict, or accident. The nearby airport and town of Longyearbyen gives sufficient infrastructure to receive new seed shipments and to support a team of maintenance engineers and scientists.

So that the seeds are properly preserved, the rooms where they are kept in the vault are kept at a standard temperature of -18 degrees Celsius and have low humidity. Svalbard has natural permafrost, which means that even in the case

of a power outage, the vault will stay cold enough to keep the seeds frozen.

However, in 2017, melting permafrost seeped into the vault due to climate change. Thankfully, none of its samples were damaged. The vault was promptly upgraded to no longer rely just on the permafrost to keep the seeds cold. Despite this incident, Svalbard is still considered one of the safest places in the world for long-term storage of the seeds.

Spread the word

When going on an expedition cruise with us to Svalbard, you might not be able to actually see the seed vault for yourself, as it's quite difficult to get there as a visitor. But the locals are more than happy to share stories and fun facts with you that you can retell to others who also share the same care and concern for the welfare of our planet.

[Test your knowledge »](#)

DISCOVER WILDLIFE



Svalbard's vast landscapes of rock, ice, and sea provide a home for a remarkably diverse batch of inspiring creatures.

© UNSPLASH

In deep and shallow waters

Svalbard's waters are frequented by several whale species. These immense sea mammals are surprisingly agile, sometimes treating onlookers to impressive acrobatic displays. You may even encounter the mighty blue whale, the largest animal on Earth.

The bays around Svalbard's islands are also inhabited by walrus and various seal species. Look for bearded seals in the shallows of a fjord or find shy ringed seals out on the ice.

Above and on land

Arctic foxes are among the few mammals in Svalbard. They forage anywhere from the mountain ridges to the coast, even being found on drift ice. Also found on drift ice is the mighty polar bear. From a safe distance, you might catch a glimpse of one of these rare apex predators stalking a seal beside a glacier or swimming from one ice floe to another.

Elsewhere, you might see Svalbard reindeer grazing on tundra vegetation. You can easily identify them by their majestic antlers. During much

of the summer, you can see these antlers in different stages of growth. Svalbard also provides prime annual breeding spots for 41 species of seabird.

Remember that these are natural habitats, so we can't guarantee that certain animals will appear during your expedition. Mother Nature will do as she pleases, and no sightings can be set in stone.

Wildlife in Svalbard »

	■ best time	■ good time	APR.-MAY	JUNE-JULY	AUG.-SEPT.
POLAR BEARS	[Dark Blue]		[Dark Blue]		
WHALES	[Dark Blue]		[Dark Blue]		
WALRUS AND SEALS	[Dark Blue]		[Dark Blue]		
POLAR FOX	[Dark Blue]		[Dark Blue]		
SVALBARD REINDEER	[Dark Blue]		[Dark Blue]		
BIRDS	[Dark Blue]		[Dark Blue]		
FLOWERS	[Dark Blue]		[Dark Blue]		
MIDNIGHT SUN <small>(From April 19 - August 23)</small>	[Dark Blue]		[Dark Blue]		

SUSTAINABILITY

Exploring our blue planet for more than a century has taught us the importance of being green.

Over decades, our Captains and crew, Expedition Teams and returning guests have witnessed the impact of climate change on vulnerable polar areas with their own eyes. We want the Arctic, Antarctica, and everywhere in between to remain places of pristine nature, pure water and clean air.

Sustainability is therefore at the heart of who we are and what we do. From the beautiful natural world to remote communities, we want to ensure our expedition cruises protect them both. In line with the UN's Sustainable Development Goals, we're able to offer you greener and more sustainable expedition cruises on and for the planet.

Want to know more?

Visit [our sustainability web page](#) »



© GENNA ROLAND

HURTIGRUTEN FOUNDATION

**Collaborating for change:
Creating a footprint we can be proud of.**

Hurtigruten Foundation is a platform for taking a stance and volunteering in worthwhile causes – together. Working closely with guests, partners and organizations, Hurtigruten believes we make a genuine difference, by minimizing our operational impact and maximizing the positive contribution we make to local communities. Since the Hurtigruten Foundation was established at the end of 2015, a total of 3,200 000 NOK has been donated to date for 34 projects in eight countries.

Hurtigruten Foundation is funded by direct donations and several onboard initiatives, including auctions, fund-raisers, and primarily the "Green stay" programme, where a donation is made for every day you ask us not to clean your cabin, thereby saving energy, detergents and water. We invite you to join us and leave a footprint we can be proud of!

Visit [the Hurtigruten Foundation web page](#) »

