Coates Wildlife Tours

Trip Dossier
14 Day Across the Arctic Circle Cruise
Aberdeen to Longyearbyen
2 - 15 July 2019

Highlights: Visit Stone Age villages in the Orkney Islands; Almost 24-hours of exquisite Arctic sunlight; Follow humpbacks migration to Norwegian coast; Abandoned whaling stations and trappers huts; Photograph delicate Arctic tundra flowers; Large colonies of auklets, guillemots and puffins; Lofoten Islands’ majestic fjords and soaring; Toast your crossing of the Arctic Circle.

Visit 3 unique destinations on one fabulous cruise as you cross the Arctic Circle.

Follow the Vikings’ way from northeast Scotland to the land of the midnight sun. Our enthusiastic historian and expert naturalist reveal the Orkney and Shetland islands, from Stone Age villages and Viking relics, to world class distilleries and spectacular birdlife. We follow migrating whales along Norway's dramatic coast, visit picturesque fishing villages and toast our Arctic Circle crossing. In Spitsbergen, we enter a polar wonderland, where delicate wildflowers adorn tundra and the summer sun never sets. This spectacular wilderness is the breeding ground of walruses, reindeers, various birds and polar bears.

On foot and by Zodiac, we visit abandoned whaling settlements, search for walrus, Arctic fox and reindeer and observe in millions of migratory birds, including little auks, guillemots and puffin.

Our expedition ship, is the perfect launch pad to set off from and oh, so comfortable to return to.

Join us on an unforgettable adventure to places that few are fortunate to visit.
Itinerary

Day 1 - Aberdeen, Scotland
Our staff welcome you aboard Polar Pioneer mid-afternoon in Aberdeen, Scotland, before we start sailing north.

Day 2 - 3 Orkney Archipelago
Among Orkney’s archipelago of 70 windswept islands, a treasure trove of archaeology, history and wildlife awaits. We follow the passage of time – from 5000-year-old, World Heritage-listed, Neolithic sites to Viking relics, from reminders of World War II occupation to present-day crofting communities. Imposing sea cliffs teem with seabirds, inviting our Zodiacs and kayakers to explore coastlines. At Fair Isle we visit traditional crofts to admire local knitwear and nearby colonies of fulmars, kittiwakes, guillemots, gannets, shags and puffins.

Day 4 - Shetland Isles
Warmed by Gulf Stream currents and near 24-hours’ daylight, the Shetland’s 100 islands are peppered with nature reserves and archaeological sites. These include the complex Stone, Bronze and Iron Age settlement of Jarlshof, the world’s best preserved broch (fortified Iron Age tower) on Mousa, and remnants of Viking conquest along the coast.

Day 5 - North Sea
As we sail towards Norway, our historian and naturalist delight us with fascinating talks and inspire our birdwatching.

Day 6 - 9 Norway
An intricate maze of islands protects Norway’s coastline. We celebrate crossing the Arctic Circle and visit special places, like Sør Gjaeslingan, once home to a busy cod-fishing fleet. Today it provides fantastic birdlife, including kittiwakes, terns and skuas that migrate here each summer. Continuing north, we pass by Torghatten, a mountain with a distinctive hole through it, and learn the fable of lost love and a troll’s arrow. Majestic scenery delights in Lofoten Islands, from romantic beaches to narrow fjords hemmed by granite walls. Share the water with orcas, the skies with puffins.

Day 10 - 13 Bear Island & Spitsbergen
We cross the Barents Sea, past often fog-shrouded Bear Island, favourite nesting ground for fulmars, kittiwakes, guillemots and gulls. Beyond Spitsbergen’s South Cape, we explore South Spitsbergen National Park, a sanctuary for barnacle geese and eider ducks, before entering the iceberg-laden waters of Hornsund. Surrounded by polar desert on a grand scale, we search for reindeer, ringed and bearded seals and the mighty polar bear. Learn of human history dating back 400 years and if lucky, we’ll encounter the elusive beluga whale.

Day 14 - Spitsbergen
We disembark in Longyearbyen, bid goodbye to expedition staff and are transferred to the airport for our onward journey.
Tour Costs Per Person Twin Share

Cost: $7,300.00  Triple Cabin (Shared Bathroom) pp  
$8,800.00  Twin Cabin (Shared Bathroom) pp  
$10,600.00  Twin Cabin (Private Bathroom) pp

Prices quoted are per person and in Australian dollars, based on twin share. Single occupancy is 1.7 times the twin share price. No single travel fees apply if you are willing to share your cabin (twin and triple cabins only). Fuel surcharge may apply in the event of significant fuel price increases. No refund for unused services.

Tour Payments

Non-refundable deposit: At time of booking $3,000.00
Non-refundable final Payment: 90 Days prior to departure

Included

- Group sightseeing tour in Longyearbyen upon disembarkation (post voyage)
- Group transfer from Polar Pioneer to airport in Longyearbyen
- 1-year membership to National Trust of Australia, including entry into over 300 properties within the UK
- Accommodation on the Polar Pioneer in your chosen cabin category with daily cabin service
- All meals, snacks, tea and coffee during voyage
- All shore excursions and Zodiac (inflatable boat) cruises
- Educational lectures and guiding services from our expert team
- Access to our on-board doctor and basic medical services
- A custom-designed polar expedition jacket to keep
- Free gumboot hire during the voyage
- Comprehensive pre-departure information
- Professionally produced voyage journal (one per booking)
- All entry fees to historic landing sites
- All port taxes and charges

Not Included

- Air transport to and from the ship, unless specified
- Airport arrival or departure taxes
- Transfers not mentioned in the itinerary
- Visa, passport, and vaccination charges
- Travel insurance or emergency evacuation charges
- Hotels and meals not included in voyage itinerary
- Optional excursions not included in the voyage itinerary
- Optional activity surcharge. Please contact us if you wish to book any optional activities, such as sea kayaking
- All items of a personal nature including but not limited to: alcoholic beverages and soft drinks, laundry services, personal clothing, medical expenses, gratuities, and email or phone charges

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Cruse Information

Polar Pioneer - The Polar Pioneer is one of the most popular style of vessels currently used in Antarctica and the Arctic. Originally built as an ice-strengthened research vessel in Finland in 1982, she was refurbished in 2000 and converted into a passenger ship for expeditions to the Polar Regions. Polar Pioneer’s excellent reputation for polar expedition cruising is due to her strength, manoeuvrability and size. She is small and nimble, which means she can sail up close to landing sites and venture where other, larger ships can’t. Carrying just 54 passengers, she allows us to offer you a far more personal and intimate experience of the destination we are visiting.

Dining

Our professional chefs present three healthy, delicious meals daily, with morning and afternoon tea available in the dining rooms in between. All of our produce is sourced locally, with fresh fruit and vegetables, and freshly baked bread and pastries, served wherever possible. We are able to cater for a range of special meal requests, including vegetarian, vegan, gluten free, lactose free and other allergy specific requirements – please ensure you list this on your personal details form.

Observation Decks

Our spacious observation decks provide a congenial place to watch for wildlife or follow the ship’s progress on nautical charts. Rug up for unparalleled scenery from the outer decks or flying bridge, where our naturalists help you identify wildlife.

Learning and Lectures

At sea, join our polar specialists entertain and inform us with illustrated talks, and prepare us for making shore visits with mandatory safety and environmental briefings.

Captain and Crew

Our highly experienced Russian captain and crew are among the best ice navigators in the world. Our efficient stewardesses attend to rooms and serve our meals, whilst the crew work mainly behind-the-scenes to help our expedition leader get the ship to where we want to go.
Getting To and From Your Voyage

This voyage departs from Aberdeen in Scotland. This modern city can be reached via direct flights from many European Cities or by train or bus from mainland UK. The voyage concludes in Longyearbyen in Svalbard. Although Longyearbyen is only a small town they have flights departing most days to Oslo, from which you can transfer home.

Getting Ashore

Polar Pioneer boasts a fleet of Zodiacs that transport us ashore to view Wildlife and historic sites, and provide us with a platform for photography. Our small excursion crafts take us beyond the reach of giant cruisers, and our philosophy of “getting out amongst it” is put to practice.

Medical Clinic

A basic medical clinic is managed by our English-speaking Ship’s Doctor, who is available at all times to assist with bouts of sea sickness and other unexpected emergencies.

On-board Entertainment

From socialising in our fully-stocked lounge bar to enjoying Captain’s drinks, trivia nights and charity auctions, or escaping to the sauna for some R&R, our small ship offers some surprisingly fun entertainment for when we’re not out and about.

Technology and Connectivity

Polar Pioneer has communication services that are available for an additional fee. These include satellite telephone, email and fax. Please note that these services are basic and not suitable for continuous use. Internet access is available on board for an additional cost. Please note that due to the remote nature of our expeditions, connection cannot always be guaranteed.

Weather:

Although the voyage is in the arctic summer temperature and conditions can be a bit cooler and wetter then expected. Day time temperatures are normally around the mid to high teens and as the trip moves further north the temperature will decrease. Summer rain is a potential for the whole trip.
Weather in Svalbard in summer is very unique. With daylight lasting unto 24 hours you have the potential to spot wildlife at any time. At this time of year you can expect temperatures to range between 1C to 7C.

Fitness Requirements

This voyage is suitable for people of most ages and physical abilities. We offer a variety of soft and harder walking options, some of which may be over uneven and/or slippery surfaces.
You are free to choose which activities and outings you would like to participate in, and less nimble passengers are given the choice whether to land or not.
To fully enjoy your expedition, we recommend that you are able to walk up and down the ships gangway (the equivalent to a steep set of stairs), and are able to get in and out of Zodiacs (inflatable rubber boats) with some assistance from the staff.
To make a booking or further information please contact
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