

VOYAGE INFORMATION

Voyage Name	Arctic Discovery
Voyage Code	ARD001G
Dates	12 September-02 October, 2021
Duration	21 days / 20 nights
Start	Longyearbyen, Spitsbergen
Finish	Bergen, Norway
Ship	Greg Mortimer
Forms Due	04 June, 2021

Welcome!

Thank you for joining Aurora Expeditions on our *Arctic Discovery* expedition.

Combining remote wilderness with rural culture, this voyage offers a genuine glimpse of life in the Arctic. Witness calving glaciers, marvel at sculpted icebergs, hike near a volcano, and discover the world's largest fjord at Scoresbysund. Encounter polar bears, reindeer, musk oxen, whales, and Inuit communities. This expedition will leave you with spectacular photos and a lifetime of stories to share.

ITINERARY OVERVIEW

Day 1	Longyearbyen. Embark the <i>Greg Mortimer</i>
Days 2-3	Svalbard
Days 4-5	Greenland Sea
Days 6-12	East Greenland
Day 13	At Sea
Day 14	Jan Mayen
Day 15	At Sea
Days 16-20	Norwegian Coast
Day 21	Disembark Bergen

VOYAGE HIGHLIGHTS

- Sail through stunning fjords and sheltered waterways in Svalbard and along the Norwegian coast
- Encounter remarkable arctic wildlife including polar bears, walrus, seals, reindeer, musk oxen, arctic fox and whales
- Be one of the lucky few people in the world to attempt a landing on Jan Mayen Island
- Discover the world's largest National Park and the world's largest fjord system, Scoresbysund, in East Greenland

EXPEDITION INCLUSIONS

- Group arrival transfer from Longyearbyen airport to the *Greg Mortimer* on day 1
- Group sightseeing tour of Longyearbyen on arrival pre-voyage
- Group transfer to Bergen hotel or airport on day 21
- On-board accommodation during voyage including daily cabin service
- All meals, snacks, tea and coffee during voyage
- Beer, house wine and soft drinks with dinner
- All shore excursions and Zodiac cruises
- Educational lectures and guiding services from expedition team
- Free access to our onboard doctor for consultations relating to sea-sickness. A standard fee of US \$60.00 (reclaimable through your travel insurance provider) applies for medical consultations not related to seasickness
- A 3-in-1 waterproof polar expedition jacket
- Complimentary use of muck boots during the voyage
- Comprehensive pre-departure information
- Port surcharges, permits and landing fees

EXPEDITION EXCLUSIONS

- International or domestic flights, unless specified
- Transfers not mentioned in the itinerary
- Airport arrival or departure taxes
- Passport, visa, and vaccination charges
- Travel insurance or emergency evacuation charges
- Hotels and meals not included in itinerary
- Optional excursions not included in the itinerary
- Optional activity surcharges
- All items of a personal nature including but not limited to: alcoholic beverages and soft drinks (outside of dinner service), laundry services, personal clothing, medical expenses, gratuities, Wi-Fi, email or phone charges.

Note: A \$15 USD per person per day gratuity for the crew is automatically added to your onboard account. It is at your discretion if you would like to remove the tip (or increase/decrease the amount) when you settle your bill. It is not necessary to tip the expedition team members. This gratuity amount is included for suites as part of their 'Suite Benefits'.

DETAILED ITINERARY

Please refer to this itinerary as a guide only, as changes may occur due to unpredictable sea and weather conditions. Flexibility is key, when joining us on our expeditions.

Day 1 Embark Longyearbyen

Arrive in Longyearbyen, where you will be met by a representative of Aurora Expeditions to commence a tour of Longyearbyen. Learn about the town's history, geology, flora and fauna on a half day excursion. You will visit Svalbard Museum and Galleri Svalbard, and take in the main sights of Longyearbyen including Office of the Governor, Svalbard Church, Nybyen (new town), a few of the town's mines such as Santa Claus Mine, and a quick photo stop at the famous beware of polar bear street sign.

Afterwards, you will be transferred to the port in the late afternoon to board the *Greg Mortimer*. You'll have time to settle into your cabin prior to the compulsory briefings. Your voyage commences, cruising out of the beautiful Isfjorden, escorted by gliding fulmars and perhaps the occasional puffin. Find a spot on one of the observation areas watching for seabirds, including graceful ivory gulls, kittiwakes and guillemots. They rise and fall skilfully, using the air currents created by the ship to gain momentum.

Please note: Sometimes our ship is unable to dock in Longyearbyen port due to space and capacity. In these instances, we reach the ship by Zodiac. Please ensure that you keep your wet-weather gear in your hand luggage to use in the Zodiacs, if the situation arises. Please ensure your cabin luggage tag is completed clearly showing your cabin number and name. Our crew will deliver your luggage directly to your cabin.

Days 2-3 Svalbard

Svalbard offers unspoiled, raw arctic wilderness at its best. With majestic mountains of jagged peaks, iridescent sea ice, countless glaciers and superb wildlife-viewing opportunities. Our experienced expedition team, who have made countless journeys to this area, will use their expertise to design our voyage from day to day, choosing the best options based on the prevailing weather, ice conditions and wildlife opportunities.

Cruise along phenomenal fjords stretching towards magnificent mountain ranges, discover a polar desert with creamy coloured slabs of rock, rich in fossils, hear heroic tales of early explorers contrasted with visits to cultural remains from the time of European whaling mainly Russian and Norwegian, witness walrus colonies hauled-out on sea ice or on beaches. While ashore we aim to stretch our legs, hiking on lush tundra where brightly-coloured summer wildflowers and lichen grow, and where reindeer graze, observe the towering cliffs alive with nesting sea birds, including Svalbard's largest little auk colony. Without a doubt, our goal is to encounter the majestic polar bear on pack ice, and the expedition team are just as keen as you to find them— they are on constant watch to spot these dazzling creatures.

If you have chosen an optional activity such as kayaking, you'll have the option to enjoy the activity whenever conditions allow, and of course keen polar plungers will have the chance to fully immerse themselves in polar waters - conditions permitting!

Days 4-5 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 approach East Greenland we may encounter more pack ice where we may see seals and

a variety of seabirds, including northern fulmar and migratory Brunnichs guillemots. 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.

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 informative and fun presentations on geology, history, ice, and early explorers like Nansen, Andree and Scoresby.

Conditions permitting, there may be a chance for kayakers to launch their sea kayaks and the rest of us to cruise in the sea ice with Zodiacs. Perhaps if we have had a good crossing, we may even have the opportunity to make our first landing on the Greenland coast, weather permitting.

Days 6-12 East Greenland

In the coming days, a host of choices are open to us, and depending on ice and weather conditions, the east coast of Greenland is ours to explore. Our experienced expedition team, who have made countless journeys to this area, will use their expertise to design our voyage from day to day. This allows us to make best use of the prevailing weather, ice conditions and wildlife opportunities. We will generally make up to two landings or Zodiac excursions per day; cruising along spectacular ice cliffs, following whales that are feeding near the surface.

Be prepared to experience ice, lots of it! East Greenland contains some of the Arctic's most impressive scenery. Deep fjords and narrow channels, flanked by sharp ice-clad peaks up to 2,000 m / 6,562 ft high. Glaciers create gigantic icebergs that drift throughout the fjord system creating breath-taking scenes. The landscape is filled with multi-coloured tundra home to musk oxen and Arctic hare. Throughout the area are ancient Thule archaeological sites, historical trappers' huts, and modern Inuit hunters' cabins. A highlight is a visit to the Inuit village of Ittoqqortoormiit, the most isolated and northernmost permanent settlement in the region, with approximately 450 inhabitants. The community boasts an excellent museum, gift shop, an abundance of Greenlandic sled dogs, and the opportunity to meet Inuit people.

Explore Scoresbysund, the largest fjord system in the world – a spectacular place that simply needs to be seen to be believed. North of Scoresbysund are, Kong Oscar and Kaizer Franz Josef fjords, two of the most significant fjord systems in all of Greenland, each one encompassing several smaller fjords and sounds. Thanks to the fertile volcanic soil mountains that protects areas from the strong winds, the area is rich in wildlife. You may spot everything from muskox and arctic foxes to mountain hares and even reindeer near the fjord. Look skyward and you could catch a glimpse of birds including glaucous gull, black-legged kittiwake, northern fulmar, common raven and common eider.

We will attempt to enter Kaiser Franz Josef Fjord, a remote and rarely visited fjord system with countless opportunities for exploration within the Northeast Greenland National Park. 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. We aim to reach Scoresbysund, the world's biggest fjord and a favourite hunting ground of the local Inuit. Massive glaciers dump into this fjord, the birthplace of the famous big Greenland icebergs.

We plan to visit the remote Inuit community of Ittoqqortoormiit (Scoresby Town) and to hike across the tundra in search of ancient graveyards and summer villages occupied 3,000 years ago by Eskimos. This area provides excellent opportunities for sea kayaking in its maze of calm, interconnecting waterways. If we are lucky we may see musk oxen, arctic hare and seals, and maybe if we are extremely lucky even a polar bear or narwhal, although due to the local hunting traditions, these sightings are often very rare.

Places we may land along the east coast include:

Cape Humboldt is a beautiful bay on Ymer Island. There is a good chance to take a tundra walk and see musk oxen graze. We will also keep a lookout for Arctic fox and ptarmigan. A lone trapper's hut looks over the bay and magnificent icebergs.

Sefstrom Glacier adorns the narrow peaked waterway in Alpefjord. Enjoy Zodiac cruising and kayaking in this pretty area, where colourful Arctic flora adorns the tundra ground.

Ittoqqortoormiit is Scoresbysund's colourful Inuit community of approximately 500 people. Here you can explore the village, the fascinating museum or sit in the beautiful Lutheran Church. The locals are friendly and from underneath their Arctic fox-fur jackets, the shy young children are keen to say hello and practice their English.

Sydkap in Scoresbysund offers good walking and delightful views across the sound. Kayakers will have good opportunities to explore the lonely beaches. We may explore the ancient gravesites on the island, or the lakes with green tunnels and giant icebergs offer hours of enjoyment for kayak and Zodiac rides.

Rømerfjord

Rømer Fjord with its narrow channels and towering peaks is simply stunning, and lies roughly 167 km / 104 mi south of Scoresbysund. There are great hiking options in the fjord where flowering tundra plants, scattered bones of whales and muskox from centuries of hunting by the Inuit, and fumaroles can be found. These are areas where heated groundwater boil to the surface creating bubbling pools and mineral formations as the water reacts with the atmosphere.

Rode Ø

Rode Ø Island is a glorious place for Zodiac cruising, hiking and kayaking, with its rich red Devonian sandstone geology. Discover the impressive mafic dyke that runs through the east side of Rode Ø. Glaucous gulls find perfect perches and nesting sites along the top of the basalt extrusions. Kayak along the maze of icebergs - pillars and arches, caves and peaks that look as though an artist had sculpted them.

Hare Fjord

The scenery here is breathtaking. Walk across the tundra alongside a ravine or Zodiac cruise where you might find musk ox, along with flitting shore birds, seals and a variety of colours in the lush Arctic tundra. Kayakers can enjoy sublime paddling in one of the most remote fjords in the world. Nearby is the spectacular and impressive Ø Fjord, a perfect place for small ship cruising.

Nordvest Fjord

If mountains rising 1,200 m / 3,937 ft straight out of the water wasn't enough, how about the fjord itself, descending to 1,500 metres? There are also countless icebergs pouring out of the Daugård-Gensen Glacier. A great place for kayaking and Zodiac cruising with plenty of gorgeous bergs while the glacier itself, seemingly small from a distance, proved to be a formidable river of ice snaking down the valley.

Eskimobugt

No one can state the exact age of the neo-Eskimo site at Eskimobugt, but it may only be a few hundred years old. Subterranean winter houses designed with a tunnel that faces the sea where occupants would crawl through to the stand-up living chamber; at the opposite end is the sleeping platform. The walls were erected with carefully laid stones while the roof structure would be built from whatever material was available - driftwood, walrus bone, and

available skin covering. Fire hearths were created by laying rocks in a circle with a bed of white quartzite stones. Learn from our historian about the incredible resourcefulness of the Inuit people whose men travelled formidable distances by kayak to hunt, and whose women crafted sophisticated garments from animal skins and fur – a people for whom survival in such extremes was paramount. Hiking here offers panoramic views, sightings musk ox and, occasionally Arctic hare.

Skipperdalen

See some of the most striking sedimentary sandstone, shale and siltstone formations imaginable. The alternating colours and patterns in the layers of rocks defied belief, and the layers of sediment here are estimated to have taken about 4,000 years to be laid down. You can also find the remains of a simple but highly effective wooden fox trap in use by Norwegian trappers in both Greenland and Svalbard from the early 1900s to 1960s. Skipperdalen is also a marvellous place to hike and paddle in kayaks.

Other possible landing points in the area include:

- Rypefjord
- Nordenskjöld glacier & Blomsterbugten
- Alpenfjorden
- FjordFonfjord
- Bjorn Oya
- Milne Land
- Hekla Havn
- Denmark Island

Day 13 At Sea

During our sea crossing to Jan Mayen Island, our experts will offer informative and entertaining talks and presentations about Arctic exploration and to prepare you for your visit to Jan Mayen, one of the world's most remote and fascinating volcanic islands. Perhaps treat yourself to a remedial massage in the wellness centre, soak in the hot tub, or free up some space on your photographic memory card for the coming days.

Day 14 Jan Mayen

The approach to Jan Mayen is spectacular. The huge volcano (2,277 m / 7,470 ft altitude) is the world's northernmost active volcano, and it last erupted in 1985. The northern part of the island is a great place to look for whales and dolphins, and contains impressive glaciers, some of which reach the sea. If the weather is friendly, we will try to land at Kvalrossbukta, a relatively sheltered bay on the island's west coast. This is one of the landings used to supply the weather station Olonkinbyen, situated on the eastern side of the island. If conditions allows, we may walk from Kvalrossbukta to Olonkinbyen (approximately three hours walk to visit the station). Our Zodiacs will be waiting for us at a small bay to transport us back to the ship.

Day 15 At Sea

We continue our voyage east, sailing to the Norwegian coast. Our expedition team will share their knowledge of Norwegian maritime history and fascinating Norse culture through informative talks and lectures.

Days 16-20 Norwegian Coast

Lofoten is a Norwegian archipelago known for its dramatic mountain scenery, wildly beautiful places of marsh and rock, green fields, reflective lakes, and white sandy beaches by crystal-clear seas. The region offers superb opportunities for ship cruising, kayaking and Zodiac excursions through the fjords, to spot seals, sea eagles and perhaps whales. Learn about Norway's oldest export at the Lofoten Stockfish Museum, enjoy a Zodiac cruise through spectacular and narrow Trollfjord, a two kilometre-long, 100-metre-wide gorge flanked by steep mountains on either side. Stroll through picturesque villages dotted with red and white fishermen's huts, surrounded by soaring granite peak. We plan to land at Torget Island and hike to Torghatten, a fascinating rock formation with an equally interesting legend describing the hole in the mountain having been created by a troll's arrow. En route to Bergen, we hope to visit other charming villages including a visit to the beautiful and historic stave church at Kvernes and maybe Runde Island - one of Norway's premier seabird nesting islands.

Day 21 Disembark Bergen

Disembark in historic Bergen, located in the heart of the Fjord Norway region in the southwest coast. It's the country's second largest city and is surrounded by mountains and fjords including Sognefjord, the country's longest and deepest. Bergen is also rated as a UNESCO City of Gastronomy and is therefore an ideal place to relax after your voyage. Bid a fond farewell to your fellow expeditioners as we all continue our onward journeys. Your voyage includes a transfer to Bergen airport or to your hotel.

NOTE: At the conclusion of the voyage, we do not recommend booking flights departing prior to 12.00 pm on the day of disembarkation in case there are delays.