

North Spitsbergen - Summer Solstice - In search of Polar Bear & Pack Ice - Birding

The best opportunity to spot the King of the Arctic



Title:	North Spitsbergen - Summer Solstice - In search of Polar Bear & Pack Ice - Birding
Dates:	18 Jun - 25 Jun, 2021
Tripcode:	PLA04-21
Duration:	7 nights
Ship:	m/v Plancius
Embarkation:	Longyearbyen
Disembarkation:	Longyearbyen
Language:	English speaking voyage

ITINERARY

PLEASE NOTE: All itineraries are for guidance only. Programs may vary depending on local ice and weather conditions and in order to take advantage of opportunities to see wildlife. The on-board expedition leader determines the final itinerary. Itineraries may mention places that require permission to land, which must be granted by the relevant national authorities. Such permission is not granted prior to the publishing of these itineraries. Flexibility is paramount for expedition cruises. Average cruising speed for m/v Plancius is 10,5 knots.

Start your North Spitsbergen cruise with a trek around historic Longyearbyen, then join our expedition to the north of the island to take in the fantastically beautiful landscapes, the thousands of seabirds, and of course the star of the show, the

polar bear.

“Solstice”: -

The midnight sun is a natural phenomenon that occurs in the summer months. The sun is visible for the full duration of 24 hours, given fair weather. June Solstice (Summer Solstice) is on Monday, 21 June 2021, 05:31 in Longyearbyen. “Solstice” (*Latin: “solstitium”*) means sun-stopping.

The point on the horizon where the sun appears to rise and set, stops and reverses direction after this day. On the solstice, the sun does not rise precisely in the east, but rises to the north of east and sets to the north of west, meaning it's visible in the sky for a longer period of time. It won't be before late August that the sun will go down for a few minutes.

Experience Summer Solstice when the the midnight sun has its highest position above the Northern horizon in Spitsbergen.

Birding: -

We will have at least one dedicated expedition guide in our team who will share their expert knowledge about bird species and who will be available to help you identify, photograph on deck and learn more about the birds that we see. In addition to outdoor sessions, our guide will focus on species and related information on the birds of the Arctic in re-caps and lectures onboard.

Day 1: Largest town, biggest island

You touch down in Longyearbyen, the administrative center of Spitsbergen, the largest island of the Svalbard archipelago. Enjoy strolling around this former mining town, whose parish church and Svalbard Museum make for fascinating attractions. Though the countryside appears stark, more than a hundred species of plant have been recorded in it. In the early evening the ship sails out of Isfjorden, where you might spot the first minke whale of your voyage.

Day 2: Route to Raudfjorden

Sailing to Raudfjorden, on the north coast of Spitsbergen, you take in an expansive fjord spilling with glaciers – and maybe even visited by ringed and bearded seals. The cliffs and shoreline of this fjord also support thriving seabird colonies, rich vegetation, and the possibility of polar bears.

Day 3: The massive Monaco Glacier

Depending on the weather, you could sail into Liefdefjorden and cruise within sight of the 5-kilometer-long (3.1 miles) face of the precipitous Monaco Glacier. The waters in front of this glacier are a favorite feeding spot for thousands of kittiwakes, and the base of the ice is a popular polar bear hunting ground. If ice conditions prevent sailing here early in the season, an alternate route along the west coast of Spitsbergen can be implemented.

Day 4: Highlights of Hinlopen

Today you sail into Hinlopen Strait, home to bearded seals, ringed seals, and polar bears. At the entrance there is even the possibility to spot blue whales. After cruising among the ice floes of Lomfjordshalvøya in the Zodiacs, you can view the bird cliffs of Alkefjellet with their thousands of Brünnich's guillemots. On the east side of Hinlopen Strait, you may attempt a landing on Nordaustlandet. Here reindeer, pink-footed geese, and walrus are likely sights. You can take an alternate route if ice prevents entry into Hinlopen.

Day 5: Stop at the Seven Islands

The northernmost point of your voyage may be north of Nordaustlandet, in the Seven Islands. Here you reach 80° north, just 870 km (540 miles) from the geographic North Pole. Polar bears inhabit this region, so the ship may park for several hours among the pack ice before wheeling around west again.

Day 6: Sailing the continental shelf

While retracing your route west, keep watch for polar bears and elusive Greenland (bowhead) whales. About 40 nautical miles west of Spitsbergen, you sail the edge of the continental shelf. Here fin whales forage during the summer in the upwelling zones (where cold, nutrient-rich water wells up from below the sea's surface) that run along the Spitsbergen banks. At the mouth of Kongsfjorden, you have a good chance of sighting minke whales.

Day 7: Reindeer, foxes, and so many seabirds

Walrus sometimes haul out in Forlandsundet, your next stop. Alternatively, you might sail into St. Johns Fjord or south to the mouth of Isfjorden, landing at Alkhorntet. Seabirds nest on these cliffs, Arctic foxes search below for fallen eggs and chicks, and reindeer graze the sparse vegetation. You arrive in Longyearbyen later at night.

Day 8: There and back again

Every adventure, no matter how grand, must eventually come to an end. You disembark in Longyearbyen, taking home memories that will accompany you wherever your next adventure lies.

Included in this voyage

- *Voyage aboard the indicated vessel as indicated in the itinerary*
- *All meals throughout the voyage aboard the ship including snacks, coffee and tea.*
- *All shore excursions and activities throughout the voyage by Zodiac.*
- *Program of lectures by noted naturalists and leadership by experienced expedition staff.*
- *Free use of rubber boots and snowshoes.*

- *Transfers and baggage handling between the airport, hotels and ship only for those passengers on the group flights to and from Longyearbyen.*
- *All miscellaneous service taxes and port charges throughout the programme.*
- *AECO fees and governmental taxes.*
- *Comprehensive pre-departure material.*

Excluded from this voyage

Any airfare, whether on scheduled or charter flights

Pre- and post- land arrangements.

Passport and visa expenses.

Government arrival and departure taxes.

Meals ashore.

Baggage, cancellation and personal insurance (which is strongly recommended).

Excess baggage charges and all items of a personal nature such as laundry, bar, beverage charges and telecommunication charges.

The customary gratuity at the end of the voyages for stewards and other service personnel aboard (guidelines will be provided).

ACTIVITIES YOU CAN PARTICIPATE IN

Birding

FREE



We will have at least one dedicated expedition guide in our team who will share their expert knowledge about bird species and who will be available to help you identify, photograph and learn more about the birds that we see.

CABINS & PRICES

Quadruple Porthole



1 porthole
2 upper & lower berths
Private shower & toilet
Desk & chair
Flatscreen TV
Telephone & WiFi (supplemented)
Hair dryer
Ample storage space
This cabin is suitable for families traveling with children, or passengers who do not require a twin or more luxurious cabin



Complete cabin
Price for the complete cabin, fully occupied.

15800 USD



Sharing berth
Share your cabin with others for the best price

3950 USD

Triple Porthole



1 porthole
1 upper berth & 2 lower berths
Private shower & toilet
Desk & chair
Flatscreen TV
Telephone & WiFi (supplemented)
Hair dryer
Ample storage space
This cabin is suitable for families traveling with children, or passengers who do not require a twin or more luxurious cabin



Complete cabin
Price for the complete cabin, fully occupied.

16500 USD



Sharing berth
Share your cabin with others for the best price

5500 USD

Twin Porthole



1 porthole
2 lower berths
Private shower & toilet
Desk & chair
Flatscreen TV
Telephone & WiFi (supplemented)
Hair dryer
Ample storage space



Complete cabin
Price for the complete cabin, fully occupied. 11000 USD



Single cabin
Price for the complete cabin occupied by 1 person (1.7x the shared rate). 9350 USD



Sharing berth
Share your cabin with others for the best price 5500 USD

Twin Window



1 window
2 lower berths
Private shower & toilet
Desk & chair
Flatscreen TV
Telephone & WiFi (supplemented)
Hair dryer
Ample storage space



Complete cabin
Price for the complete cabin, fully occupied. 11900 USD



Single cabin
Price for the complete cabin occupied by 1 person (1.7x the shared rate). 10115 USD



Sharing berth
Share your cabin with others for the best price 5950 USD

Twin Deluxe



2 windows
2 lower berths
Private shower & toilet
Desk & chair
Flatscreen TV
Telephone & WiFi (supplemented)
Hair dryer
Ample storage space
These cabins are corner cabins and are slightly more spacious than the normal twin porthole/window cabins



Complete cabin
Price for the complete cabin, fully occupied. 12600 USD



Single cabin
Price for the complete cabin occupied by 1 person (1.7x the shared rate). 10710 USD



Sharing berth
Share your cabin with others for the best price 6300 USD

Superior



2 windows
1 double bed
1 sofa bed
Private shower & toilet
Desk & chair
Flatscreen TV
Telephone & WiFi (supplemented)
Refrigerator
Coffee & tea maker
Hair dryer
Ample storage space



Complete cabin
Price for the complete cabin, fully occupied. 14300 USD



Single cabin
Price for the complete cabin occupied by 1 person (1.7x the shared rate). 12155 USD