Spitsbergen In Depth: Big Island, Big Adventure

Spitsbergen is the largest island of the Svalbard archipelago, and on this voyage we’ll attempt a circumnavigation of the island. Lying entirely within the Arctic Circle, Spitsbergen is rugged, wild, unspoiled—utterly unforgettable. When it comes to viewing arctic wildlife, Spitsbergen is known as one of the most prolific destinations.

The island and surrounding area offers one of the best opportunities to view polar bears, and with luck you’ll be able to see the world’s largest carnivores in their natural habitat. Walrus populations love Spitsbergen as well, feeding in the food-rich icy waters around the island. Whales and seabirds will also entertain you during the sailing portions of the expedition, and you may catch a sighting of reindeer or fox when taking Zodiac excursions to shore.

**EXPEDITION IN BRIEF**

- Encounter arctic wildlife: polar bears, walrus, reindeer
- View numerous arctic bird species
- Explore the polar desert
- Take advantage of continuous daylight
- Hike the tundra
- Cruise in a Zodiac
- Enjoy optional kayak adventure opportunities

**DID YOU KNOW?** Spitsbergen and the Svalbard archipelago have been known to exist since the time of the Vikings, and the first circumnavigation of the archipelago was by Dutch whaler Cornelis Giles in 1707.
Adventure Options

Booking an Adventure Option as part of your expedition is a great way to enhance your polar experience. These options are subject to availability and fill up quickly, so be sure to book yours early. Please note that Adventure Options are weather dependent.

**KAYAKING**

Imagine gliding along the surface of a bay in the presence of icebergs and glaciers! Our kayaking adventures are the best way to feel at one with the sea. Taken by small groups of 10 people, multiple times per voyage, kayaking adventures are only conducted during calm weather conditions. We recommend you have some prior kayaking experience, including the capability to do a wet exit.

*More information about your Adventure Options, including the necessary experience, physical requirements and cost, is available by contacting your Polar Travel Adviser.*

**INCLUDED ACTIVITIES (VARY BY DEPARTURE)**

**HIKING**

Hiking is a great way to appreciate the immense windswept landscapes of the Arctic. The tundra comes alive during the brief arctic summer, with bursts of color from shrubs and plants that live in this polar environment. You’ll find that each hike is different: you’ll explore communities, shorelines or glaciated landscapes, often on the lookout for wildlife. Hiking participation is optional, and your Expedition Team will advise you of what levels of activity you can expect prior to each excursion.
Itinerary

**DAY 1 Embarkation Day in Longyearbyen, Norway**

Your Spitsbergen arctic voyage begins when you board your ship in Longyearbyen, the island’s largest settlement. Enjoy your first view of the island’s rugged, glacier-topped mountains, rising majestically from icy waters.

**DAYS 2 TO 12 Circumnavigating Spitsbergen**

Expect a new adventure every day as we begin our circumnavigation by heading north and around the island of Spitsbergen, exploring smaller, outlying islands. The variety of incredible wildlife and geological formations found here is astounding. We plan to circumnavigate the island of Spitsbergen, but if conditions are favorable, we will also attempt a circumnavigation of the whole Svalbard archipelago. Every expedition will be different, depending on the weather and ice, but we do hope to visit a few of our favorite landing sites, including the 14th of July Glacier, Ny London, Phippsøya, Alkefjellet and the seldom-visited Kvitøya.

The names may seem strange to you, but each has its own unique appeal. For birders, the 14th of July Glacier is home to purple sandpipers, common eiders, barnacle geese and arctic terns, while Alkefjellet is home to nesting Brünnich’s guillemots (thick-billed murres).

If you’re looking for confirmation that reindeer are real, then you’ll want to have your camera ready for visits to sites like Ny London, Sundneset and Alkhornet. As for the largest carnivore in the world, searching for polar bears is a constant activity for our Expedition Team. Phippsøya and Isbukta are two of the bears’ preferred places for hunting, which translates into great potential for you to capture them in action.

A big part of appreciating Spitsbergen comes from understanding the culture—not just how people live today, but also how this land was first explored. Whaling was a key industry, and you will see old blubber ovens from the 16th century, plus other evidence of whaling at landing sites such as Smeerenburg. Colorful tundra meadows are complemented by glaciers, and sometimes there is a rare chance to spot beluga whales.

**DAY 13 Depart Longyearbyen**

Your adventure ends in the frontier-style settlement of Longyearbyen. From here, we’ll transfer you to the airport for your flight home.

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**IMPORTANT REMINDER**

*Embracing the unexpected is part of the legacy—and excitement—of expedition travel. When traveling in extremely remote regions, your expedition staff must allow the sea, the ice and the weather to guide route and itinerary details. This itinerary is a tentative outline of what you’ll experience on this voyage; please be aware that no specific itinerary can be guaranteed.*
Arrival & Departure Details

Welcome! As you prepare for your journey, you may be interested to know the details of your arrival and departure. Since air transportation to and from your voyage is not included in the cost of your expedition, you will need to arrange flights from your home to the starting point, and home again from the finishing point. Quark Expeditions® can assist you with booking air arrangements on an individual basis, or feel free to contact your preferred travel agent or airline. Here are the details for your expedition.

Arrival Day and Embarkation

ARRIVING IN LONGYEARBYEN AND EMBARKATION
Please be sure to arrive prior to 3 pm on Day 1 of your expedition. Based on the arrival information you send us, we will arrange for a transfer from the airport to a downtown hotel meeting point. Your luggage will go on to meet you in your cabin when you board the ship. At a designated time which will be communicated during your arrival transfer, you will be transferred to the ship for embarkation.

For passengers arriving one day before the start of the itinerary, a transfer will be provided to your previously arranged hotel. A pre-expedition hotel night is not included. Speak to your Polar Travel Adviser for assistance in booking this hotel accommodation, or if you choose to book independently, please include the hotel information with the arrival details that we will need to arrange your transfer.

Final Day and Departure

DISEMBARKATION IN LONGYEARBYEN AND ONWARD
Your ship is scheduled to arrive back at the pier in Longyearbyen, between 7 am and 8 am local time. After breakfast, and once the ship has docked, you will have time to bid farewell to your Expedition Team and shipmates before completing your disembarkation. The process takes about an hour. After disembarkation, there will be a group transfer either to your hotel if you have booked additional accommodation, or to the airport for those who have booked flights on disembarkation day. Please book your flight home from Longyearbyen to depart as late in the day as possible, or at a date after the end of your expedition. If you have booked a flight that departs before 11 am on the date that your expedition ends, you will be at risk of missing your flight.

Please note: Weather conditions can always delay our arrival, and airline schedule changes have also been known to occur. Booking flexible tickets is always encouraged, as we cannot be held responsible for delays due to unforeseen circumstances.
A post-expedition hotel night is recommended.

LET US HELP YOU BOOK YOUR FLIGHTS!
To book flights to complement your expedition, contact a Polar Travel Adviser (1.888.892.0073) for seamless, worry-free booking of all flights.
Hotel Accommodations

Your itinerary does not include hotel accommodation before or after the scheduled itinerary. If you are arriving prior to Day 1 of your expedition or are staying after the disembarkation day, please contact your Polar Travel Adviser for hotel options. Since accommodation space is limited, you are encouraged to request any extra nights as early as possible.

Arrival and Departure Transfers

LONGYEARBYEN AIRPORT TRANSFERS

ARRIVAL
Transfers in Longyearbyen are included in the expedition. If you arrive one day prior to the expedition, a transfer will be provided from the airport to your hotel, and the following day you will be transferred to the ship at the appropriate time. Details of ship transfer times will be provided when you arrive.

If you arrive on embarkation day, you will be transferred from the airport to a downtown location. Your luggage will be taken directly to the ship, and later you will be transferred from the meeting point to the ship. Details of ship transfer times will be provided when you arrive.

DEPARTURE
If you have flights booked for the day of disembarkation, departure transfers are provided to either a downtown location or directly to the airport. Your luggage can be stored in a luggage truck if your flight is scheduled for later in the day.

If you are spending extra time in Longyearbyen after your expedition, a transfer will be provided to your hotel. You will need to arrange your own transfer to the airport if you are flying out after the disembarkation day.

In order to facilitate your transfers, we request that you provide your flight details to Quark Expeditions® at least 30 days prior to traveling.
Inclusions

THIS EXPEDITION INCLUDES

- Shipboard accommodation with daily housekeeping
- All breakfasts, lunches, dinners and snacks on board
- All shore landings per the daily program
- Leadership throughout the voyage by our experienced Expedition Leader
- All Zodiac transfers and cruising per the daily program
- Formal and informal presentations by our Expedition Team and special guests as scheduled
- Photographic journal documenting the expedition
- Waterproof expedition boots on loan for shore landings
- Official Quark Expeditions® parka to keep
- Coffee, tea and cocoa available around the clock
- Hair dryer and bathrobe in every cabin
- Comprehensive predeparture materials, including a map and an informative Arctic Reader
- All miscellaneous service taxes and port charges throughout the program
- All luggage handling aboard the ship
- Emergency evacuation insurance to a maximum benefit of US$500,000 per person
- Arrival transfer from Longyearbyen airport to your hotel if you arrive one day prior to embarkation
- Transfer from your hotel or Longyearbyen airport to the ship on embarkation day
- Group transfer from the ship to Longyearbyen airport or a local designated drop-off location on disembarkation day

THIS EXPEDITION EXCLUDES

- International airfare
- Passport and visa expenses
- Government arrival and departure taxes not mentioned above
- Meals ashore unless otherwise specified
- Baggage, cancellation, interruption and medical travel insurance—strongly recommended
- Excess-baggage fees on international flights
- Mandatory waterproof pants for Zodiac cruising, or any other gear not mentioned
- Laundry, bar, beverage and other personal charges unless specified
- Phone and Internet charges
- Voluntary gratuity at the end of the voyage for shipboard staff and crew
- Additional overnight accommodation
- Optional kayaking activities
### Dates & Rates

#### SPITSBERGEN IN DEPTH *Big Island, Big Adventure*

**Expedition Aboard the Adventure Ship OCEAN NOVA**

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<th>Days</th>
<th>Start/End</th>
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*All rates per person in USD.*

**Expedition Aboard the Adventure Ship OCEAN ADVENTURER**

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*All rates per person in USD.*
LILLIEHÖÖK GLACIER

In 1906, His Serene Highness Prince Albert I of Monaco visited Lilliehöök Glacier to conduct scientific investigations. His great-great-grandson, HSH Albert II, visited the glacier a hundred years later as part of a scientific investigation, this time to further our understanding of the arctic clam, a species that lives for more than a century. The growth rings of a single clam’s shell contain evidence of the chemicals encountered by the clam. Scientists can determine the variations of the water’s temperature and pollutant content by studying the shell.

LONGYEARBYEN

Eighteen hundred people inhabit the administrative capital of Svalbard, which is situated on the shore of Isfjorden. The settlement was founded in 1905 by John Munroe Longyear, the majority owner of the Arctic Coal Company of Boston.

MOFFEN ISLAND

This island is designated as a protected sanctuary for walrus.

MONACO GLACIER

HSH Prince Albert I of Monaco, a pioneer of oceanography, led an expedition to Svalbard in 1906. His team used sophisticated photographic techniques to understand the shape and position of several glacier fronts. Monaco Glacier honors the expedition, the prince and the principality over which he reigned.

PHIPPSØYA

This small archipelago is the northernmost land in Svalbard. Englishmen left their mark during a survey of the islands in the 1780s. The party named the islands after themselves, with the smallest and least significant island being named Nelsonøya, after the lowly midshipman, who was promoted over the years to the rank and title of Vice Admiral Horatio Lord Nelson!
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ROSENBERGDALEN

This is an excellent location to stretch your legs and explore the Arctic on foot. We often head out hiking here in search of reindeer.

SAMARINVÅGIN

The Samarin Glacier dominates the landscape that surrounds the bay, where icebergs, kittiwakes and Brünnich’s guillemots (thick-billed murres) may be seen.

VIBEBUKTA

This polar desert may seem barren, but traces of life can be found here, including fossils and whale bones that are 9,500 years old. The ancient bones provide nutrients (which are leached out) for microenvironments.

VON OTTERØYA

Otter Island is an excellent location for Zodiac cruising to search for and photograph polar bears and walrus.

WORSLEYNESET

This is a beautiful and colorful tundra-covered island with moss campion (a small wildflower), saxifrage and arctic mouse-eared chickweed—fun names on an island that is a pleasure to explore.