Arctic Watch Wilderness Lodge: Adventure and Wildlife at 74°N
(Northwest Passage Marathon Departure)

Bring your running legs to the Canadian Arctic at this unique wilderness lodge and world-class beluga whale observation site. Situated 500 miles (805 km) north of the Arctic Circle, the lodge offers guests fully-guided opportunities for hiking, kayaking, and exploring the arctic tundra in all-terrain vehicles (ATVs), as well as a bi-annual Northwest Passage Marathon. Observe the elusive musk ox, polar bears and more wildlife in their natural habitat and enjoy comfortable accommodations and superb food, all accessible within a scenic flight from Yellowknife, Northwest Territories, to Somerset Island in Nunavut, Canada.

**EXPEDITION IN BRIEF:**
- Encounter rarely seen arctic wildlife and their habitats: polar bears, musk ox, bird cliffs, fox dens and more
- Complete a half-, full or ultra-marathon along the shores of the Northwest Passage
- Take advantage of included equipment and activities such as all-terrain vehicles (ATVs), *Mercedes Unimog*, kayaking, rafting and more
- Visit the Cunningham River estuary, home to hundreds of beluga whales
- Visit Cape Anne Thule sites with ancient stone and bone houses
- Unique photography opportunities

**DID YOU KNOW?** Located directly on the Northwest Passage, above the Arctic Circle, Arctic Watch Wilderness Lodge hosts North America’s most northerly marathon.
Included Activities

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 the shrubs and plants that eke out a living in this polar environment. You’ll find each hike is different - exploring shorelines or landscapes, always 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.

RIVER RAFTING

The Cunningham River is swift-flowing, crystal-clear water with no difficult sections or rapids. Typically lasting a full day and including an optional hike to the starting point and lunch along the shore, guests will travel by raft on this river excursion. Guests are given a hands-on introduction to rafting prior to departing, and no previous experience is required.

ATV

A great way to better explore the varied terrain of Somerset Island is by all-terrain vehicle (ATV). Guests can opt to ride as passenger, or receive a hands-on introduction to driving ATVs, which are easy and fun to operate. Helmets and a safety briefing are provided.

KAYAKING

Led by experienced kayak guides, guests will paddle among icebergs, on the watch for ring and bearded seals and beluga whales. Sightings of sea birds, including arctic terns and eider ducks, can be expected. Although no experience is required, even avid kayakers will enjoy this half-day adventure. All equipment and basic instructions are provided.

FISHING

Guests have the opportunity to try “catch-and-release” fishing for arctic char at Inukshuk Lake. Fishing equipment and gear is supplied, and spinning equipment is also available. Fly fishing is also welcome and guests are free to bring their preferred gear. Nunavut fishing licences are available for purchase at the lodge for a small fee.
Itinerary

SAMPLE ITINERARY

The itinerary outlined below is only a sample of a typical week at Arctic Watch Wilderness Lodge. Day-to-day activities may vary and are also weather dependent. Please note the likelihood of seeing belugas early in the season is dependent on weather and ice conditions.

DAY 1 Yellowknife, Northwest Territories

Enjoy an included night in Yellowknife and meet your fellow travelers at a welcome expedition briefing, followed by boot and signature Quark Expeditions® parka distribution.

DAY 2 Yellowknife and Arctic Watch Wilderness Lodge

Today, board our private chartered plane to fly the 1,000 miles (1,500 km) to the Arctic Watch Wilderness Lodge. During the four and a half hour flight, we’ll pass over the treeline as we cross the Arctic Circle. Following a refueling stop in the community of Cambridge Bay, you’ll circle above Cunningham Inlet. Enjoy aerial views of the lodge below, before landing on the private airstrip on Somerset Island. A short walk across the tundra, and an even shorter raft ride across the Cunningham River, will bring us to the lodge. Following a tour of the facilities, you’ll be escorted to your cabins. After settling in, meet your hosts for a safety briefing and overview of the exciting activities and options ahead.

DAY 3 Arctic Watch Wilderness Lodge, Somerset Island, Nunavut

After a hot breakfast, a typical first morning at the lodge may include receiving a hands-on introduction to driving all-terrain vehicles (ATVs), which are easy and fun to drive. Later, we may take a short hike to the Cunningham River estuary to spot beluga whales frolicking in the shallow water only a few yards offshore. After lunch, there may be an opportunity for a hike to Triple Waterfalls, a five-story torrent of free-falling water. There you can see nesting peregrine falcons and other birds such as loons, snow buntings, sandpipers and rough-legged hawks. Exploring this canyon introduces you to the delicate beauty of wild arctic flowers. Encounters with musk ox are common.

During your gourmet dinner, choose a fine Canadian bottle of wine to pair from the “Northwest Passage Wine and Spirit List.” After dinner, there’s free time to explore in and around the lodge. The library has a broad selection of arctic and polar titles. The interpretive center contains collections of local fossils, skeletal remains of arctic fauna, and a collection of traditional Inuit clothing from Canada, Greenland and Siberia.

WANT TO STAY LONGER OR ARRIVE EARLIER?

Contact our Polar Travel Advisers via email, live chat or phone (1.888.892.0073) for seamless worry-free booking of all trip extensions.

ARCTIC WATCH WILDERNESS LODGE: ADVENTURE AND WILDLIFE AT 74°N
**DAY 4 Arctic Watch Wilderness Lodge**

Today, test your mettle by completing North America’s most northerly marathon, or cheer on the runners and revel in the excitement of the race. The terrain features 30.6 miles (50 km) of sandstone pebble beaches and red soil valleys, along the shores of the Northwest Passage. It’s possible to see belugas, musk ox, and polar bears while following the rough marked trail. The water here is very fresh and potable, so it’s not necessary to carry water; however wearing waterproof footwear is important, as the run will take you through some shallow creek crossings!

In the evening, following a well-earned celebratory dinner, and distribution of your marathon certificates, we’ll have a lecture on the beluga research being conducted in Cunningham Inlet.

**DAY 5 Arctic Watch Wilderness Lodge**

Following breakfast, we’ll depart for a trip to Flatrock Falls, crossing the Cunningham River delta. There, you’ll have the option of hiking or traveling by Mercedes Unimog a (multi-purpose four-wheel drive truck). We’ll visit the Somerset Island canyons, formed as the result of shifting fault lines. Their steep walls vary from 200 to 1,000 feet (up to 305 meters). Millions of fossils of prehistoric plants and animals litter the ground. You may also have the opportunity to observe nesting sites of local birds, including terns, plovers and snow geese. An al fresco lunch is served directly on the flat rocks that surround this canyon.

After lunch, we’ll travel to Gull Canyon, where you can see the striking color contrasts between the barren canyon and a lush gull rookery. The Canadian Wildlife Service recently declared this spot to be a unique eco-system due to the gull rookery and the presence of peregrine falcons. In the evening, a scientist in residence will give an informal lecture.

**DAY 6 Arctic Watch Wilderness Lodge**

Today’s full-day rafting adventure will begin after breakfast with a Mercedes Unimog truck ride to the Arctic Watch raft launch on the Cunningham River, 12.5 miles (20 km) from the lodge. Opt to hike the final four miles (6 km) through the Badlands, passing the skeletal remains of two bowhead whales dated from eight thousand years ago. On the way to the launch, you may encounter musk oxen, snow geese, jaegers, arctic foxes, sandpipers and rough-legged hawks.

We’ll savor a picnic lunch on the beach beside the river, as the staff and guides prepare the rafts. Return to the lodge by raft on the swift-flowing, crystal-clear water of the gentle rapids. The views are amazing and include steep canyon walls and, at one point, a 180-degree turn.

Tonight, we’ll enjoy our farewell dinner and evening at Arctic Watch.

**DAY 7 Depart Arctic Watch Wilderness Lodge**

Today, you’ll bid a fond goodbye to the lodge team and the High Arctic. You may have time to take advantage of one last activity before we depart. In the late afternoon, return to Yellowknife. Upon arrival in Yellowknife you will be transferred to your included hotel.

**DAY 8 Depart Yellowknife**

After breakfast and boot return, you can make your way home at your leisure or spend some more time in the Yellowknife area.
Inclusions

THIS ADVENTURE INCLUDES

- Daily accommodation
- All breakfasts, lunches, dinners and snacks at Arctic Watch
- All activities per the daily program, e.g. ATV, kayaking, rafting, photography, etc.
- Leadership throughout the expedition by our experienced Arctic Watch Team
- Formal and informal presentations by the Expedition Team and special guests as scheduled
- Waterproof expedition boots on loan
- An official Quark Expeditions® parka to keep
- Coffee, tea, water and juice available around the clock (soft drinks and beer are not available)
- Comprehensive pre-departure materials, including a map and an informative Arctic Reader
- All miscellaneous service taxes throughout the program
- All luggage handling at the charter terminal and at the lodge
- Emergency evacuation insurance to a maximum benefit of US$100,000 per person
- Complimentary WiFi (limited signal strength)

THIS ADVENTURE EXCLUDES

- Mandatory transfer package*
- International airfare
- Passport and applicable visa expenses
- Government arrival and departure taxes not mentioned above
- Meals outside the lodge with the exception of breakfasts in Yellowknife
- Wine and spirits, “Northwest Passage Wine and Spirit List” available at additional cost
- Baggage, cancellation, interruption, and medical travel insurance - strongly recommended
- Excess baggage fees on international flights
- Waterproof gear beyond the included parka
- Voluntary gratuity at the end of the expedition for staff
- Additional overnight accommodation
- Fee for fishing licence
- Additional expenses (meals, accommodation, international flight change fees, etc.) incurred by delay or cancellation of activities due to suboptimal weather

*MANDATORY TRANSFER PACKAGE INCLUDES:

- Hotel shuttle transfers on arrival and departure between airport and hotel in Yellowknife
- One night hotel accommodation in Yellowknife with breakfast
- Group transfer to and from charter flight to Arctic Watch Wilderness Lodge
- Charter flight from Yellowknife to Arctic Watch Wilderness Lodge (return)
- One night hotel accommodation in Yellowknife with breakfast

Package cost: $1,690

Note: Baggage allowance on charter flight is 11 lbs (20 kg) checked and 11 lbs (5 kg) carry-on.
Marathon Dates & Rates

ARCTIC WATCH WILDERNESS LODGE Adventure and Wildlife at 74°N

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Mandatory Transfer package — $1,690
All rates per person in USD.
Please note that the likelihood of seeing belugas early in the season is dependent on weather and ice conditions.

NOT A RUNNER?
Check out our 8- and 10-day traditional departures on the next page!

HOW TO BOOK YOUR EXPEDITION & ADVENTURE OPTIONS
To book your cabin or inquire about the availability of Adventure Options, contact a Polar Travel Adviser 1.888.892.0073 (+1.203.803.2666).

1-888-892-0073
Additional Dates & Rates

**ARCTIC WATCH WILDERNESS LODGE** *Adventure and Wildlife at 74°N*

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*Mandatory Transfer package — $1,690*

*All rates per person in USD.*

*Please note that during the first week of the season, there is less likelihood of seeing belugas.*
POSSIBLE HIGHLIGHTS AND WILDLIFE

CUNNINGHAM INLET

Every summer, this sheltered inlet is home to about 2000 beluga whales who pass through the Cunningham River estuary on Somerset Island, Nunavut. Arctic Watch Wilderness Lodge is located within walking distance of this cluster of whale activity, and we will be able to view them enjoying the warmth of the river water and socializing.

TRIPLE WATERFALLS

A hike from the lodge brings you to a five-story torrent of free-falling water. Here you can see nesting peregrine falcons and other birds such as loons, snow buntings, sandpipers and rough-legged hawks.

MUSKOX RIDGE TRAIL

The trail provides a scenic overview of the entire Cunningham River delta. Here you will see an arctic fox den and are very likely to encounter musk ox herds.

INUKSHUK LAKE

Located two hours from the lodge by ATV, at Inukshuk Lake you can fish for arctic char as part of the lodge’s catch and release program.

FLATROCK FALLS

Here you can view the Somerset Island canyons, formed as the result of shifting fault lines. Their most vertical walls vary in height from 200 to 1,000 feet. Keep your eyes open for fossils of prehistoric plants and animals.

GULL CANYON

Named by Arctic Watch owners Richard Weber and Josée Auclair, Gull Canyon shows the striking biological contrasts between barren canyon and lush gull rookery.

CAPE ANNE

A trip to Cape Anne includes seeing scenic vistas, icebergs, ancient Thule campsites and giant prehistoric whale bones. The Thule were a culture of bowhead whale hunters, and ancestors of today’s modern Inuit. The Cape Anne Thule site is the largest in the area and includes the remains of 15 stone and bone houses.

YELLOWKNIFE

Beautiful Yellowknife is a thriving community on the north shore of Great Slave Lake, featuring endless summer days and incredible arctic scenery. Originally a gold-mining town, Yellowknife has now reinvented itself as Canada’s “Diamond Capital”, and is an interesting gateway to the expansive world of the north. Numerous opportunities abound for an active and unique vacation, including seeing Northern Lights, dogsledding, or hiking on the Canadian Shield.

Last updated February 13, 2015