Fair Isle, Faroes, and Spitsbergen: Birds and Bears

This arctic expedition will have you traveling under the midnight sun to some of the most remote islands on earth, where only a small number of adventurers have ever left their footprints. As you sail across the North Atlantic Ocean, you’ll soon be immersed in the rugged beauty of the region, as well as whaling and Viking history, visiting such awe-inspiring and unspoiled destinations as Fair Isle (home of a famous bird observatory), the Faroe Islands (where the rolling green hills and grass-covered roofs seem to come straight out of a movie) and Spitsbergen (a wildlife haven), not to mention the world’s most northern active volcanic island and possibly the smallest and most picturesque capital city on the planet.

Towering fjords, massive glaciers, soaring sea stacks and coastal cliffs teeming with thousands of unique seabirds, like the amazing Atlantic puffin, will simply take your breath away. So too will the diverse wildlife of this far-flung region, from the iconic polar bear and Svalbard reindeer to dolphins, seals and a variety of whales (including minke, fin and humpback). And having continuous daylight for part of the voyage means that you may spot these magnificent creatures in their natural habitat at any time of day... or night!

DID YOU KNOW? One of the world’s most fascinating (and cute!) birds, Atlantic puffins, which got their name from the puffiness of their chicks, sport a similar black-and-white “tuxedo” look as penguins. But unlike their southern counterparts, these small birds boast colorful, comical features, earning them the nicknames “sea parrots” and “clowns of the sea.” Their large parrot-like beak changes from a dull gray in winter to a bright orange and red in spring, coordinating with their orange feet and the fleshy yellow rosettes at the base of their beak.

EXPEDITION IN BRIEF

• Encounter iconic Arctic wildlife, such as whales, reindeer, seals, seabirds and the iconic polar bear
• Explore the volcanic and glacier-covered Jan Mayen island, in the heart of the North Atlantic Ocean
• Visit abandoned whaling stations, a bird observatory and other significant sites, and learn about the storied history of the region
• Cruise in a Zodiac to get up close to wildlife and diverse landscapes
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.

Photography Session

With Cindy Miller Hopkins

Cindy Miller Hopkins is a full-time travel and wildlife photographer with thousands of publications to her credit. Her images can be seen on the pages of text books, travel brochures, calendars, and other consumer products, as well as U.S. and international magazines and newspapers. Her freelance, workshop, teaching and assignment career has taken her to all seven continents and over 140 countries. Some of her recent clients include National Geographic Traveler, Wells Fargo Bank, American Express, Microsoft, AAA & Frommer’s travel guides, BING homepage images, most major cruise lines and TV’s Food Network. She has an image on permanent display at Smithsonian’s National Museum of the American Indian in Washington D.C. She is a long time member of American Society of Picture Professionals and current Board Member, and Past President, of the North American Nature Photography Association Foundation. When she’s not traveling, which isn’t often, she lives at home with her husband in Colorado Springs, Colorado, USA.

As a special guest of Quark’s, on the Fair Isle, Faroes, and Spitsbergen: Birds and Bears expedition, Cindy will be available to help you with your camera, as well as your photography, both on and off the ship. In addition to hands on help from Cindy, guests can expect photography workshops. Some of Cindy’s lectures are for those newer to photography — Point & Shoot Basics and Beyond, Composition, People or NO People? That is the question!, and Vacation Photos Worth Framing; and for those guests looking for something a bit more advanced - Digital Image Management, Metadata, The Missing Link, and Marketing.

Regardless of your skill level, Cindy, and Quark’s onboard team of expert photographers, will be able to assist photography enthusiasts, whether just starting out, or trying to go pro.
General Photo Classes

Below is a list of possible photography workshops conducted by Cindy. Please note not all classes will be offered due to timing.

POINT & SHOOT BASICS AND BEYOND
This class covers an introduction to digital cameras, point and shoot camera basics, as well as pointers for iPhone & iPad users. Whether you’re a beginner or a seasoned shooter, you’re sure to pick up some new information. Learn the truth about megapixels, the differences in memory cards, how to make your camera shoot accurately through glass, proper use of flash, and even some trouble shooting tips for what to do when things go wrong.

COMPOSITION
Where you put the subject in your photo can make the difference between a snapshot and a GREAT shot! Learn some simple rules while looking at photographic samples from around the world. This workshop will teach you how to take photos in a totally new way by taking advantage of leading lines, the use of color, and the rule of thirds. We will also learn some exciting hints on how to shoot more creative photos by using select focus.

PEOPLE OR NO PEOPLE? THAT IS THE QUESTION!
Whether you’re somebody who prefers to have friends and family in EVERY shot or the person muttering under their breath waiting for everybody to MOVE out of the way, Cindy will help you to better understand when and how to include, or exclude, people from your images. We will learn about using people to enhance your images and hints for shooting in crowds to omit people from your shots.

VACATION PHOTOS WORTH FRAMING
Our vacation photos are some of our most prized images. As a full-time professional travel photographer, Cindy will teach you the dos and don’ts of getting the best vacation shots ever! This workshop will cover advice on shooting in adverse conditions, how to tell a story with your photos, unconventional use of flash and shooting images with a “sense of place.”

Advanced Photo Classes

DIGITAL IMAGE MANAGEMENT
Most of us don’t miss buying and processing rolls of film like we used to, but with the introduction of digital capture comes a whole list of new, time consuming, issues. This class will cover: The downloading process, why it’s important to rename all of your files, how to be a good editor, sorting and rating your images using photo software, organizing your images into file folders, and finally backing up and archiving your photos. By streamlining your image management, you are bound to speed up your workflow and improve the process of not only safely storing, but FINDING your favorite images.

METADATA, THE MISSING LINK
As photographers we all love perusing that perfect shot! That’s what keeps us motivated and coming back for more. With advances in digital processing software, many of us are willing to invest time to take our images to the next level using creative post processing. But, very few of us see any advantage of inputting additional metadata into our image files. Let’s face it, most of us don’t see any reward. This workshop will introduce you to the “how” but also the “whys,” proper metadata can save you time and make you money. This advanced class will cover: How and where to find automatically embedded camera metadata, how to use camera metadata to improve your images, proper captioning and key-wording, and time saving tips on how to BATCH process.

MARKETING
For many of us, the thought of winning a photo contest or being published is on the top of our wish list. This class will go over professional business practices that even a hobbyist will appreciate. Some of the topics covered are: How to enter images into photo contests, client contracts, the truth about pricing, working with agents, contract negotiations and a realistic overview of the business of photography.
Itinerary

**DAY 1 Embark in Aberdeen, United Kingdom**

The gateway for your Arctic adventure, the Scottish city of Aberdeen has many monikers, but its most famous is Granite City (it was once the granite capital of the world). Wandering the streets, you’ll soon see why, as the Victorian buildings sparkle in the sun, courtesy of the high mica content of the granite. A bustling cultural hub, Aberdeen also offers a range of museums, galleries, theatres, shops, cafés and restaurants to explore. Be sure to be out on deck, camera in hand, as your ship sets sail this afternoon. The area’s coastal waters offer excellent possibilities for spotting bottlenose and white-beaked dolphins, harbor porpoises and minke whales.

**DAY 2 Fair Isle**

The U.K.’s most remote inhabited island, the extraordinary Fair Isle is located halfway between the Shetland and Orkney Islands. Boasting a rugged beauty, Fair Isle’s landscape is diverse, with fields and moors dominated by seaside cliffs and an astounding amount of sea stacks, natural arches and caves.

Despite its small size (and lack of a pub or restaurant), the island offers activities for history, nature and photography buffs alike. Visit the museum to immerse yourself in local artifacts, photos, knitwear and other historical memorabilia. Or climb up the 106 steps and two ladders to the top of the south lighthouse, to take in incredible vistas of the dramatic peninsula. At 85 feet/26 meters, the 1891 Stevenson structure is the tallest lighthouse in the Shetlands and was one of the last in Britain to be manned. Don’t forget to snap a shot of the circa 1935 classic red phone booth by the post office!

In terms of wildlife, orcas are native to the waters around Fair Isle, and they sometimes come close in pursuit of seals. But the island is best known for its bird observatory and offers an exciting vantage point for viewing migrating birds, with coastal cliffs teeming with seabirds in spring and summer. The star attraction is the Atlantic puffin, a clown-like bird that clings to the steep slopes. Photographers will surely want to capture their likeness.

**EXTEND YOUR STAY**

Contact our Polar Travel Advisers via email, live chat or phone (1.888.892.0073) for seamless, worry-free booking of all trip extensions.
to capture pictures of their bemused expressions, and Fair Isle’s easily accessible grassy banks make it one of the best places in the Shetlands to get close to these colorful creatures. Northern fulmars, kittiwakes, storm petrels, razorbills and guillemots are also likely to be spotted, soaring over the open waters.

Another must for visitors to this community of crofters, artisans and artists, a traditional Fair Isle sweater will keep you warm during the rest of your Arctic voyage. Be sure to pick one up, along with a matching hat, scarf and mittens, at the observatory gift shop.

**DAY 3 Torshavn, Faroe Islands**

Known for its beautiful, unspoiled landscape, with verdant pastures giving way to rugged, steep cliffs, the Faroe Islands have a storied past, though the details of the archipelago’s early history are a bit hazy. The first settlers may have been seventh-century Irish monks seeking solitude on these islands far removed from any continent. Their isolation ended in 800 AD, with the arrival of Norse farmers, and Norwegian colonization continued throughout the Viking Age. Today, many of the inhabitants of the Faroe Islands, now a self-governing country within the Kingdom of Denmark, are descendants of Norwegian Vikings.

Exploring Tórshavn, where the Vikings established their government in 825 AD, you can travel back in time and enjoy a soothing solitude similar to those early days. One of the world’s smallest capitals, the picturesque Tórshavn has a relaxed vibe and a number of historic and cultural sites. Meander the maze of narrow laneways of the old town, admiring the quaint wooden houses with traditional sod roofs and white paneled windows. Learn about the history of the islands, from the days of the Vikings till the 19th century, at the National Museum of the Faroe Islands (be sure to check out the carved church pew ends), explore the botanical gardens at the national history museum, or visit the art museum to see vibrant works by Faroese artists. If you’re looking for more action, hike up to the historic fort, built in 1580 to guard against pirate raids, and enjoy stunning views of the port below. Or perhaps you prefer to wander the charming harbor, filled with cafés, pubs and old warehouses, and simply gaze out at the sea while sipping a latte.

**DAY 4 At Sea**

Say goodbye to the Faroes as we cruise toward the world’s most northerly volcanic island, Jan Mayen. There are several activities to keep you engaged while at sea. Learn to identify seabirds gliding alongside your ship, attend dynamic presentations by your Expedition Team, relax in our polar library or simply spend some time on deck, admiring the sea. With your binoculars and camera at the ready, keep your eyes peeled for the blow of a humpback, blue or fin whale. Encounters with minke whales or orcas are also possible, since their curiosity often brings them near the ship. If you’re lucky, you may even see harp seals.

**DAYS 5 AND 6 Jan Mayen**

North of the Arctic Circle, about 280 miles (450 km) east of Greenland and 340 miles (550 km) north of Iceland, lies the mysterious Jan Mayen, deep in the North Atlantic Ocean. Often shrouded in thick fog, the small mountainous island was declared a nature reserve in 2010 and is rarely visited, save for the 18 rotating personnel of the Norwegian military and Norwegian Meteorological Institute, who are the only inhabitants.

Landing here will be dictated by the weather and sea. If conditions allow, as we approach, keep watch on deck as the spoon-shaped island’s highest summit emerges. A 7,470-foot (2,277 meter) high volcano, the breathtaking Beerenberg features a symmetrical cone shape and impressive glaciers that spill into the sea. During the summer months, the island’s lower landscape is covered with grass, moss and a smattering of hardy flowers that add a cheery pop of color to the otherwise barren black lava terrain.

One site we hope to visit is Olonkinbyen and the surrounding area. Named after Russian-Norwegian polar explorer Gennady Olonkin, it’s the island’s only settlement and the location of the meteorological station, where you may have the chance to learn about polar research while seeing how weather is monitored at the top of the world. Another option might be the black sand beach at Kvalrossbukta, where the remnants of a 17th-century Dutch whaling station and a large fulmar colony can be found. In 1632, two Basque ships landed at the small bay and
plundered the station. A Dutch party was sent here the following year to protect the land stations during winter, but all seven men perished from scurvy. Whaling in the area came to an end about 20 years later.

If we’re fortunate, we may get a close-up view of the volcano and the stratified cliffs of the spectacular north coast as we Zodiac cruise around the island, searching for wildlife. Designated an Important Bird Area by BirdLife International for the large numbers of breeding seabirds, Jan Mayen supports colonies of northern fulmars, little auks, glaucous gulls, kittiwakes, and black and Brünnich’s guillemots. Birders will also delight at the sight of Atlantic puffins, the “sea parrots.” The waters here are rich feeding grounds for marine life, so you may even spot orcas and minke, fin, blue or humpback whales, too.

**DAY 7 At Sea**

As our ship sails farther north, spend some time with your shipmates in the lounge, swapping stories and photos, or pause for a moment on the bridge, joining in as your Expedition Team looks out for whales, dolphins, seals and a variety of seabirds.

**DAYS 8 TO 10 Spitsbergen, Svalbard**

Rugged, wild, unspoiled and situated entirely within the Arctic Circle, the largest island of the Svalbard archipelago is utterly unforgettable. From immense glaciers to polar deserts, the landscape here is as varied as the wildlife.

As we explore the fjords of the southwestern edge of this magical island, it won’t take long for you to see firsthand why Spitsbergen is the “wildlife capital of the Arctic.” Some of our preferred destinations, chosen for optimum wildlife viewing as well as an appreciation of the island’s history and geology, include Hornsund, Bellsund, Samarinvåginn and Lilliehöök Glacier.

The possible landing sites at Hornsund, the island’s most southerly fjord, have rich histories. En route to Gåshamna, a bay at the southern end, where we hope to explore theformer science station, you may have the opportunity to discover old whale bones or hike the spectacular glacier. At Isbjornhamna, the location of the Polish research station, perhaps you may spot Svalbard reindeer and colonies of delightful little auks. Cruising by Brepollen, meanwhile, might reward with the sight of polar bears, which are known to hunt in Hornsund.

A 12-mile (20 km) long sound, Bellsund lured miners a century ago for its natural resources. Today, visitors come to Bourbanhamna and Calypsobyen to see historic mining and trapper sites and marvel at the magnificent vistas. It may also be possible to hike along the colorful tundra, dotted with flowers bursting for a taste of sunshine. Viewing reindeer here is likely, as they frequent the area.

Nearly 60 percent of glaciers cover Svalbard, and two of our favorites are Samarín and Lilliehök, for their sheer beauty and size. Samarín Glacier dominates the landscape surrounding Samarinváginn, while the calving Lilliehök Glacier stretches about four miles (7 km) across and 260 feet (80 meters) high. As we Zodiac cruise along the face of these glaciers, we’ll keep a safe distance but still hope to get close enough to appreciate their splendor.

There is no shortage of natural beauty in Spitsbergen. Each day, you’ll see something new, whether it is a rare bird species or an abandoned site from centuries ago.

**DAY 11 Disembark Longyearbyen**

The time has come to say farewell to your newfound friends and Expedition Team. After disembarking, spend the day exploring the frontier-style settlement of Longyearbyen or catch your homeward flights.

**IMPORTANT REMINDER**

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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.

Arrival Day and Embarkation

ARRIVING IN ABERDEEN AND EMBARKATION
Please be sure to book flights arriving prior to 1 pm on Day 1 of your expedition, to allow time for clearing customs and immigration, as well as travel time into the city. Meet at the port, at the designated time and location, which will be communicated in your final documents. Embarkation to the ship is scheduled for 4 pm. You are responsible for bringing your luggage to the port and on board, but assistance may be provided at the gangway if required.

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.

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 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

ABERDEEN AIRPORT TRANSFERS
Arrival transfers in Aberdeen are not included in the expedition; however, a Polar Travel Adviser can arrange one for you.

LONGYEARBYEN AIRPORT TRANSFERS
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.

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.
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 after embarkation aboard the ship
- Emergency evacuation insurance to a maximum benefit of US$500,000 per person
- Group transfer from the ship to Longyearbyen airport or a designated drop-off location downtown 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

**FAIR ISLE, FAROES, AND SPITSBERGEN  *Birds and Bears***

*Expedition Aboard the Adventure Ship OCEAN ADVENTURER*

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*All rates per person in USD.*

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**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
SCIOTLAND AND FARE ISLANDS

POSSIBLE LANDINGS AND WILDLIFE SIGHTINGS

FAIR ISLE, SHETLAND ISLANDS

With a population of just 70 people, Fair Isle is the most remote inhabited island in the United Kingdom. It is also the best place to find rare birds in Britain with 27 first records.

TORSHAVN, FAROE ISLANDS

The Faroe Islands’ largest city, Tórshavn may be the world’s smallest capital. Picturesque wooden cottages with charming black-tarred sod roofs mingle with modern architecture in the city’s historic old town. A symbol of the islands, the oldest of these traditional houses dates back 500 years, though most were built after a devastating fire burned down many of the town’s buildings in 1673. The Vikings founded their government (called “ting”) here in 825 AD, and Faroese parliament remains in Tórshavn to this day. Named after the Norse god of war, Tórshavn means “Thor’s Harbour.”

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.
Jan Mayen

POSSIBLE LANDINGS AND WILDLIFE SIGHTINGS

BEERENBERG

Covered in glaciers, this active volcano dominates northern half of Jan Mayen, taking up a significant part of the island’s mere 144 square miles (373 sq km). A soaring 7,470-feet (2,277 meters) high, it last erupted in 1985.

KVALROSSBUKTA

One of only two possible landing sites is Kvalrossbukta. This small bay is the site of the remains of a 17-century whaling station. The island is home to a variety of birdlife, including a large fulmar colony, which is also located here.

OLONKINBYEN

Jan Mayen’s only settlement, Olonkinbyen is located at the southeastern side of the island, by Båtvika (Boat Cove), the other possible landing site. As a designated nature reserve, Jan Mayen remains uninhabited, except for the 18 rotating personnel who reside in the settlement and work at either the nearby weather station or radio station.

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Spitsbergen

POSSIBLE LANDINGS AND WILDLIFE SIGHTINGS

HORNSUND

The most southerly fjord in Svalbard offers some of the most spectacular scenery, with dramatic calving glaciers, drifting pack ice and majestic peaks (the highest of which are often shrouded in mist). A Polish research station has operated on the northern shore of Hornsund since 1957. Part of Sør-Spitsbergen National Park, this pristine area is rich in wildlife—reindeer, arctic fox and polar bears can often be spotted hunting for food, while ringed seals bask on the fast ice.

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.

SAMARINVÅGIN

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

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