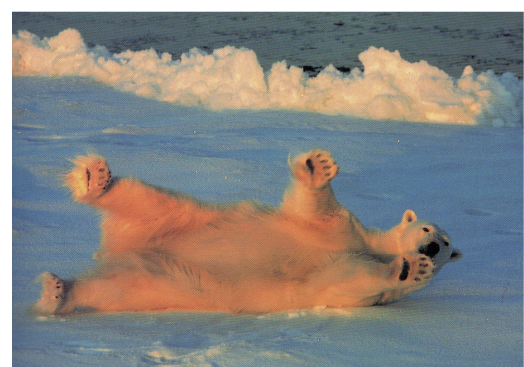


Polar Bear Special

Spitsbergen 26 June- 03 July 2011 from €2,650 per person ex flights

An itinerary spending more time in north Spitsbergen increasing the chances for more bear encounters



POLAR BEAR ITINERARY 26 JUNE – 03 JULY 2011 Longyearbyen – Longyearbyen.

Day 1 - Arrive in Longyearbyen, the administrative capital of the Spitsbergen archipelago of which West Spitsbergen is the largest island. Before embarking there is an opportunity to stroll around this former mining town, whose parish church and Polar Museum are well worth visiting, while in the surrounding area of Longyearbyen, more than 100 species of plants have been recorded. In the early evening the ship will sail out of Isfjorden.

Day 2 - We visit Sallyhamna, where the last two years a Fin Whale carcass attracted Polar Bears. Later we sail to Raudfjord on the north coast of West Spitsbergen, a beautiful fjord dominated by spectacular glaciers and favoured by Ringed and Bearded Seals. The cliffs and shoreline of the fjord also support thriving seabird colonies and a surprisingly rich vegetation, which flourishes in sheltered spots.

Day 3 - Depending on the weather we may now sail to the mouth of Liefdefjorden and go ashore for a walk on the tundra island of Andøya. Many Common Eiders and Pink-footed Geese nest here, and the rarer King Eider may also be seen. We hope to sail into Liefdefjorden, cruising near the 5km long face of the impressive Monaco Glacier. The waters of the glacier front are a favourite feeding spot for thousands of Kittiwakes and on previous voyages Polar Bears have been seen on the glacier, providing wonderful opportunities for photography.

Day 4 - Today we will sail into Hinlopen Strait, home to Bearded Seals, Ringed Seals, Polar Bears, and Ivory Gulls. We'll navigate the ice floes of Lomfjordshalvøya in our zodiacs and explore the bird cliffs of Alkefjellet with thousands of Brünnich's guillemots. On the east side of Hinlopenstrait, we'll attempt a landing at Palanderbukta on Nordaustlandet, home to Reindeer, Pink-footed Geese, breeding Ivory Gulls, and Walruses.

Day 5 - In the morning we will try to land at Laagoya, a haul-out place for Walruses. Later we will reach our northernmost point at Phippsøya, in the Seven Islands north of Nordaustlandet. Here we will be at 81 degrees north, just 540 miles from the geographic North Pole. Polar Bears inhabit this region, along with Ivory Gulls. We may sit for several hours in the pack ice, before we turn west again.

Day 6 - Retracing our route westwards, we sail all the time through and along the pack-ice, on the watch for Polar Bears and the elusive Greenland Whale (Bowhead).

Day 7 - We land at the northern tip of Prins Karls Forland near Fuglehuken, where Barentsz probably set foot on Spitsbergen for the first time. Seabirds nest on the cliffs and along the coast we see Harbour Seals, the only population found in Spitsbergen. Further we also will observe the remains of the Polar Bear hunting era, with demolished set guns and bear traps. At the opposite site of Forlandsundet at Sarstangen is a haul out place for Walruses. Alternatively we sail into St. Johns Fjord or south to the mouth of Isfjorden and land at Alkhornet. Seabirds nest on its cliffs and Arctic Foxes search the cliff base for fallen eggs and chicks, while Spitsbergen Reindeer graze the relatively luxuriant vegetation. In the night we arrive at Longyearbyen.

Day 8 - We disembark at Longyearbyen, the administrative centre of Spitsbergen, for the flights home via Oslo.

OTHER CURRENT OFFERS ARE:

- a 5% discount off North Spitsbergen departure 10- 21 June 2011 from €2,850 ex flights
- a 5% discount off North or Around Spitsbergen departure 6-17 July 2011 from €3,279 ex flights + free flight Brussels to Longyearbyen included in the price
- a 5% discount off our Scoresby Sund 7-15 Sept 2011 from trip from €3,135 ex flights

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