

Canadian Arctic Wildlife, Helicopters, and the Northwest Passage

Onboard Ultramarine



Expedition Overview



The Most Complete Northwest Passage Journey

Our brand-new 20-day **Canadian Arctic: Wildlife, Helicopters, and the Northwest Passage** itinerary is the most in-depth way for travelers to experience the legendary Northwest Passage—designed to take you deeper, farther, and with more time to truly see it all. From the dramatic cliffs of Sam Ford Fjord to the stark beauty of Devon Island, you'll explore the full sweep of Lancaster Sound and beyond. With extended time in the High Arctic, maximize your chances of encountering whales, walrus, and muskoxen, while connecting with Inuit and Greenlandic communities. Add helicopter flightseeing, Zodiac cruising, and expert-led exploration, and this itinerary becomes the definitive Arctic journey.

- Soar in a helicopter over the wild Arctic
- Visit Inuit and Greenlandic communities
- Explore deep into the legendary Northwest Passage
- Spot Arctic wildlife, such as whales, walrus and muskoxen
- Cruise in a Zodiac for stunning views of glaciers, fjords and icebergs

Day by Day Itinerary



— Onboard *Ultramarine*
- - - Flights to/from Reykjavik

Day 1

Arrive in Reykjavik, Iceland

Arrive in the Icelandic capital and make your way to the designated hotel, which is included in your Charter Flight & Hotel Package. You will have the day to explore this fascinating city known for its stunning modern architecture, contemporary music and Viking history.

Day 2

Fly to Nuuk, Greenland, and Embark

After breakfast, guests and their luggage will be transferred to the airport for the charter flight to Nuuk, the capital of Greenland. Upon arrival, guests will be transferred to their ship.

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Day 3

At Sea: Crossing the Davis Strait

As we make our way across the Davis Strait, your Expedition Team will offer a series of polar presentations that will set the stage for the adventures ahead. You'll learn about the storied history of the Arctic, its fascinating wildlife, geology and ecology. Our team will also keep a lookout for seabirds soaring above your ship, as well as whales that pass through these waters.

Days 4–6

Exploring Baffin Island Canada

The Inuktitut name for Baffin Island—the fifth-largest island in the world—is Qikiqtaaluk. It has been home to Inuit for thousands of years. The island's English name commemorates William Baffin, who explored the region in the early 17th century while searching for the fabled Northwest Passage, long after it was inhabited by Inuit.

Sailing along the island's eastern coast, each day is shaped by weather and ice conditions, making every landing distinct. Favorite destinations include Qikiqtarjuaq and Sam Ford Fjord, where towering mountains, deep fjords, vibrant tundra, and Inuit settlements define the landscape.

The welcoming Inuit community of Qikiqtarjuaq—meaning “the big island” in Inuktitut—lies just north of the Arctic Circle on Broughton Island. Fondly known as “Qik” by locals, the hamlet offers sweeping views across the Davis Strait. Visitors may also have opportunities to support local Inuit artisans by purchasing handcrafted artwork, jewelry, and other crafts.

Farther north, well within the Arctic Circle, Sam Ford Fjord stands out as one of Baffin Island's most dramatic Arctic destinations. A traditional Inuit hunting area, the fjord is a striking study in contrasts, where sheer granite walls rise almost straight from the ocean, reaching heights of up to 457 meters (1,500 feet).

If conditions allow, the region offers outstanding Zodiac cruising, sea kayaking, and opportunities to explore ashore. Arctic foxes may be spotted on land, while polar bears are sometimes seen during off-ship excursions. Cruising the fjord provides a powerful sense of scale: stretching approximately 110 kilometers (68 miles), Sam Ford Fjord narrows to less than 3 kilometers (2 miles) wide as it winds deeper inland.

Days 7–10

Gateway to Lancaster Sound

Located at the northeastern tip of Baffin Island, Pond Inlet (Mittimatalik) looks across Eclipse Sound to the glaciated peaks of Bylot Island, offering one of the most dramatic settings of any community in the Canadian Arctic. Mittimatalik provides a meaningful opportunity to connect with the people who have lived here for thousands of years, before the voyage turns northwest toward Lancaster Sound (Tallurutiup Imanga).

Among the Arctic's richest marine habitats, Lancaster Sound's ice-free waters attract whales, walruses, and seals in remarkable numbers each summer. We explore by Zodiac, scanning for iconic wildlife—and, with luck, the elusive narwhal. Polar bear sightings are also possible. Nearby, Coburg Island's soaring coastal cliffs, within the Nirjutiqavvik National Wildlife Area, support hundreds of thousands of nesting Brünnich's guillemots, black-legged kittiwakes, northern fulmars, and black guillemots.

At approximately 76° North off the east coast of Ellesmere Island, Cape Norton Shaw is likely the northernmost stop of the voyage. Here, multiple tidewater glaciers calve directly into iceberg-filled seas. We plan a combined helicopter and Zodiac operation to explore this rarely visited coastline by land and sea. If flying conditions are unsuitable, we reroute to Grise Fjord and Craig Harbour, the site of an RCMP outpost established in 1922, closed in the 1930s, and controversially reopened at the outset of the Cold War.

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On Devon Island's southern shore, the weathered remains of a Royal Canadian Mounted Police detachment at Dundas Harbour quietly reflect Canada's efforts to assert sovereignty in the High Arctic. The journey concludes in spectacular Croker Bay, where towering glaciated walls and calving ice deliver a sense of scale no photograph can fully convey.

Days 11–13 Heart of the Northwest Passage

As we push westward into the inner reaches of Lancaster Sound, the geography narrows and the sense of remoteness deepens. Rising from the confluence of Lancaster Sound and Barrow Strait, the sheer limestone cliffs of Prince Leopold Island form one of the most significant seabird sanctuaries in the eastern Arctic. We'll see hundreds of thousands of birds wheeling above us as still waters stretch in every horizon, one of the defining sights of a High Arctic expedition.

At the southern tip of Somerset Island, Fort Ross marks the entrance to Bellot Strait, the narrow, current-swept channel separating Somerset Island from the Boothia Peninsula and forming a critical link in the Northwest Passage. Once a Hudson's Bay Company trading post, Fort Ross remains one of the most evocative reminders of a time when commerce, survival, and exploration converged at the top of the world.

We will attempt to land at Beechey Island, a National Historic Site of Canada. Named for explorer Frederick William Beechey, the island is the final resting place of three members of Sir John Franklin's 1845-46 Northwest Passage expedition, discovered in 1850 on a desolate raised beach. A shore visit to Radstock Bay may also be possible, home to one of the Arctic's most impressive ancient Thule sites. Exploring the remains of subterranean houses—including whale bone supports—offers a powerful insight into how Paleo-Inuit thrived in the Far North.

Days 14–15 Admiralty Inlet and Arctic Bay

Carved deep into northern Baffin Island, Admiralty Inlet is one of the Arctic's longest fjords: a silent, ice-ringed channel where whale blows punctuate the stillness. Among the world's most vital narwhal summering grounds, Zodiac cruising here may provide some of the expedition's most unforgettable marine wildlife encounters.

The Arctic Bay area has been inhabited by Inuit for over 5,000 years. With very few visitors, the community is typically quite excited to welcome a ship. Enjoy a gathering on the outskirts of town featuring Inuit arts, cultural activities and, possibly, tastings of local cuisine shared by elders and community members.

Days 16–17 At Sea

Enjoy the sail back across Baffin Bay where the presence of ice can lead to opportunities for polar bear sightings as well as whales and seabirds. Onboard the team will keep you engaged with presentations and wildlife watching. Guests often use sea days to take advantage of the ship's Tundra Spa and Sauna.

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Day 18

Meeting the People of Sisimiut

Arriving back in Greenland, we hope to visit the community of Sisimiut, where you may enjoy locally led city tours, including a “Taste of Greenland” experience featuring samples of traditional foods. Back onboard, head to the deck to watch a traditional kayak demonstration below on the water.

Day 19

Disembark at Kangerlussuaq

Today, we disembark in Kangerlussuaq, formerly known as Søndre Strømfjord, and transfer you to your charter flight to Reykjavik, where you’ll spend the night in your group hotel, both of which are included in your Charter Flight & Hotel Package.

Day 20

Depart Reykjavik

Today, after breakfast, make your way independently to the airport for your flight home, or continue your personal travel plans as prearranged.

Arrival & Departure Details



* Arrive at the hotel on Day 1 by 3pm or earlier. Day 1 includes a mandatory briefing.
✈ International flights are not included in the cost of the voyage.



Day 1 Arrival and Hotel Night in Reykjavik

You may arrive in Reykjavik at any time during Day 1 of the itinerary and make your way to the included hotel.

- Fly to and overnight in Reykjavik



Day 2 Fly To Nuuk, Greenland and Embark

After breakfast, guests and their luggage will be transferred to the airport for the charter flight to Nuuk, the capital of Greenland. Upon arrival, guests will be transferred to their ship.

- Embark on your Arctic adventure



Disembarkation Day Disembarkation in Kangerlussuaq

Your voyage is scheduled to end in Kangerlussuaq, where you will disembark after breakfast. The disembarkation process takes about an hour. After disembarkation, you will be transferred to the airport for the return charter flight to Reykjavik. Upon arrival in Reykjavik, there will be a group transfer to your included post-expedition hotel.

- Disembark after breakfast
- Charter flight to Reykjavik



Final Day Departing from Reykjavik

After breakfast, which is included, you may make your way to the airport to connect with your homeward flight, or stay longer if you have booked additional accommodation.

- Your Arctic adventure ends

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Airport Transfers

Arrival and departure transfers in Reykjavik are not included; if you require a transfer, you will need to arrange your own transportation. Most airports we travel in and out of have reliable taxi ranks in the arrivals area, or you can often pre-book a transfer online.

Luggage Restrictions

- Travel with one checked bag and one carry-on only.

This expedition includes charter flights. Your package includes one checked bag and one carry-on bag. Luggage weight restrictions on these flights are typically lower than those on international carriers. There is no option to pay for additional luggage. Specific weight limits will be confirmed in your final travel documents.



Photos captured with a telephoto lens from a responsible distance, following regulatory/AECO guidelines.



Book Your Next Adventure

Contact your travel professional or a Quark Expeditions Polar Travel Advisor.

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