

i-Adventures Journey to the Arctic

May 26 to June 3, 2025



PRE-DEPARTURE INFORMATION

You are about to travel to one of the world's most scenic places. The Arctic may be a bit cooler holiday destination than most, but it is about as unique and adventurous as it gets.



GUIDES

We know that one of the keys to a successful expedition is having knowledgeable and enthusiastic leaders. Many of the guides on our trip have more than ten years' experience in the polar regions. A few weeks prior to our voyage you will receive a short introduction to each of our guides.

GENERAL

There is no set itinerary on this expedition. Factors such as the weather and ice play an important role in where the ship will venture. The daily schedule is decided by the Captain and the Expedition Leader, who are both highly experienced. Flexibility is the key to a successful expedition!

MEDICAL CONDITIONS

You must have good mobility to participate in this trip. If you have had any major surgery in the last two years or have any pre-existing medical conditions that the staff and crew on board need to know about, please complete and return the medical form, which you can find [here](#). Open the form and save it to your computer/tablet. **If you tick any of the boxes, please fill in the form with your physician and send it to me at JaysonA@i-sustain.com.**

You should also bring a list/description of your medication.

INSURANCE

You are required to have full medical, emergency evacuation and repatriation coverage throughout your voyage.

PASSPORT & VISA

All visitors to Svalbard need a valid passport that will be valid for at least six months after your scheduled return date.

CURRENCY

The currency in Svalbard is Norwegian Krone (NOK). Credit cards (VISA, MasterCard, AmEx) are accepted in most shops in Longyearbyen and Ny-Ålesund. Please note, there are currently no facilities to withdraw cash in Longyearbyen.

LOST LUGGAGE

Lost luggage is beyond our control. In case your luggage does not arrive in time we recommend you take the following precautions:

- Pack your hand luggage with your essentials, such as medication and valuables.
- Fly with your jacket on/with you on board.
- Avoid travelling in light summer shoes.
- Bring a change of clothes in your hand luggage.
- If you have a travel companion, pack a few items in each other's luggage. That way if your luggage goes missing, you will still have some of your items available.

Longyearbyen has a number of stores where you can purchase outdoor gear and clothing, but the options for replacing other items will be very limited.

PHOTOGRAPHY

- **Batteries:** Bad batteries account for the largest percentage of camera problems on expeditions, especially in cold climates. For this reason, please bring extra camera batteries with you, even if the one in your camera is new.
- **Memory cards:** Rule of thumb is to bring more memory cards than you believe you will need.
- **Tripods:** Tripods, which are often used to steady cameras with large telephoto lenses, are not useful on ships, as they tend to transmit the ship's vibrations.
- **Maintenance:** Particles or water can easily stick on the camera lens, which can reduce the image quality. For this reason, we recommend you bring a microfiber cloth designed for optics.
- **Storage:** Cameras are generally sensitive to water, moisture and shock. A bag/backpack for protection is recommended.

BINOCULARS

- Good binoculars are highly recommended and will add quality to your travel experience.
- All binoculars are listed by power and brightness, e.g., 8x32 or 10x50. The first number indicates magnification and the second the diameter of the front lens. At least 8x-power is recommended, 8x32 or 10x42 binoculars are good choices.
- "Wide-field" binoculars allow you to see a wider area making it easier to spot wildlife.

- Compact models, in the 8x25 range, can fit in a pocket and are very lightweight, but sacrifice brightness and field of vision.
- Rubber coated models are generally more shock resistant and some of these are also waterproof.
- A spotting scope, just like binoculars, is a fantastic tool for experiencing wildlife in a more detailed way. Please note that spotting scopes are not suitable on board our ships because the tripod generates vibrations, but they are, of course, excellent equipment to bring along during our landings.

DRONES

Unless otherwise agreed, passengers are not allowed to bring or use drones on the voyage.

OUR HOME ON THE SEAS – THE M/S QUEST

M/S Quest was built in Denmark in 1992 to serve as a ferry on Greenland's west coast. In 2004/2005 she was completely refurbished into a comfortable expedition ship and in 2018 she underwent renovation of the passenger areas.

Length: 49.65 Meters

Beam: 11 Meters

Draft: 3.50 Meters

Gross tonnage: 1.268 GT

Passenger capacity: 50

Crew: 25

Zodiacs: 5

BAR SERVICE

The bar is located in the panorama lounge on top deck and offers a selection of alcoholic beverages and soft drinks to buy. Coffee and tea are available around the clock.

BRIDGE VISIT

There is an open bridge policy on board and passengers are welcome to visit the bridge at all times. Please respect the Captain's orders, especially during difficult ice navigation and mooring. The Captain can decide on a closed bridge in the event of, for example, bad weather.

CABINS

There are 24 passenger cabins on board and they are all outside cabins with windows. Each cabin has a private WC and shower with shampoo, shower gel, soap and hairdryer. Each cabin has a fitted wardrobe with hangers, a mirror, desk and chair, electrical socket and bin. Your cabin will be cleaned daily, and new towels are available upon request. All cabins are equipped with a small safe.

COMMUNICATION

The ship can be contacted via satellite phone. You will receive contact information together with the final documents closer to departure. You will be able to buy vouchers to use the internet during your trip. More information will be provided on board. Please note: you will not have reception on your mobile phone during most parts of the expedition.

DRESS CODE

The dress code on board is informal. Please wear sturdy shoes with non-slip soles when moving around the ship.

ELECTRICITY

The electrical outlets onboard in your cabins and elsewhere on the ship are 220 volts with European two-prong plugs. We recommend that you bring an international adapter if you have devices that need to charge. All cabins are also equipped with USB-A outlets for charging smartphones and cameras.

GRATUITIES CREW

Gratuities are optional and at your discretion. For those who wish to express their appreciation for excellent service, you have the option to leave a tip in cash at the end of your trip (NOK/USD/EUR). If needed, it is also possible to tip with your credit card.

LANGUAGE

All information presented by the guides will be in Swedish and English. The crew on board speaks English.

LAUNDRY

Please note that there are no laundry facilities on board.

MEALS

The dining room is located on deck 2 and serves all passengers at once. It is comfortable and spacious with porthole windows. Our chef will serve you three meals a day. Breakfast and lunch are served buffet style and dinner has waiter service with a choice from a menu every day. There is also a range of drinks to choose from the menu. Please remember to inform us of any food restrictions in your personal information form prior to the trip.

MEDICAL

We will have a physician and basic medical supplies on board. Passengers under regular treatment requiring special medication should bring sufficient quantities to last during the entire expedition. Please bring a written description of your medication. The ship is always reachable by helicopter from Longyearbyen, where there is a small hospital.

MONEY MATTERS

A tab of your expenses, for example bar purchases or communications, will be kept throughout the expedition. If you share a cabin with someone and want separate bills, it is important that you inform the ship's crew directly. The currency on board the ship is Norwegian Krone (NOK). You can pay with US-dollars and Euro, but only in cash and the NOK exchange rate of the day applies. Your

ship account will be payable at the end of the expedition by cash or credit card (Visa and MasterCard). The final charges are always in Norwegian Kroner (NOK).

Please note, at the time of writing, there is no ATM in Longyearbyen for cash withdrawal.

PANORAMA LOUNGE

In the panorama lounge you can take in the views and enjoy listening to entertaining lectures. Here you will also find a small library.

SHOP

The shop offers a limited selection of souvenirs.

SMOKING

A non-smoking policy applies inside the ship. Smoking is only allowed outside on the open deck in the designated area. Please note that it is strictly forbidden to throw cigarettes overboard or to smoke during landings.

WATER

The water on board is safe to drink.

SAFETY GUIDELINES

SMALL GROUPS – CLOSE ENCOUNTERS

We will be travelling in small groups, a necessity to experience close and exclusive encounters with the wild. Small groups offer great flexibility when it comes to landings and making the most of the opportunities that arise during an expedition. Travelling in small groups allows us to maximize the time spent ashore and the quality time each guest experiences “out in nature”. The Zodiacs are one of the secrets behind a successful expedition cruise. With these safe and sturdy rubber boats we can navigate among icebergs, cruise along glaciers and go ashore to get unique nature experiences. Each day, our goal is to make several landings or cruises with our Zodiacs. The Zodiac operation is fast and efficient, and all guests can get ashore on short notice. New regulations established in January 2025 established a limit of 39 people on shore at some of the landing sites within protected areas, which means that in these areas one or two Zodiacs may cruise instead of landing, or the boats may have to take runs coming into shore.

LANDINGS WITH ZODIACS

Always pay attention to your Expedition Leader and guides. Do not hesitate to ask them if you have questions regarding the landing procedures. Passengers must be aware of certain regulations involving the Zodiacs in order to ensure safety in our operations. A safety briefing will also be given by our guides.

- The boat driver oversees the Zodiac and its operations. His/her instructions must always be followed.
- There will be wet landings (where you will need to wade ashore). You should wear rubber boots and appropriate waterproof clothing as protection from sea spray or rain when in the Zodiac. Use a waterproof bag to protect items such as cameras and binoculars.
- Always wear the life jackets provided when in the Zodiacs. This is for your safety and is required at all times regardless of weather and sea conditions.
- Accept the helping hands of crew members and drivers when stepping into or out of the Zodiac at the ship’s gangway. Keep both hands free for this operation, and use the “Sailor’s grip” (i.e., grip each other by the wrist).
- Minimize the number of items you bring into the Zodiac. Backpacks are ideal for loose items such as cameras, binoculars, medication etc. It allows you to have both hands free.

FLOATATION SUITS DURING ZODIAC CRUISING

It is mandatory to wear a flotation suit (see photo) during Zodiac cruises. These are available on board. The suits are warm, waterproof overalls, and replace your outer layer (jacket/trousers) and life vest when Zodiac cruising. Please note: The flotation suits will not be worn on landings/walks, but only when Zodiac cruising.



WILDLIFE & NATURE

- When ashore, always stay with your group and your guides. Due to polar bears and for your safety, you are never allowed to wander off on your own.
- Watch your step and keep to established paths when possible. In cold and dry habitats, the recovery of plants is very slow.
- Approach wildlife slowly when taking photographs and retreat from the subject just as carefully.
- Never disturb wildlife for the sake of a photograph.
- Per environmental regulations we are required to stay at least 500 meters from polar bears when we are within 12 nautical miles of the Svalbard archipelago. Weather and ice permitting, we plan to head toward the vast pack ice border. With more space and fewer ships, we will have additional opportunities to observe polar bears in their natural habitat.
- Be extremely careful among breeding colonies of seabirds and ground nesting birds.
- Be careful not to startle or chase any bird from its nest. Your attention to a nesting or molting bird should never be prolonged when a predator is in the vicinity. Foxes, gulls and skuas are always lurking to raid exposed nests.
- Monitor your surroundings and be sensitive to any disruption you may be causing. If an animal shows signs of distress or avoidance, move away.
- Look but never touch. We wish to observe natural behavior in its natural state.
- Never feed wild animals!
- In order not to introduce new species into Svalbard please wash your boots at home and make sure that no seeds are included in the packaging or clothing (pockets, Velcro, etc).
- Return all litter to the ship for proper disposal. This includes litter of all types, such as plastic bags and paper tissues.
- It is not allowed to collect natural souvenirs such as shells, rocks, feathers, bones or fossils.
- Keep the noise level to a minimum.

AECO GUIDELINES

GUIDELINES FOR VISITORS IN THE ARCTIC

The Association of Arctic Expedition Cruise Operators (AECO) is an international organization for cruise operators. The organization's main objective is to ensure that expedition cruises and tourism in the Arctic are carried out with the utmost consideration for the fragile, natural environment, local cultures and cultural remains, while ensuring safe tour operations at sea and on land.

OUR RESPONSIBILITIES

Tourism and cruise activities in the Arctic operate within a comprehensive framework of international and national laws and regulations to ensure safety and preservation of the environment, with which AECO members of course are obligated to comply. Nevertheless, there is a need for operators to take responsibility for their activities and actions both within and beyond formal laws and regulations. AECO has developed a comprehensive set of guidelines for expedition cruise operations in the Arctic. The AECO guidelines are endorsed by the operators for the organization of respectful, environmentally friendly and safe expedition cruising.

YOUR RESPONSIBILITIES

From our comprehensive set of guidelines, we have picked out a few basic rules that we ask you to read carefully and act in accordance with. We invite you to spend some time reading about necessary safety precautions and we also ask you to note the cultural and social considerations we would like you to take.

- AECO Biosecurity Guidelines: [HERE](#)
- AECO Wildlife Guidelines: [HERE](#)
- AECO Longyearbyen Guidelines: [HERE](#)

EQUIPMENT AND PACKING RECOMMENDATIONS

The typical temperature in Longyearbyen during the time period we will be there ranges from 24 to 36 °F. This is much warmer than mid-winter when the temperature can drop to 22 below zero or more! Even though Svalbard is at an extreme northern latitude, the North Atlantic Current moderates temperatures, giving it up to 36 °F higher winter temperatures than similar latitudes in continental Russia and Canada.

In other parts of the archipelago the temperatures are most likely **a few degrees cooler** than in Longyearbyen. Please also be aware of the **wind chill factor**, which takes wind speeds and humidity into account. The 'feels like' temperature will often be much lower than the actual air temperature shown on a weather forecast.

Please make sure that you come properly geared!

We recommend you dress in layers; it allows you to easily adjust to variations in temperature. Wear three layers or more. The purpose of the layers are:

1. To get rid of perspiration.
2. Insulate you from the cold.
3. Protect you against the wind (and water).

The layering method also allows you to easily adjust your clothing when the weather and temperatures change. Make sure to bring an extra layer if you are travelling early or late season.

When going ashore by Zodiacs, make sure to **wear wind and waterproof jacket/trousers and tall rubber boots**. Below you will find some instructions on how to dress for the polar climate, followed by an equipment checklist.

THE BASE-LAYER

The layer closest to your skin must get rid of perspiration from your body to keep you dry and warm. Recommended clothing includes wool or synthetic fabrics. Cotton should never be worn close to the body.

THE MID-LAYER

This layer provides insulation and retains body heat without restricting movement. Fleece or wool clothing is suitable for this layer. It is better to wear several thin layers than one thick layer. On cold days you may need extra insulation. This way you control your body temperature.

THE OUTER LAYER

The main function of this layer is to offer protection against wind and water, but also to let out excess body heat. Therefore, it is good to use breathable materials such as Gore-Tex or similar.

THE TOP

Bring a warm and windproof hat, made from synthetic fiber or wool, and make sure it covers your ears!

HANDS AND FEET

These parts of your body are particularly sensitive. It is important to keep hands and feet dry and warm. The same layering method applies here. Use inner gloves made of synthetic fiber, silk or wool and cover with a wind/waterproof mitten. Mittens are much warmer than gloves. Please remember to bring an extra pair of mittens. You should wear inner socks of synthetic fiber and cover with layers of wool or synthetic socks. A pair of warm, solid and knee-high rubber boots is the secret weapon when going ashore with the Zodiacs. It is also wise to bring wool insoles.

PACKING CHECKLIST:

ESSENTIALS

- Passport**
- Medicine** (if applicable) to last the entire trip

LUGGAGE

- 1 soft bag** – a large backpack or soft duffel bag for clothes and equipment to check-in. A soft bag is recommended as it is easily stored in your cabin.
- 1 backpack** – small and preferably water resistant, to use in the Zodiacs and during shore excursions.

LAYERS

- Inner gloves** – wool or synthetic.
- Gloves** – water and windproof (bring an extra pair).
- Base-layer top and trousers** – wool or synthetic.
- Warm sweater** – wool or fleece.
- Warm socks** – wool or synthetic.
- Jacket** – water and windproof for example Gore-Tex.
- Trousers** – water and windproof for example Gore-Tex.
- Hat** – warm and windproof that covers ears.

FOOTWEAR

- Rubber boots** – (Mandatory) Sturdy knee-high, lined and with warm wool soles.
- Hiking boots** if you prefer not to walk in rubber boots after landing, this is optional.
- Regular shoes/sneakers** to wear on board the ship, with sturdy rubber soles to avoid slipping.

It's possible to rent high-quality rubber boots in Longyearbyen for your Svalbard expedition, which is a convenient option for travelers who prefer not to bring their own boots. For detailed information about the pre rental process, including pricing, availability, and downtown pickup location, we recommend visiting the website: spitzbergen-reisen.no/en/shop-rental/rubber-boots



Please note: This is a local company in Longyearbyen. We are not able to answer questions about reservations made with them.

CAMERA EQUIPMENT

- Camera & memory cards**
- Waterproof bags** to protect your camera from getting wet during rubber boat cruises.
- Cleaning cloth** for camera lenses.
- Charger & extra camera batteries** as the cold makes batteries discharge faster.

IN ADDITION, WE RECOMMEND

- A good pair of binoculars** enhances the experience, as many animals are seen from a distance.
- Sunscreen** with high sun protection factor for face and lips.
- Sunglasses**, preferably with necklace, so you do not drop them in the water.
- Ski goggles**, especially for trips in May as it is more common with snow fall. It offers good protection for the eyes during a Zodiac cruise.
- Motion sickness medicine** – pills, wrist bands or patches for seasickness.
- Pen & notebook**
- Swimwear** – in case you get the opportunity to take a polar plunge.
- Water bottle**
- Eye mask** – the midnight sun reigns supreme.
- Ear plugs**
- Heat packs for your gloves or boots**, if you know that your hands and feet easily get cold.
- Walking sticks** for those who want extra support in the often hilly terrain. Please note that they must be foldable and stored in the checked-in luggage.

SUGGESTED READING

Many inspiring books have been published about Svalbard. We have listed a few of them here.

GENERAL

Svalbard Guide by Pål Hermansen

An informative guide book of Svalbard by the writer and internationally recognized photographer Pål Hermansen.

A Journey to Svalbard - Polar Territory by Christian Kempf

An informative and beautifully illustrated book on all aspects of travelling in Svalbard.

Arctic Dreams – Imagination and Desire in a Northern Landscape by Barry Lopez

This celebrated meditation on the Arctic draws on Lopez's travels throughout the North. A dazzling writer and compassionate observer, Lopez weaves biology and history into his storytelling. With chapters on the Polar Bear and Narwhal.

The Arctic - a Guide to Coastal Wildlife by Tony Soper

A compact, illustrated guide to coastal marine mammals and seabirds of the circumpolar north featuring handsome water colour illustrations by Dan Powell and lively text on the natural history of each species by intrepid expedition leader and bird-lover Tony Soper.

FLORA

Flowers of Svalbard by Olav Gjaerevoll and Olaf I. Rønning

This excellent field guide to all flowers in Svalbard is available in most shops in Longyearbyen.

HISTORY

Face to Face – Polar Portraits by Huw Lewis-Jones

A lavish account of pioneering polar photography and modern portraiture. The book features the very first polar photographs and the first portraits of explorers. It is published by the Scott Polar Research Institute (SPRI) in association with Polar World.

By airship to the North Pole – An Archaeology of Human Exploration by P.J. Capelotti

A history of Swedish balloonist Andrée and the American journalist Wellman and their attempts to reach the North Pole by airship.

Disaster at the Pole – The Tragedy of the Airship Italia and the 1928 Nobile Expedition to the North Pole by Wilbur Cross

A thrilling account of the crash of the airship Italia in 1928 and the political aftermath in an increasingly fascist Europe.

Ninety Degrees North – The Quest for the North Pole by Fergus Fleming

A thrilling artfully told chronicle of the mostly 19th-century adventurers, madmen and explorers who quested after the North Pole.

Shipwrecked at the Top of the World – Four against the Arctic by David Roberts

Combines the little-known but remarkable tale of fourteen Russian Walrus hunters that were stranded on the icepack around Svalbard after a storm destroyed their ship in 1743.

The Arctic – A History by Richard Vaughan

This is one of the fullest and most comprehensive history books of the area, which will appeal to anyone interested in history, geography and anthropology.

The White Eagle – Roald Amundsen by Olav Gynnild

This book is an exploration into the life of Norwegian polar explorer and aviator Roald Amundsen. This extraordinary man spent a great deal of his life exploring the Arctic including several attempts to reach the North Pole starting in Svalbard.

NATURAL HISTORY

Frozen Oceans – The Floating World of Pack Ice by David N. Thomas

The author's lively and readable text conveys his excitement at the unique relationships between living communities and the ice. Published in 2004 by the Natural History Museum in London.

Polar Bears by Ian Stirling and Dan Guravich

A tribute to the Polar Bear by pre-eminent researcher Ian Stirling and intrepid photographer Dan Guravich. It's an excellent combination of outstanding colour photography, solid information on natural history and Inuit lore.

Polar Bears – Living with the White Bear by Nikita Ovsyanikov

A beautiful book chronicling four years living among the polar bears (of Wrangel Island in Russia).

The World of the Polar Bear by Norbert Rosing and Ian Stirling

Fantastic photographs and brief essays on the behaviour and history of the polar bear.

The World of the Walrus by Peter Knudtson

One of few informative books on the Walrus. The book combines engaging text and spectacular photographs to reveal the essence of this prodigious sea mammal.

MOVIES/TV

Frozen Planet

This is a nature documentary series with David Attenborough as narrator. The seven-part series focuses on life and the environment in both the Arctic and Antarctic. A sequel titled Frozen Planet II began airing in September 2022, which covers more frozen habitats than just the polar regions, while also emphasizing more on the threat of climate change.