

GREETINGS I-ADVENTURERS

Join Us for an Extra Special Trip of a Lifetime!

May 26 to June 3, 2025

Cruise the Svalbard Archipelago on a small ship



Late spring, when the sea ice is melting and the polar bears are emerging



M/S Quest - 50 passengers

DRAFT ITINERARY

May 26 to June 3, 2025

May 26: Arrive in **Longyearbyen** in the Svalbard Archipelago. Dinner followed by a presentation about our ship, the cruise route, Longyearbyen, and the Arctic research taking place in the region.

At a latitude of 78 degrees north, Longyearbyen is the northernmost city in the world. It's a unique and fascinating destination due to its extreme location, distinctive lifestyle, and striking natural environment. People from 53 different countries live in Longyearbyen, which has a total population of 2,400 people.

In addition to tourism, research and education is another important industry. Students from all over the world come to study at the University Centre in Svalbard (UNIS), which focuses on Arctic research in the fields of biology, geology, geophysics and technology. Unbelievably, considering the remoteness and size, there are excellent restaurants in Longyearbyen.



Anyone leaving town must be with someone who is carrying a firearm since polar bears are never far away.

May 27 to June 3: Let's cruise the Svalbard Archipelago!

We will be spending 8 days / 7 nights on our ship. This is the magical transition time in the Arctic, when the freezing temperatures of winter and spring are abating and the islands come alive with wildlife. We will still experience the true arctic, with its majestic snow-covered landscape. However, the pack ice will be breaking up enough to allow us to more easily land our zodiacs and come onto land for hiking, while the snowy cliffsides will be melting away, allowing thousands of migratory birds to begin their annual nesting.

In May the Arctic fox and the Svalbard reindeer still wear their winter coats, walrus are often seen resting on the ice floes, and if we're lucky, we might see the polar bear hunting for seals. Birdlife is beginning to return to Svalbard, and it's a good time to see king eiders and rock ptarmigans. The fairytale winter landscape is dominated by glittering ice formations, snow-capped mountains, fjord ice, and pastel-colored skies.

By June, the midnight sun reigns supreme, bird colonies teem with life, and the dramatic mountain ranges are beautifully snow-capped. The ice still keeps the islands in its grip and we can admire the ever-changing ice formations.

We will be in a part of the world where we are completely dependent on the ice and weather conditions. Our aim is to head out on Zodiacs cruises every day, and to go ashore when the opportunity arises. Our exact itinerary will depend on these factors and on the wildlife we encounter, but here are some examples of places we may visit:



Alkhornet

At the entrance of Isfjorden is the characteristic cliff of Alkhornet. We will go ashore to enjoy the beautiful tundra and its birdlife, including barnacle geese, Brünnich's guillemots, glaucous gulls, snow buntings and tens of thousands of kittiwakes. Arctic foxes are sometimes seen in the rock crevices around the mountain and with a bit of luck we might see some scurrying around, frantically looking for food.

Prins Karls Forland

This narrow strip of land is covered by a magnificent and snow-covered mountain chain. The island is also home to many seabirds and harbor seals.

Fantastic fjords

Svalbard offers the visitor countless spectacular fjords. During our cruise we will explore some of them such as: Liefdefjorden, meaning "The fjord of love", is lined with snow-capped mountain peaks and here we hope to cruise along the face of the spectacular Monaco Glacier. Many common eiders and pink-footed geese nest in the area and if we are lucky we may see the rare king eider. In Krossfjorden we can admire the beautifully sculpted front of the 14th of July Glacier and listen to the sounds of the large numbers of kittiwakes and Brünnich's guillemots that nest on the nearby cliffs. Raudfjorden is an area of immense natural beauty – dominated by magnificent glaciers. It is also a favourite spot of seals and the bird cliffs are abuzz with activity. Kongsfjorden is home to the scientific village of Ny-Ålesund. It was from here that Amundsen and Nobile set out on their heroic expeditions to the North Pole.

Danskøya

Danskøya was the starting point for two of the most daring attempts to reach the North Pole. The Swedish explorer Andrée made an attempt with a hydrogen balloon and American journalist Wellman started with an airship. Interesting remnants of these Arctic expeditions can still be seen here.

Bellsund

At the beautiful Vårsolbukta in Bellsund little auks nest by the tens of thousands. We go ashore and walk across the tundra to get a closer look at these charming birds.

Hornsund

The majestic Hornsund consists of several magnificent fjords along the west coast of Spitsbergen, where huge glaciers calve out shimmering blue ice. This is one of the favourite haunts of some of Svalbard's polar bears, and we may be lucky enough to spot one on the fjord ice.



June 3: The ship returns to land. You can fly out from Longyearbyen the same day, though we suggest that we stay in Longyearbyen that night, have a farewell dinner together and fly out on June 4.

	APRIL	MAY	JUNE
POLAR BEARS	<p>Mating season begins. Females leave their dens with last season's cubs.</p>	<p>Males are busy with courtship battles. It's peak weaning season for two year olds.</p>	<p>Courtship continues amongst adults. Pups start learning to hunt from their mothers.</p>
BIRDS	<p>Svalbard's summer visitors are still on their way to their nesting grounds.</p>	<p>Nesting begins from the end of May once the cliffs are clear of snow.</p>	<p>Every cliff and ledge in the archipelago becomes filled with bird life!</p>
WALRUS & SEALS	<p>Walrus arrive from their southerly wintering grounds and ringed seal pups are born.</p>	<p>Ringed seal pups are prey to hungry bears, while walrus are busy pupping.</p>	<p>Walrus males are moulting. Newly-weaned seal pups are now on their own.</p>
WHALES	<p>As the ice starts to recede, whales start arriving in coastal waters.</p>	<p>Humpbacks are most common. Minke and other baleen whales may also be seen.</p>	<p>Minke are seen in the fjords. Fin and sei might be seen in open sea.</p>
	SPRING	SPRING	SUMMER