



OCEANWIDE

EXPEDITIONS



Spitsbergen, Northern Greenland & Aurora Borealis

5. September – 18 September, 2018
on board

MV Plancius



MV *Plancius* was named after the Dutch astronomer, cartographer, geologist and vicar Petrus Plancius (1552-1622). *Plancius* was built in 1976 as an oceanographic research vessel for the Royal Dutch Navy and was named *Hr. Ms. Tydeman*. The ship sailed for the Royal Dutch Navy until June 2004 when she was purchased by Oceanwide Expeditions and completely refit in 2007, being converted into a 114-passenger expedition vessel. *Plancius* is 89 m (267 feet) long, 14.5 m (43 feet) wide and has a maximum draft of 5 m, with an Ice Strength rating of 1D, top speed of 12+ knots and three diesel engines generating 1230 hp each.



Captain Alexey Nazarov

and his international crew of 44

including

Chief Officer:	Svein Rubach	[Norway]
Second Officer:	Romanas Vicas	[Lithuania]
Third Officer:	Mindaugas Oginskas	[Lithuania]
Chief Engineer:	Sebastian Alexandru	[Romania]
Hotel Manager:	Zsuzsanna Varga	[Hungary]
Asst. Hotel Manager:	Gabor Ferencz	[Hungary]
Chef:	Ralf Barthel	[Germany]
Sous Chef:	Ivan Yuriychuk	[Ukraine]
Ship's Physician:	Veronique Verhoeven	[The Netherlands]

and

Expedition Leader:	Beau Pruneau	[Canada/Germany]
Asst. Expedition Leader:	Arjen Drost	[Netherlands]
Expedition Guide:	Laurence Dyke	[UK]
Expedition Guide:	Lynn Woodworth	[Canada/Australia]
Expedition Guide:	Andreas Alexander	[Germany]
Expedition Guide:	Isabelle Schulz	[Germany]
Expedition Guide:	Shelli Ogilvy	[Alaska]
Expedition Guide:	Ursula Tschertter	[Switzerland]

Day 1 – Wednesday, 5. September 2018

Embarkation in Longyearbyen

1600 GPS Position: 78° 14.0' N / 015° 37.1' E

Wind: N 1 Sea state: calm Weather: light overcast Temperature: 9°C



From the plane we got a first glimpse of Spitsbergen's impressive terrain of mountains and delta systems. At first glance, this seemed like a wild and inhabitable place, but as we were about to learn it is home to a lot of life. For many of us, Longyearbyen was our first stop, visiting the museum and the church or maybe shopping some extra warm clothes before leaving civilisation. Ready for adventure and exploration we first walked to the pier to board M/V *Plancius*. We arrived at the ship, our new home for the next eight days. We were greeted by our Expedition leader, Beau and Hotel manager, Zsuzsanna, proficiently we were shown to our cabins with our luggage already waiting for us.

We soon gathered in the observation lounge where we were briefed about safety on board. The briefing was held by the Third Officer who presented details of ship safety and how to prepare for the worst. A general-alarm drill (seven short blasts followed by one long blast) was made, and we all took the SOLAS orange life jackets and mustered in the lounge guided by crew and staff. After a roll call to assure



everyone was present, we went out on deck to have a look inside the lifeboats and hoped never to need to use them. Soon *Plancius* was navigating out of Adventfjorden, north to tomorrow's adventures. Back in the lounge Zsuzsanna introduced us to the interiors of the ship, hotel operations and the dining room procedures for meals. Captain Alexey joined us for a welcoming toast of sparkling wine or juice, and Beau presented the Expedition team ready to explore the wilderness with us. Thereafter, we headed down to the dining room for our first scrumptious dinner prepared by Head Chef Ralf and his staff.

The fresh snow on the mountain peaks freshened the air over these northern arctic waters. However, this was soon covered in a blanket of cloud as the evening darkened and the rain set in. A gentle swell of the ocean rocked us to sleep as we relaxed for our first night on *Plancius*.



Day 2 – Thursday, 6. September 2018

Raudfjord, Alicehamna & Moffen

0800 GPS Position: 79° 32.6'N, 021°63.2'E

Wind: N 4 Sea state: moderate Weather: overcast with snow Temperature: 1°C



During our first night on board, we felt the ship gently rolling after we sailed out of Isfjord and turned northward up the West Coast of Spitsbergen Island. In the morning, we woke to a slightly grey day with thin sea fog presenting in the distance. Northern fulmars escorted us on our way, soaring past the lounge windows and appearing to float in the air alongside the ship as we made our way along the coast past the island of Prins Karls Forland and Albert I Land on Spitsbergen Island. Beau woke us very gently, and we found our way to the dining room and the buffet breakfast presented to us on board. In the dining room, Zsuzsanna, Gabor and the dining room team made us comfortable and fed us well - something we would get very used to over the coming days. After a hearty meal, Beau gave us a quick rundown on the plans, then Arjen briefed us on how to behave in the Arctic, with Zodiac and Polar bear safety, plus a general Arctic briefing from AECO, the Arctic Expedition Cruise Organisation. Later in the morning, the Expedition team assisted us in finding a pair of rubber



boots. This footwear would keep us warm and dry for each landing and Zodiac cruise. We were all excited and keen to give our new boots a good try out this afternoon.

In route to our destination north a brief sighting of several White beaked dolphins was observed, they surfaced on both sides of the ship, and then after giving us a quick once-over, soon departed.

We sailed past the Northwest corner of Spitsbergen, and turned towards the East, coming across the top of the island and into Raudfjord. This fjord, which is approximately 20 kilometres long and only 5 kilometres wide, is called 'Red fjord', named for the iron oxide in the Devonian red rock that later Expedition staff Andreas had spoke about during in the daily Recap. This sandstone was formed 400 million years ago, when Svalbard was at a much warmer latitude, at approximately 24°N.



Present day beautiful glaciers coming down to the water between rugged mountains lightly dusted with fresh snow, letting us know: autumn is here and winter is fast approaching. We ship cruised the fjord, observing small snow and rain squalls slanting across the water as we approached our intended zodiac cruise location in Hamiltonbukta. There, unfortunately, a strong swell had developed and we could not operate our gangways safely. Expedition Leader Beau looked across Raudfjord to a small bay called Alicehamna, where conditions proved much better. Thus, instead of a Zodiac cruise, we had the opportunity to land and stretch our legs a bit in the rocky tundra. Once we were all ashore, we all had the chance to explored the small



rustic hut perched up the beach. In 1929 the hut was constructed by a man known as "Stockholm Sven" who included bits of driftwood for timber framing, thus the hut was structurally very sound, with a cosy living area and a bunk room.

Once we were all ashore, we divided into three groups, with fast, medium and leisurely walks all going in different directions. The fast walkers headed straight off across the flat land to tackle a steep slope and conquer a small mountain. Lead by Andreas and Beau,

they forged a trail directly to the back of the valley and then pretty much straight up, gaining incredible views of Raudfjord. Arjen, Shelli, Ursula and Laurence took the bulk of us on a medium walk, with stories and interpretation from Arjen and the other guides. We again divided purely for language purposes and equally explored the terrain. At the top of a small high point there was a grave, home to a long passed Norwegian (either sealer or trapper) from the earlier days and as well as a well stacked stone marker cairn. Broad vistas across Raudfjord were admired and photos taken, the group went down the other side of the hill, and back along the flat, across to the landing beach past a small lagoon. Meanwhile, the leisurely group spent more time at the hut, then meandered the beach inspecting organic and inorganic vagrants that have drifted in on ocean currents. A few jellyfish and ctenifors were both in the water and on the beach, and we stopped to spend some time watching two almost grown tern chicks being fed by their parents.

Back on board, we headed up to the Lounge for our first Recap, where Beau outlined plans, Arjen told us about the crazy travel distances Arctic terns migrate to Antarctica for the Southern summer, and Andreas gave us some good dirt on the rocks of Raudfjord.



We crossed 80°N around 21:30, and continued on Northeast to Moffen Island, a very low (less than two metre) pebbly sand bank where walrus often hauled out and resting along the shore. There was a large number of animals on shore, probably more than 50 individuals. Moffen is a protected location for both the walrus and seabirds that breed on the sand, so the ship is not allowed to approach too closely, but it was great to see these big lumpy animals huddled together and presumably enjoying the cold soggy sandy beach. Meanwhile, the colours in the sky were improving, and the sunset gradually became more magnificent. Finally, we had to leave the walrus in peace, and we left Moffen and turned to the next stage of our adventure, a westward sea crossing towards Greenland.



Day 3 – Friday, 7. September 2018

At Sea to Greenland

0800 GPS Position: 79°39.4' N, 04°39.20' E

Wind: W 10 Sea state: calm with swell Weather: partly cloudy Temperatur: 4 °C



We woke to the now familiar voice of Beau who let us know that during the night we had made excellent progress towards the west. The weather conditions outside were a little challenging; winds up to 25 knots had created a large swell and *Plancius* rocked and rolled as we made our way across the Norwegian-Greenland Sea. Shortly after the wake-up call Zsusanna let us know that breakfast was ready and we tucked in; getting set up for a day of seafaring.

In the morning Andreas gave a presentation on the geology of Svalbard, taking us through 13.7 Billion years, from the inception of the universe at the Big Bang, to the present-day. Andreas explained that the rocks of Svalbard are extremely varied and cover almost every age in Earth's history. The oldest rocks in Svalbard are from the Proterozoic; these metamorphic rocks include the west side of Raudfjord where we had landed the previous day. The lecture presented all the major groups of rocks, describing the

starkly different environments that they were formed in. Perhaps the most notable were the Carboniferous rocks which form the distinctive plateau landscape around Longyearbyen. These thick sequences of coal-bearing rocks were laid down around 300 million years ago in vast forests where dinosaurs roamed free. Andreas showed us some amazing photos of dinosaur footprints from this time which are preserved in the roof of one of the coal mines.



After lunch Ursula gave an entertaining lecture on Walrus. She introduced us to their biology, their evolution, and how they fit into the marine mammal family. The presentation also included some great videos of Walrus behaviour from around Svalbard. We learned that Walrus in the Arctic were heavily hunted, for their ivory and for oil from their blubber, up until the middle of the 20th century. This resulted in a major population crash. Walrus numbers are only now starting to slowly recover and these ungainly creatures of the sea are gradually recolonising the areas around Svalbard. Ursula also handed out an example of a plant-based alternatives to ivory products; a tagua nut from a palm tree species from South America. The inner nut is extremely hard and has a very similar appearance to ivory. Ursula ended her talk by emphasising that there are many sustainable solutions to environmental problems, provided we are willing to think creatively.



By the late-afternoon the weather was noticeably better and the seas had calmed to just a gentle ripple, quite a delicacy given the area of ocean with such a fierce reputation. A white shimmer appeared on the horizon and before long we were approaching a large area of Arctic sea ice, the first of our trip! Captain Alexey brought *Plancius* right in amongst the floes. The weather and light were incredible; dark clouds behind us provided an atmospheric backdrop to the sun-drenched ice floes all around us. We slowed and as we passed, it was possible to hear the clinking and chiming of the ice as

it undulated in the glassy waters. In the evening Beau gave a brief recap, presenting plans for the coming days based on the latest weather and ice conditions. After this it was already time for dinner and a relaxing evening watching the world pass, where does the time go?!



Day 4 – Saturday, 8. September 2018

Coastal Ice

0800 GPS Position: 76° 42.9' N, 011° 28.9' W

Wind: SSW 12 Sea state: moderate Weather: overcast Temperature: 1°C

When we first peeked out of our portholes and windows, the world presented us with a monotone grey scene. A very thick sea fog surrounded us, blending into to steely grey patterns of the sea itself. To add to the theme, grey-on-grey fulmars drifted in the fog. This blanket of grey is a common event where ice and sea meet the sky, although looking straight up, blue sky was visible. Looking forward to a



full day of enjoying the ocean and hopefully some sea ice, we took our time with breakfast, chatting and having a little extra from the buffet before wandering off to our cabins or up to the lounge.

In the morning, Shelli gave us a presentation on Whales, telling us all about how these incredible mammals make the cold Northern oceans their home, explaining about their body structures and the feeding techniques that go with them, to where and why they migrate as well as breeding information. She also bespoke that sometimes we still don't know everything about their biology, but the more we learn, the more fascinating they become.

During the morning, we left the fog behind, and the mountains of Store Koldewey became clear ahead of us. Sighting Greenland was definitely a milestone, it was good to know we had completed the 350 nm / 650 km crossing and were now turning South along the Greenland coast. We also had sea ice along our Starboard side, thick low pans of ice, in amongst the smaller ice, huge, tall and flat icebergs could be seen, our first tabular icebergs. Tabular icebergs are formed when huge amounts of glacial ice, from land, slides down and out into the water. These monstrous bergs are born in Northern Greenland and are a unique sighting really only seen here.

Through the morning and into the afternoon, we mostly tracked along the side of the sea ice edge, scanning for wildlife both in and out of the water and enjoying the gentle but extremely smooth ocean swell.



Later in the afternoon, Laurence presented a great "Introduction to Greenland", with many beautiful photos, giving us an overview of this

giant island. He explained how important the oceans around Greenland are to the planet = very important due to deep water upwelling. There were many illustrations of the unique geology and glaciology, with Greenland having the largest ice cap in the North and second largest on the planet, leaving us well prepared for what is to come in the next few days.

In the early evening, the Captain and Beau took the decision to leave the sea ice and turn further Southwest, heading towards a field of large tabular bergs. These beautiful giants glowed blue and white as we sailed past them, making perfect subjects for our photography. Before dinner, in our Recap, first Beau outlined our plans for the next day, pointing out that going ashore will require permission from the people at Daneborg, then Arjen gave us hints on to how to photograph the Aurora Borealis, or northern lights. We finished up with a little biology, Isabelle talking about the kelp we saw in Svalbard, illustrating



how it can grow to 30 meters and explaining how it keeps these long leaves in the sunlight near the surface of the water.

Dinner was followed by a quiet night, with the light fading gently from grey to anvil, similar to the day's arrival. With an extra hour's sleep ahead of us, a few tried to stay in the bar a bit longer than usual, but most of us succumbed to the call of our bunks long before bartender Rolando's last call.



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Day 5 – Sunday, 9. September 2018

Coastal Ice and Daneborg

0800 GPS Position: 74° 09.5' N, 017° 39.8' W

Wind: S 10 Sea state: slight Weather: fog Temperature: 4°C



We woke to thick fog or a sort of “pea soup” it is often called. *Plancius* gently swayed in the swell still lingering in the larger ocean waters. Combined with the additional time change in the night, some of us lingered in our bunks a little longer and it was a relaxed morning.

Due to icy conditions our progress was slowed, and visibility diminished but we continued on for our hoped-for ship’s cruise of Clavering Ø and a possible landing at Daneborg.



The Expedition team took the opportunity to share some more educational information and Lynn presented the differences between the Arctic and Antarctic environments. How and why the two are similar, but strikingly much different from each other. Zsuzsanna opened the shop and we had a little retail therapy. Lunch was served and we idly stirred in hopes of exploring the shores of Greenland, now seen only by the radar on the bridge, and charts on the walls.

Slowly the miasma of gray began to lift, another fog bow encircled our ship, and finicky views came and went of our proposed landing at the large Danish station of Daneborg.

Around 2 pm visibility was quite good and we were all out on deck where the warmth of the sun could be felt and the vast stunning landscape observed.

Expedition leader Beau radioed the station, and after several attempts finally a response came. Unfortunately, the station commander informed us that they were too busy to accommodate our visit.

We heaved anchor and headed westward towards a secondary scientific station known as Zackenburg. They responded fairly quickly, however joint ice conditions near the shore and shallow depths for the ship hindered our approach. They would have liked to allow our visit, but only a few scientists were left on base and they were busy tidily packing up for the oncoming winter season. Kindly we wished them well and began a small ship cruise around part of coast of Clavering ø.



Seemingly so, a flock of Pink Footed geese were also seen headed their way south for the season.

A Walrus was spotted hauled out on a small ice flow near shore. Several Ravens were in the vicinity and likely benefiting from his or her's seasonal shedding of outer skin. How the animal had managed to haul its several hundred kilo body mass onto the ice was not witnessed, but that is part of what tusks are for. It would likely remain there until finishing its molt which can last several weeks.



The sheer expanse of Greenland was undressed for our visual pleasure. Through binoculars or with the bare eye, autumn colors of red dwarf birch and yellowing willow made soft contrast to the cinnamon rocks, azure sea and glimmering sea ice.

Slowly we headed back out to sea to round into Keiser Franz Josef Fjord for a hoped landing in Myggebugten tomorrow; or Mosquito Bay, site of an old weather station from the 1920's now sometimes inhabited by the Sirius Patrol Danish Naval forces.

Just after Re-cap as dinner began, we re-entered the sea fog, wrapping a blanket around us for the evening, dreams of clear skies ahead.



Day 6 – Monday, 10. September 2018

Myggebugten

0800 GPS Position: 73° 28.3'N, 021° 29.4'W

Wind: W 2 Sea state: calm Weather: overcast with rain Temperature: 2°C

After an incredible day in and out of fog yesterday, it was good to wake up to no fog. Unfortunately, though there was some rain. We had moved a little South overnight, into Myggebugt, in a small bay called Mackenzie Bugt at the entrance to Franz Joseph Fjord. Following breakfast, we dressed in all our rainproof clothing and went to the gangway, ready for a wet ride to a wet shore. That shore was in Greenland, and we were going, rain



or no rain! The ride in on the zodiacs was smooth, as the seas were almost glassy with only a slight lingering swell., We arrived to a shallow gravelled beach with a short ridge rising up to a large outwash delta covered in tundra. Beau briefed us about the perimeter landing and we headed up to explore the area with our guides at stationed points keeping watch. There were several man-made structures, one a beautifully maintained hut, plus two outbuildings, some old and abandoned dog cages, and a few metal

items of uncertain use. The hut had an interesting collection of bones, including a muskox skull around the side and some reindeer antlers mounted above the front door. Built in the 1920s, the white-painted trim was well tended, obviously receiving regular maintenance from the Sirius patrol teams, who use the hut as an outpost from their main base at Daneborg, Northeast of Myggebugt. Surrounding the hut were bits of metal, slowly eroding in the damp atmosphere, but many of the larger metal items had been moved down to a pile near the beach, ready for removal. Walking out across the tundra, while low, was very dense and diverse. Polar willow, Mountain avens, Moss campion, woolly



lousewort and saxifrages were thick on the ground, some still in bloom, some showing signs winter is on the way, and beginning to turn to autumn colours. There were also plenty of droppings to indicate that Musk ox regularly come down to graze on the flat plain around the hut, but try as we did, no live ones were spotted. Observed were many carcasses of long-dead animals, but due to the dry cold environment much of the year, it takes a long time for something large to decompose. and many of these carcasses were probably very old.



The dampening rain caused a chill even without any wind, thus many of us headed back early to the ship, making our way up to the Lounge to enjoy the view from a comfortable and dry seat before having warming soup to start a hearty lunch.

Around midday, the Captain raised the anchor and we began sailing slowly out of Mackenzie Bugt into Franz Joseph Fjord proper, taking in amazing views of ancient Devonian sedimentary rocks, with dark volcanic dykes cross cutting the strata. Later in the afternoon, Beau gave a talk on the Sirius Patrol, the elite Danish forces who patrol the icy wastes of Greenland by dogsled, living and travelling with their

teams for months at a time. These dedicated men are there to ensure all is well in the vast wilderness regions, and to uphold Denmark's claim to managing and caring for Greenland.



The steep sides of the fjord rose to 1,600+ metres high with Harder Bjerg on one side, the highest point on Gauss Halvo, the large peninsula which makes up the Northeastern side of the fjord. The Southwestern side is made up of several small islands, but they too have tall peaks, all lost in the cloud today. Around the ship, in the deep waters of the fjord itself, some surprisingly large icebergs drifted. These large chunks of glacial ice, showing only about 1/9th of their total size, were carved by waves and wind and time into fantastic shapes,

castellated bergs showing arches and pinnacles, tabular bergs riding flat and 'table-like', and smaller growlers and bergy bits floating low around us.

Captain Alexey found one to his liking, a large deteriorating tabular berg, which he circled very closely, driving the ship as if it were a zodiac. It was great to see the berg from all sides, and also to see the rest of the fjord as we spun around 360 degrees. This also brought to our attention the amazing rock compositions of the mountainous walls of the fjord. Incredible contrasting striped layering displayed powerful uplift events that have brought the originally horizontal bands up to almost vertical. Late in the afternoon, following the iceberg circumnavigation, we had a talk by Andreas on Aurora borealis, explaining what it is and how it is formed. He included great photos of this incredible phenomenon. A truly impressive and "out of this world" display, we hope to see it ourselves before the voyage is over.

Recap was shortened to 15 minutes, with a quick outline of our plan by Beau, and an explanation by Ursula of her animal wall art that has been displayed around the ship. The artworks are amazing, and the reason for them is even better - it is all about bringing the animals to children, rather than the other way around!

The evening was capped by a Greenlandic BBQ - everybody was invited out onto the back deck, where the galley team had produced an incredible feast for us. Salads and garlic bread, many meats, potatoes and corn on the cob, plus warm mulled wine and complimentary beer, wine and soft drinks. All of this followed by desert and dancing with the backdrop of icebergs and the snowy slopes of Franz Joseph Fjord. We were truly in our own private world of impressive ice and dramatic rock.



Day 7 – Tuesday, 11. September 2018

Blomsterbugten and Maria Ø

0800 GPS Position: 73° 20.4' N, 025° 22.4' W

Wind: NW 1 Sea state: calm Weather: overcast Temperatur: 4 °C



A few of us woke early, hoping to observe sunrise as it lined-up perfectly with the axis of Kejser Franz Josef Fjord. Unfortunately, a thick blanket of cloud shrouded the peaks of the fjord and we returned to bed, squeezing in an extra hour of sleep instead.

Captain Alexey took *Plancius* further into the fjord and whilst we sat down to breakfast we had great views of the large square mountain called Teuffelschloss (which means 'the devils castle' in German).

In the morning we made a landing at Blomster Bugt ('Flower Bay'). As we made our way to the small beach in the Zodiacs there was not a whisper of wind; the fjord was a dark mirror, reflecting the breathtaking strata of the surrounding mountains. Once ashore we found a small hut a few metres above the beach, this was built by Norwegian trappers and hunters in the 1920s. Here we divided into three groups, a fast group containing those of us who were eager to stretch our legs, a medium group, and mellow nature walk for those who wanted to explore the shoreline and tundra in detail. The landscape surrounding Blomster Bugt was true to its name, the tundra was extremely varied with many different species of plants on show, most showing vivid autumn colours of yellow, orange, and red. In amongst the small gullies and plateaus we found dwarf trees like Arctic willow and birch, Mountain Avens, several



species of Saxifrage, Moss Campions and even the national flower of Greenland – Broad-leaved Fireweed. The medium and fast groups made an ascent of the ridge behind the beach and were rewarded with views over Noa Sø, a large rosy lake with a strong pink hue. The unusual colour is a result of the surrounding rocks, these desert sandstones contain large amounts of red haematite and it washes into the lake giving it this intriguing colour.

Back aboard *Plancius* once more, we set off down Kejser Franz Josef Fjord bound for Maria Ø, a small island in the middle of the fjord. The weather became decidedly more autumnal after lunch; a strong breeze picked up and it began to rain, demonstrating just how lucky we were during our morning landing.





Maria Ø came into view in the afternoon, a stark grey ridge of sedimentary rocks forms the backbone of the island. This is surrounded by large plains of rolling tundra and some smaller rocky knolls. A short Zodiac ride had us back on shore, and again the weather was in our favour, the rain eased and the north side of the island was completely sheltered from the wind. We set off in our different groups to explore the tundra at

different paces. The fast group made it to a viewpoint overlooking a beautiful raised beach with a view across the fjord. The medium groups got to several rounded ridges overlooking the plateau of tundra, a took a moment to observe the quiet loud of arctic silence. We all had a chance to appreciate Autumn colours of the birch and willow, and after soaking it in for a few minutes it was time to head back to *Plancius*. As we got back Beau furnished the plans for tomorrow, letting us know what was in store for the coming days adventures. Andreas followed with a presentation about the stunning rocks of the Eleonore Bay Supergroup which we had been amongst for the previous two days. Finally, Shelli headlined with a talk about the striking variety of tundra plants that we had encountered during the day.



Day 8 – Wednesday, 12. September 2018

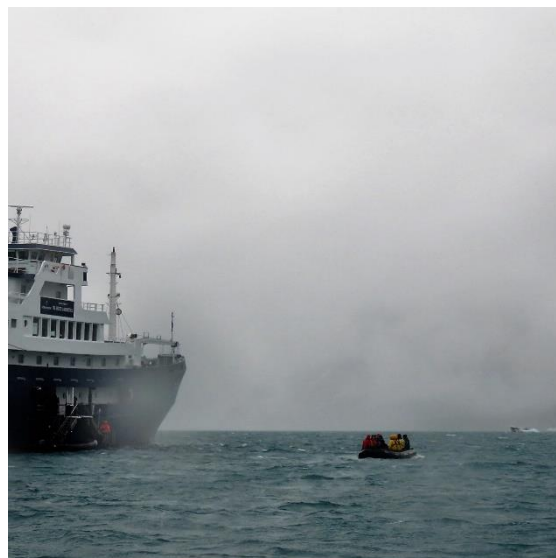
Segelsällskapet & Alpefjord

0800 GPS Position: 72° 12.8' N, 025° 27.0' W

Wind: N 5 Sea state: calm Weather: fog Temperature: 5°C



A romantic morning of overcast skies, a breeze and rain droplets greeted us as the we woke to the day. *Plancius* sailed easily into Alpefjord, majestic peaks soared overhead reaching some 2,000 meters, however today the peaks were still shrouded in cloud. The snowline ever creeping closer to the waterline was noticeable combined with a chill in the air, autumn is upon us. We were invited to breakfast and soon the morning excursion began. We divided into two groups to zodiac cruise the ice front of Seftsytrøms Glacier and Gullyglacier. Bundling up in our warm weather and waterproof gear we joined in with the drivers and headed closer to the ice.

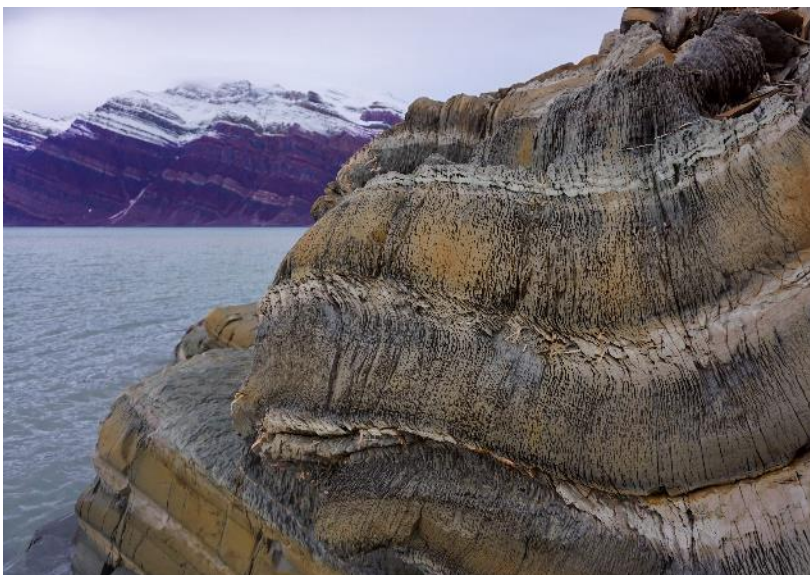


Our drivers explained about lateral, terminal and medial moraines of the glaciers as well as how the ice moves down the valley. Conditions proved challenging for much photography due to the rain and increasing waves and we simply observed the majestic ice. After some 45 minutes we turned back towards *Plancius*. Now we were headed direct into the elements, tucked into our hoods and bounced our way back to the ship. The winds by now had increased to 20 knots



and gusting higher. Fortunately, the Captain made a lee for the gangway and we climbed back on board safely. With the conditions continually deteriorating the call was made to cancel the second cruise. We headed off towards Segelsällskapet the afternoons landing, having time for a leisurely lunch and a small chance to dry our gear.

Around 2 pm we headed ashore where a perimeter landing had been established by the guides and we set off to explore the terrain. Expedition leader Beau and the team had hinted how much they enjoyed this landing but nothing could describe the palette of color and diversity of stones we saw. Painted rocks indeed. The limestone composition was outstanding with a range of tiramisu ocher, burnt umber, sienna, pink and yellow. Some areas seemed composed by an impressionistic artist swinging paint with random and expressive strokes and splatters. Other areas more precise thin and thickening lines of sedimentation incredibly detailed, and adorned further by lichen and moss. We know from the geological



aspect that these colors were rendered under conditions of either high or low oxygen levels. Dark brown and red equal low oxygen and the lighter mustard and gray colors a higher oxygen content of the oceans. The banded pattern is indications of sea level change over multiple periods. How they lift, bend, and fold is another story told on another day.



It seemed all too soon that we were beckoned back to the ship, but sail we must, and Greenland is a large place to get around in. We had 22 hours of sailing to accomplish before we would be in our hoped location for zodiac cruising in Vikingbukta tomorrow.

Back on board we settled into a warm beverage and conversation about rocks and plants, sorting out photographs and swapping experiences. There was an easy calm to the afternoon as the clouds had lifted and the landscape fully shown as we cruised the fjord system east. Some of us noticed the ship slow

slightly and change direction, slight alteration of mood was noticed, something of anticipation. A few struck out on deck, binoculars and cameras in tow, searching for the "something" not yet announced. Those that were near the guides or on the bridge observed a keen interest off the starboard side bow. Several blows had been seen and Captain calculated a course to





have a closer look. Slowly we approached and with good scouting and a few consultations, it was deduced a pod of Narwhals were not 200-300 m away.

These mystical amazing creatures are a rare and often fantasized observation. We were so lucky. Though not the BBC theatrical sighting of tusks in the air and aerobatic displays, we did chance upon a rather rare species in such a large space. Only 300 or so animals have been recorded in Scorsbysund and we were still well north of this study sight.



Onward we sailed as the evening light darkened. Dinner was served and we shortly noticed the combining rocking of ship and swell of ocean. Beau gave a small safety reminder that we would be heading to open ocean for the evening, and to keep one hand for ourselves one hand for the ship always. Off to our cabins we went to secure our belongings in the cabin and dreams of these unicorns of the sea.



Day 9 – Thursday, 13. September 2018

Vikingebugt, Gasefjord

0800 GPS Position: 70° 23.1' N, 022° 21.1' W

Wind: N 6 Sea state: rough with swell Weather: overcast Temperatur: 2°C



We finally woke to blue in the sky, and no rain falling. We had passed a good, if slightly bumpy night, sailing in open waters south from Davy Sund and along the coast of Liverpool Land; a long, thin peninsula, almost-island that makes up a good portion of the East coast. By the time Beau woke us, the sun was lighting up around the

ship, and we had turned into Scorsbysund. We had calm waters and beautiful views, with mountains on both sides and icebergs all around us. The sedimentary layering was dusted with fresh snow, enhancing the contrasting dark and light angles. Even though it was quite cold out in the wind, most of us thought it was worthwhile dressing up and getting outside regularly to take in the impressive views. Scorsbysund is one of the longest fjord systems in the world, and we made our way along the Southern coast towards our intended cruising location of Vikingebugt, a horseshoe shaped bay where Bredegletscher ("Wide Glacier") comes down to the sea.

As we sailed, Laurence gave us a presentation in the lounge on glaciers. He introduced us to what a glacier is, the many different types of glaciers, the unique ice in Svalbard and





Greenland, and the planet's changing cryosphere. As we finished the talk and before we went in to lunch, Captain Alexey completely circumnavigated a striking iceberg that was in our path. Viewing the iceberg from all sides was a revolutionary photography experience of capturing the incredible patterns of blues within the ice.

During lunch, we approached Vikingebugt, and could see the glacier at the very back of the bay. A large sailing ship, *Rembrandt*, came out of the

ice and dropped anchor near us, giving us ideas of other ways to travel in the North. As we finished lunch and were starting to prepare for our Zodiac cruise, the call went out: "Polar Bear!" Andreas had spotted a small creamy smudge of snow that turned out to be the backside of a bear who was laying down, sleeping, behind a rock. As our anchor made its raucous way down into the water, the bear raised its head and rolled around to look at the *Plancius*, confirming for all those watching in speculation that it was a bear, and not a snow patch.

Many photos later, the first group were down the gangway, in the Zodiacs and off to see the bear from a much closer approach. Moving occasionally, the bear obligingly remained within view for us to observe. After a good look at what we later decided might be a male the bear (or might not), we moved on to begin the Zodiac cruise as we had intended. Investigating the ice and basaltic columnar rocks of the bay. The huge glacier at the back of the bay had been calving recently, and there were impressive icebergs scattered through the waters. In addition, quite a bit of noisy brash ice was procured, photographed, and admired for its beauty in variety of shape and patterns.

The air bubbles escaping from the ice popped all around us. It was enjoyable to navigate the boats deep into the ice, pushing





aside medium pieces and driving over the smaller ones, each Zodiac acting as an icebreaker as we cruised around exploring.

The cliffs around us were as fascinating as the ice. Observing the shoreline from close up, the steep sides of the bay were in many places carpeted with bright patches of red and yellow plant life, most of which was almost glowing in sharp autumn colours, but the coastal geology was spectacular. Alternating with steep scree slopes, we found fantastic high walls made of giant columns of basalt in glorious steely grey and rich dark red. These amazing hexagonal columns of basalt or dolerite were created during one giant volcanic eruption that took place around 55 million years ago, part of a geological event that resulted in the Atlantic Ocean opening. Cruising along the coast, we could observe how the zones of columns started and ended in apparently random patches. This is caused by cooling features, formed above and below ground as giant lava flows cooled. The columns sometimes twisted, curved and changed direction, always pointing towards where the cooling source was.

The Zodiacs explored in a variety of directions, and we all saw slightly different views of everything around us. Everyone was having an incredible time, and few wanted to return to the ship. Beau called the drivers in, and we returned and traded out with our fellow companions who had been waiting on the ship for their turn to cruise, thus everyone was able to investigate this fabulous bay.

Recap, following Beau's outline of locations and activities planned for the followings days also focussed on the pod of Narwhal we had seen the previous night. These incredible small whales are very shy and tend to avoid ships, usually fleeing at first contact. We were very lucky to spot these elusive marine

mammals, and particularly lucky that they did not bolt upon noticing our ship. Small whales, they do not grow beyond 5 metres maximum, and generally do not have a big, obvious blow; making them very hard to spot. First seen as ripples in the water, their grey and white patterned backs were really the only sign they were present. Truly an Arctic species, these animals never leave the northern arctic, and can dive down and stay under the ice for very long periods of time. Ursula outlined with details of where they go, how they age and what they eat helped to fill in the blanks for most of us, who never expected to see these amazing mystical creatures. After dinner, the bar again filled with what can now be described as 'the usual suspects', as we chatted, looked outside at the ever-changing views, and kept Rolando busy until it was our bedtime.



Day 10 – Friday, 14. September 2018

Fog and Rode Ø

0800 GPS Position: 70° 28.3' N, 028° 05.2' W

Wind: N 2 Sea state: calm Weather: fog Temperatur: 3 °C



Plancius had spent the night moving through the huge channel of Fønfjord, heading into the deepest corners of the Scoresbysund fjord system. A few of us had set our alarms and woke early, hoping to catch the sunrise. Those of us who did were greeted with blue skies and the first rays of sun easing over the spectacular granite, gneiss, and lava walls of Fønfjord. However, the clear skies didn't last long, and we were soon enveloped in thick fog. During breakfast we continued westwards through this ethereal world of muted greys. The gloom was periodically punctuated by huge icebergs looming out of the mist; *Plancius* moved adeptly through this maze of silent white spectres.

We reached Røde Ø, the site of our morning landing, but the weather was not cooperating. Thick fog swathed the ship, although there were occasional tantalising interludes of slightly clearer visibility, and at times even some weak sunshine burning through the haze. We decided to wait for conditions to improve. This was an opportunity to have some lectures and both Arjen and Andreas gave full-length lectures on climate change in the Arctic, in English and German respectively. Both lectures detailed the many ways that Arctic is being shaped by the changing climate conditions. The Arctic is changing much faster than the rest of the planet and is full of vulnerable landscapes and ecosystems. Both Arjen and Andreas then talked about the predictions for





the future of the Arctic, outlining how dramatic changes in the high latitudes will impact life everywhere on Earth. However, the lectures finished with a note of cautious optimism; we know the challenges that the high latitudes face, and we have both the means and willpower to tackle these. With continued action it may be possible to avert the most serious consequences of climate change.

After lunch the expedition team launched a pair of Zodiacs and went to investigate the environments ashore. By one hundred metres from the ship our guides were reduced to just shadows in the mist, and few metres further they disappeared altogether. After 20 minutes Beau radioed back to the ship; the landing was cancelled. Visibility around the island of Røde Ø was bad and getting worse. The risk of a surprise Polar Bear encounter meant that it was simply were not safe to be ashore. This risk was compounded by a large iceberg rolling over directly in front of the landing site which sent waves crashing onto the beach and ca using hazardous Zodiac operations. With the guides safely back onboard *Plancius* moved north into Røde fjord; Captain Alexey brought *Plancius* carefully through the maze of fog and ice. After two hours the fog gradually began to lift, revealing the



huge, snow-capped walls of Røde fjord. Thick banks of mist still hung heavy in the air and we disappeared into them for a few minutes at a time before reappearing once more into the crisp autumn sunshine. As we worked our way north the light conditions got better and better. Everything came together for a few magical hours; the low yellow sun lit up the thick banks of



fog, mirror-calm waters reflected mountains, glaciers, and the stark whites and deep blues of the countless icebergs. As we were on deck, soaking in this incredible scene, Zsusanna let us know that there was a special treat waiting for us on the bridge deck; hot chocolate and sambuca!

In the evening we retreated indoors for dinner; the views from the dining room continued to dazzle. During dinner *Plancius* turned east into Øfjord and by the time we had polished off desert we were amongst the 2000 m peaks of this remarkable fjord. A few of us braved the cold of the Arctic evening to watch sunset from the decks; the walls of rock, ice and snow were bathed in golds, pinks, and reds from the setting sun behind us, the perfect ending to an afternoon forever etched in our memories.



Day 11 – Saturday, 15. September 2018

Jytte Havn & Rune Island

0800 GPS Position: 71° 04.6' N, 005° 36.4' W

Wind: W 1 Sea state: calm Weather: overcast Temperature: 3°C



After the glorious afternoon and evening of yesterday, with lovely light and clear sky, we were hoping for a vibrant morning as well, but our old friend, the sea fog, was back with us. Deep in the fjord, conditions were glassy calm, and the giant bergs around us shone with a deep inner light. During breakfast, the Captain positioned the ship and dropped anchor next to Bjornoer, the 'Bear Islands', low-lying rocky islets at the very Northern end of Hall Bredning, the giant waterway flowing North from Scorsbysund.

We prepared to go ashore at Jytte Havn for a walk. From the ship, a few beautiful icebergs were visible, as were the islands and the steeper, taller walls of the fjord itself. The fog lifted to show that there had been a little fresh snow overnight, almost down to sea level.

We headed for the gangway, keen to get ashore and explore the little island. Once on land and organised into our groups, we set off in





different directions, at different paces. It was easy to be engaged and enamoured by the beautiful colours of the willow, birch, bearberry and various lichens. The patterns and colours of the rocks themselves were their own chapter in a book of delights this morning. Heading up the slope behind the landing site, views opened out to include the ship and some aged icebergs, the sun even came out on the far slopes of the fjord to show its presence. While we were walking, the weather continued to evolve, and soon

there was snow falling around us, a first for some of the group.

Our ride back to the ship was a noticeably colder and a little damp, but the morning had been fantastic, and we didn't mind a little damp while on our way to a hot lunch.

The midday meal break was a chance to recharge our batteries, ready for the afternoon. We were anticipating another walking or hiking opportunity for those of us who wanted to climb more hills. Upon approach to our location the water around the ship was flat calm, and there were amazing icebergs to be viewed 360 degrees around. Once on shore, we had our first taste of local history. We were at Ingmikertikajik, a small island just North and East of our morning landing site, close to Sydcap on the mainland of Scoresby Land. This small island is culturally relevant to the in the past summer homes of Thule people. The Thule are a not so ancient group who had arrived in Greenland from Canada sometime between 1,000 and 1,500 years ago. We know very little about the Thule people, as they left very little behind them, generally only stone rings from tent sites and burial cairns. Thule lived simple lives hunting for sustenance, and most of what they used was organic and so would break down comparatively quickly. As soon as we were ashore, Beau showed us a few tent rings and graves, but they





have deteriorated to where they are sometimes hard to distinguish from natural features of the landscape. Again, we split into Fast, Medium and Gentle walking groups and set off in our various directions. With the clear blue sky and sunshine, it was a stunning afternoon, no matter what you chose to do. Views ranged from the ship with icebergs, mountain-scapes across the water, and closer detailed



rock patterns with and without the ubiquitous and gloriously coloured willow, bearberry and end of season flowerheads. The end of the afternoon was a big treat for some - the chance to go swimming in truly polar waters! With the water temperature below 3°C, most of us thought the swimmers a little bit crazy, but good fun was had by all. We gradually all returned back to the ship to warm up and have a drink in the bar before recap. From the decks of *Plancius*, the ice field south of us was clearly visible and incredibly beautiful, looking like an alien city made of fairy castles in the distance.



As the ship got underway towards our following destination tomorrow, recap was almost underway when Captain advertised we were reaching the ice field full of monster bergs, and entering the fantastical ice city. Beau decided that viewing Greenland in one of its most beautiful guises was worth



cancelling the recap, thus he gave a quick briefing with plans for tomorrow. Outside we went to take in one of the rare wonders of the planet, the giant icebergs of Eastern Greenland. The passage through the icebergs can only be described as magical, as Captain Alexey took *Plancius* deep into the berg field, no matter what direction you looked, there were towering white and blue ice-sculptures sparkling in the sunshine. At the expected time of

seven pm, Zsuzsanna invited everybody down for dinner, and even though we didn't want to miss out on any icebergs, we also didn't want to miss out on any of our Galley team's incredible food, either! Having photographed the ice from most angles, with and without friends and family in the foreground, we left the ice behind, and headed in to dinner, still watching the scenery through the dining room windows while we enjoyed our meals.

But the night wasn't over... Around midnight Beau woke us with word that the Aurora Borealis, the Northern Lights, were visible! Most of us dragged ourselves out of bed and out onto the decks for an impressive display of the lights. Showing mostly pale green, they flickered and flowed around us for some time. From the back deck, we could also see some bioluminescence in the ship's wake; we had theatre from both below and above us. As the ship was under way, the wind came up and so did the chill of the arctic. A warm drink of tea or something from the Lounge saw most of us back into our beds full of more excitement from such a full day.



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Day 12 – Sunday, 16. September 2018

Ittoqqortoormiit & Kap Tobin

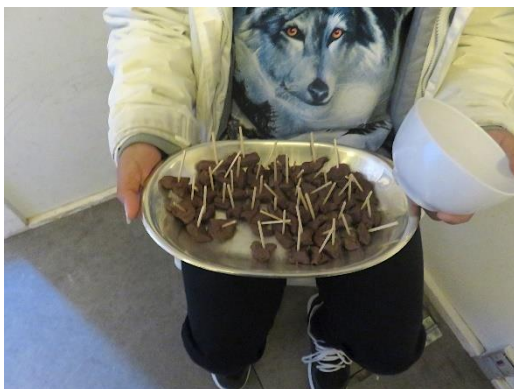
0800 GPS Position: 70° 28.6' N, 021° 58.1' W

Wind: NE 6 Sea state: swell with chop Weather: overcast & snow Temperature: 1°C



The day started with the familiar dulcet tones of Beau; he let us know the weather (cloudy), wind speed (15 knots), and temperature (a brisk -2°C). As we ate breakfast, *Plancius* covered the last few miles to our goal for the morning, the small Greenlandic village of Ittoqqortoormiit. A wintery scene greeted us there; the colourful houses on the hillside were occasionally masked by thin skeins of falling snow. Two Greenlandic government officials came aboard to check paperwork and allow *Plancius* to clear customs, and shortly after we were boarding Zodiacs to be shuttled to the shore.

We made our landing at a small cobbled beach next to the pier and after a short briefing from Beau and Arjen we made our way into the village to explore this unique settlement. After 12 days on a ship, in some of the most



remote landscapes on Earth, it took a few moments to adjust to the sights, sounds, and smells of village life. Most of us headed to the gift shop first where we sampled musk ox and perused the souvenirs; these ranged from carvings and beadwork, to maps,





postcards, and silkscreened cotton t-shirts. From there we set off around the community, walking the surprisingly numerous roads. Many of the people in Ittoqqortoormiit still actively hunt and fish to support themselves and we could see evidence of this all around us; one house had a polar bear skin hanging over a rail to dry, and several others had musk ox hides outside. There were also many sled dogs at the edge of the village waiting patiently for the snow and ice to return and for the winter hunting trips to begin

again. The village had a sleepy feel, this was definitely exacerbated by the fact that we were visiting on a gray Sunday morning! Despite this there was plenty to see and do. A few of us made it up to the astroturf football pitch set in a small valley on the northwest edge of the settlement, this flat, uniform, green surface is entirely incongruous in the landscape. The weather station lies on the hill above the eastern part of Ittoqqortoormiit and we were also able to visit this; a lucky few were invited inside to watch the weathermen preparing a radiosonde balloon launch. These measurements are undertaken daily, year-round, and more than 20,000 launches have been made since the station started operating in the 1960s. After an interesting few hours exploring Ittoqqortoormiit it was time to head back to the ship.

During lunch *Plancius* moved down the coast a little way towards Kap Tobin, a small abandoned settlement. This was where the local Greenlandic people used to live before they moved to the Ittoqqortoormiit some 50 years



ago. The expedition team sent out a scout boat to investigate conditions for a landing. During the morning the swell and wind had come up and it was unclear if we could safely land on the boulder beach in front of Kap Tobin. After a thorough scout the Zodiac returned to *Plancius*, unfortunately the combination of growing swell and wind made landing impossible. In place of the excursion, Ursula presented a lecture on plastic pollution in the marine environment. She outlined the scale of the problem and its tragic effect on marine life. However, Ursula also gave us some easy practical steps to reduce our own plastic footprint, if we all act together the scourge of plastic pollution can be drastically reduced. During the presentation, *Plancius* weighed



anchor and headed southeast, out of Scoresbysund and towards our final destination, Akureyri in northern Iceland! The swell had increased to a full stormy sea, and by recap and dinner, moving around the ship had become challenging due to the large seas. Snow blizzards covered the deck in white and the ocean became so strong the outer decks were closed, portholes on the lower decks shut, and a general “tucking in and tightening up” was recommended. The majority of us headed to our cabins to rest after a final dynamic day in Greenland.



Day 13 – Monday, 17. September 2018

At sea to Iceland

0800 GPS Position: 67° 51.10'N, 021° 30.47'W

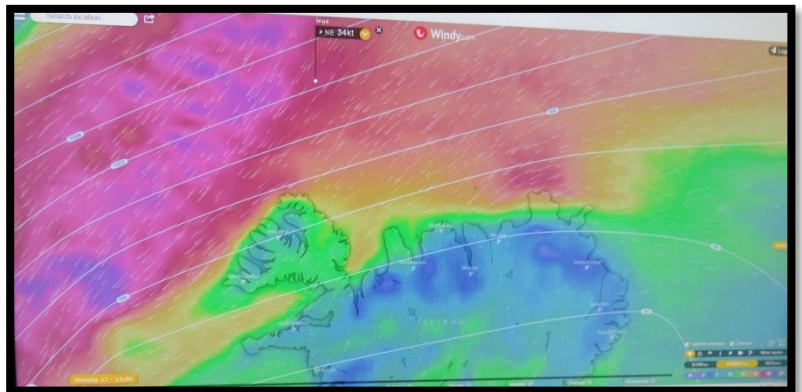
Wind: NE 10 Sea state: Heavy storm Weather: overcast Temperature: 5°C



We woke, or lay still awake to the tumble and roll of the ship in the storm still raging outside the strong hull of our ship. During the night the contents of our cabins had re-arranged themselves if we hadn't properly prepared. Even our bodies in the bunks shifted uncontrollably back and forth head to toe, toe to head. Keeping both hands for the ship some of us headed up to the lounge for a morning coffee or tea, a challenge of balance, timing, and luck to reach a seat with the cup still intact of its contents. Idly we watched waves cresting over themselves, occasionally breaking over the bow and a crescendo of white water filled the air. As mesmerizing as watching a fire, but with considerably more dramatics in regards to movement.

Mid-morning Ursula and Isa gave lectures on feeding strategies of marine mammals and marine algae respectively. The lectures were well attended given the circumstances and it was a valiant effort conducted by the presenters in such conditions, when most would prefer to be horizontal.

We sailed on towards the distant coast of Iceland, the winds remained a steady 35-40 knots with waves 3-4 meters. This, according to the Beaufort scale is a force





8 or "Fresh Gale". The snow from the evening prior had melted and temperatures outside were 3°C. However, the outer decks were still closed for safety reasons, none of us thought it a good idea to be out there anyways.

We were invited to a "plated" lunch service, soup not an option today. It was a good reason to change locations and bravely move about, but for some also a reason just to head straight to bed.

Outside we could see our friends the Northern fulmar had rejoined as well as several Kittiwake gulls. It was anticipated that by

19:00 we would be in calmer waters, and with that hopes of possible marine mammal sightings. With this information we either headed for another lie down or began the arduous project of packing our belongings. However this was just not the case, it would not be until the early morning that we would be released from the storm and at its peak of the winds had exceeded 60 knots and the seas were 6-7 metres high.

The storm continued to rage and Captain was forever having to play with the waves, our comfort and navigation to get to the following destination of Akureyri. In the dining room we were given instructions for disembarkation in the morning as well as how to rectify our bills. Beau and the Expedition team gave a toast to the voyage and we celebrated the amazing crew of *Plancius* complete for hotel team: cabin stewards, dinning staff, and the beautiful ladies of the laundry. In spirit we



celebrated the ones still busy keeping the ship running smoothly, the engineers, bridge officers and helmsmen and deck crew. The entire ship, crew and expedition team have done an amazing job of making this voyage a true success even with challenging conditions at times.

Into the evening we continued the awkward dance with ocean, ship and self. It was a final acknowledgement to the contemptuous and severe condition of the northern waters in autumn. We were warm and cozy still in our modern-day ship, but could only just imagine such a voyage just 80 years ago what hardships to endure. We tucked in a final time, languishing the rocking comfort of our final night, and dreaming of memories just freshly made.

Day 14 – Tuesday, 18. September 2018

Disembarkation in Akureyri

0800 GPS Position: 65° 41.3' N, 018°04.5' W

Wind: NE 2 **Sea state:** calm **Weather:** overcast **Temperatur:** 3 °C

After one final multi lingual wakeup call from Beau, we headed down to our ultimate breakfast onboard. We dutifully left our luggage outside our cabins, and staff and crew nicked it to the pier for us. We disembarked walking the gangway for the final time. We headed out into the mild Icelandic air, happy to feel solid ground under our feet after the rocking storm we had crossing the Denmark Strait. First, we identified our luggage on the pier and then the majority of us boarded buses headed for Reykjavik. We had plenty of time to reminisce and digest our adventures for the last 13 days during the six hours journey through Iceland's spectacular scenery. Then it was time to go our separate ways, some to hotels in the city others off to the airport, wither homeward bound or on towards other adventures.

It was sad to say good-bye to all the beautiful places we had visited and to disembark *Plancius*, the ship that had been our comfortable, cosy home for an unforgettable journey to the North.

At the same time, we were richer in memories and knowledge about the Arctic and its wildlife. We have had special and incredible experiences, taken hundreds of pictures and made new friends. We shared truly unique moments, we talked and we laughed with each other. This trip will last us a lifetime – in our memories, in our imaginations, and in our dreams.



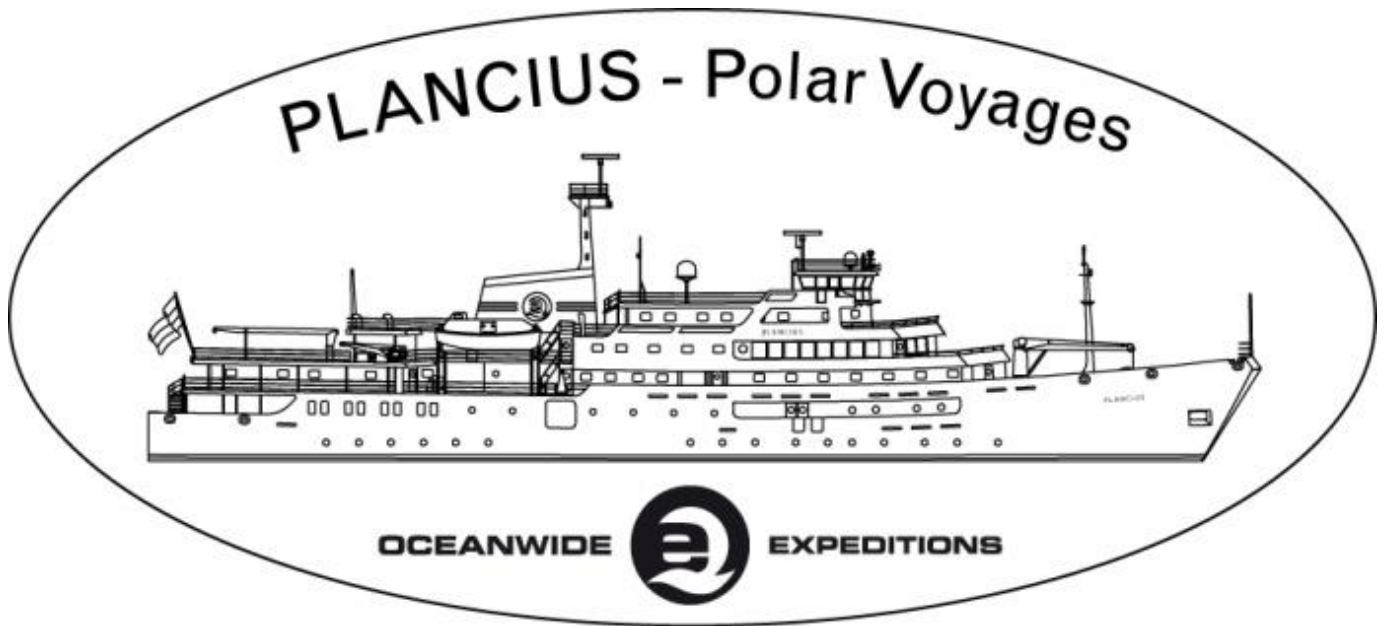
Thank you all for such a wonderful voyage, for your company, good humour and enthusiasm. We hope to see you again in the future, wherever that might be!

Total distance sailed on our voyage:

Nautical miles 2,388.22

Furthest North Point: 80°02.59`N / 020°55.20`E

On behalf of Oceanwide Expeditions, Captain Alexey Nazarov, Expedition Leader Beau Pruneau, Hotel Manager Szuazzana and all the crew and staff, it has been a pleasure travelling with you.





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The size of your photo should be between 2MB and 8MB. Our lucky winners will be contacted by e-mail and Facebook by November 30, 2018. The photography contest runs from April, 30 until October, 30 2018.

Read the terms and conditions of the contest on www.oceanwide-expeditions.com/page/contest-terms



Kayaking the Waters of Antarctica The weather changes so dramatically down here that you simply cannot say, "this looks like a great day" if it is one – rather you must live in the moment and perhaps a more appropriate phrase might be, "this looks like a great moment"! After enduring Force 8 winds on the Beaufort Wind Scale the Ortelius (our home during this Antarctica cruise) pulled into calm waters at Georges Point affording us our first close look at the breathtaking scenery (icebergs, glaciers and mountains)

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What was it like to camp out under the Antarctic sky? Was it scary when you encountered a polar bear? Was this your first cruise and were you nervous about crossing open waters?

After all, how your expedition made you feel is what you're going to carry with you for the rest of your life. If you share your experience you just might win yourself a € 1000 gift voucher for your next polar adventure.

Here's what you need to do:

1. Write a post (600 – 1200 words) in Dutch, English, or German about what excited you the most on your Oceanwide Expeditions cruise. The topic is entirely up to you.
2. Make sure you add titles and subtitles to the story.
3. Create a hyperlink or two inside of your post. The link could connect to the ship's page, the trip itinerary, the particular destination's page, or perhaps a page related to one of the activities you enjoyed.
4. Add 3 to 5 pictures (they should be 2 MB minimum in size, in landscape format and attached separately when you decide to send your entry to us).
5. Post it online by completing the entry form "Share your story" (<https://oceanwide-expeditions.com/customer-story/create>) **OR** send your post to us at marketing@oceanwide-expeditions.com. Either way, make sure you include your full name and e-mail address.
6. **Spread the word!**



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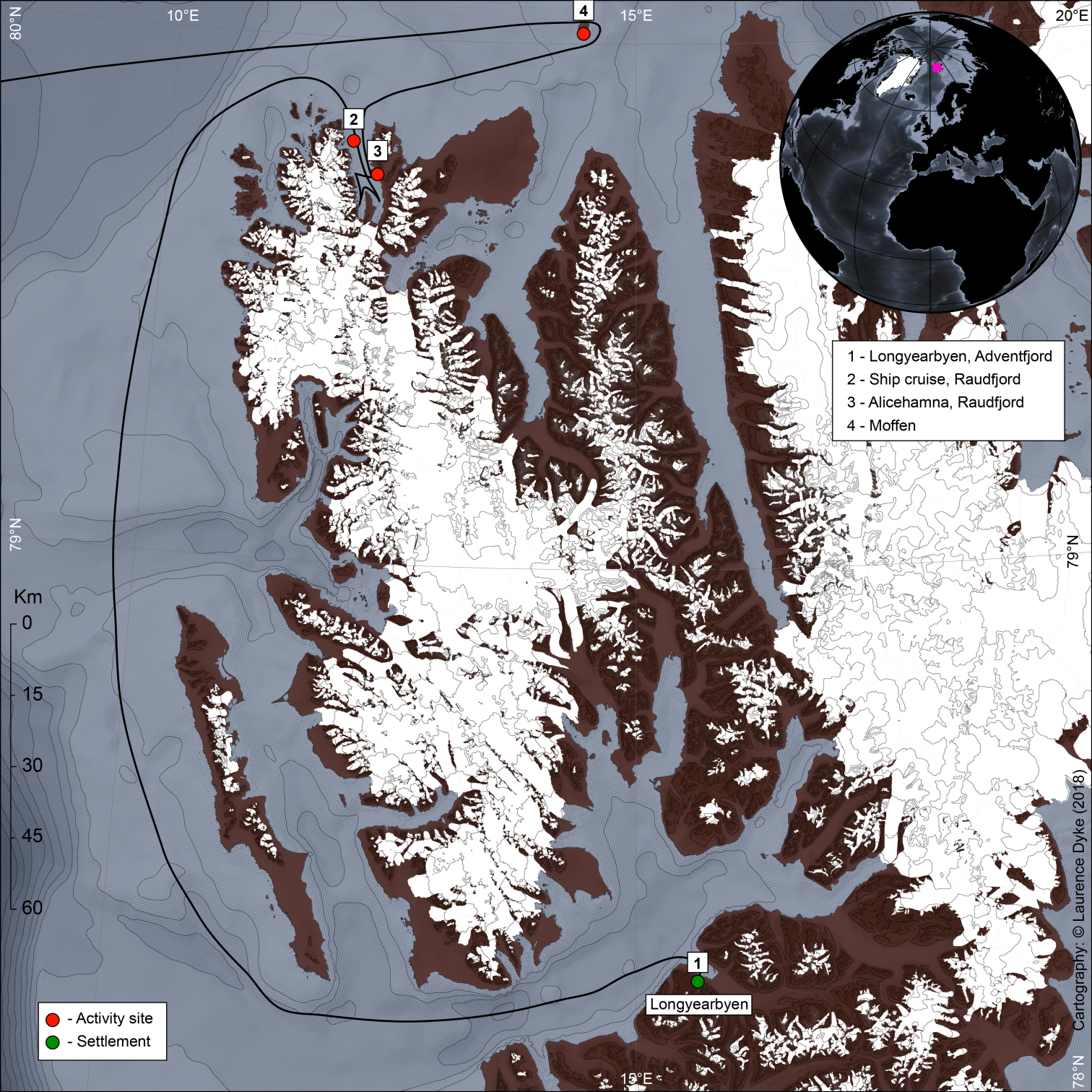
€ 250 gift voucher
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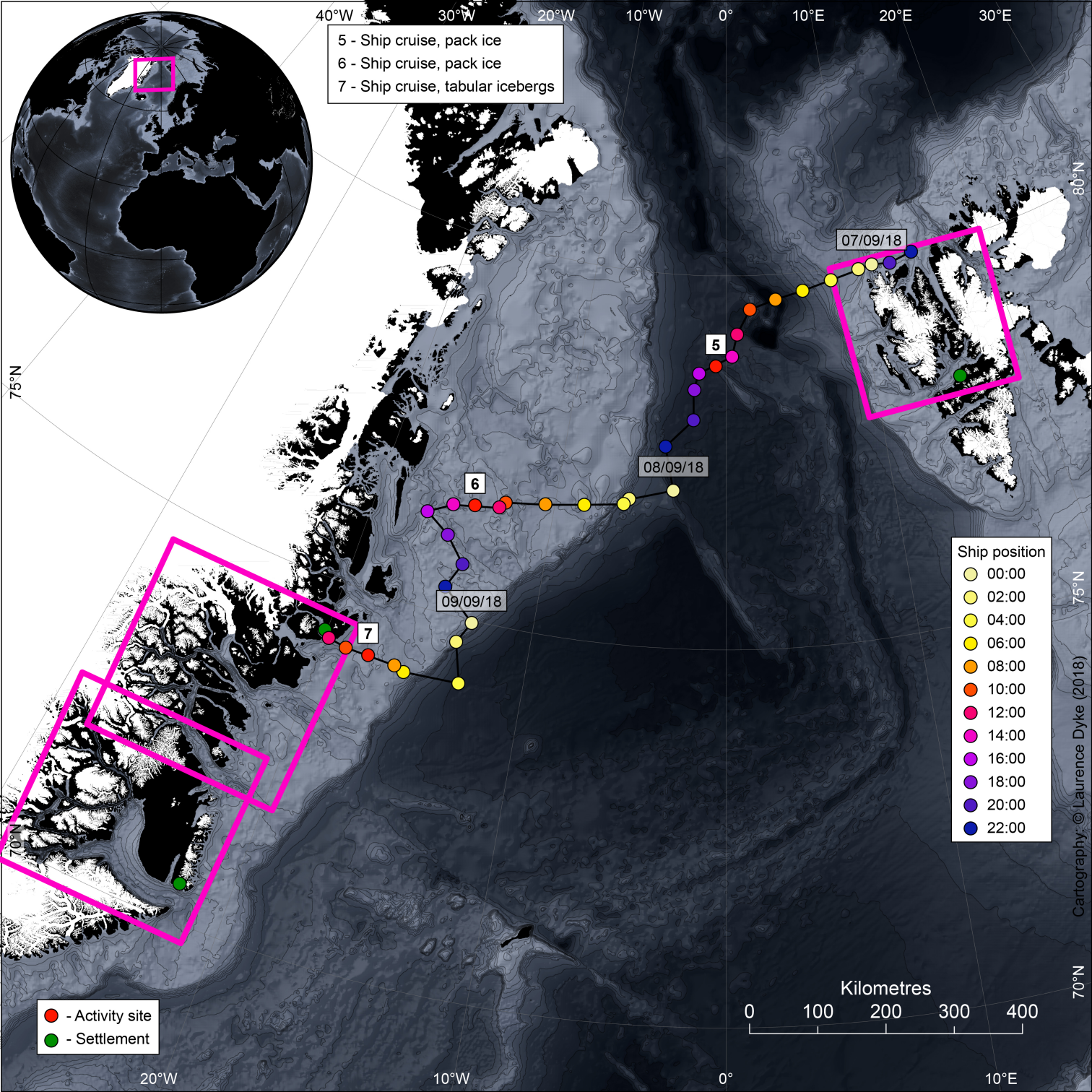


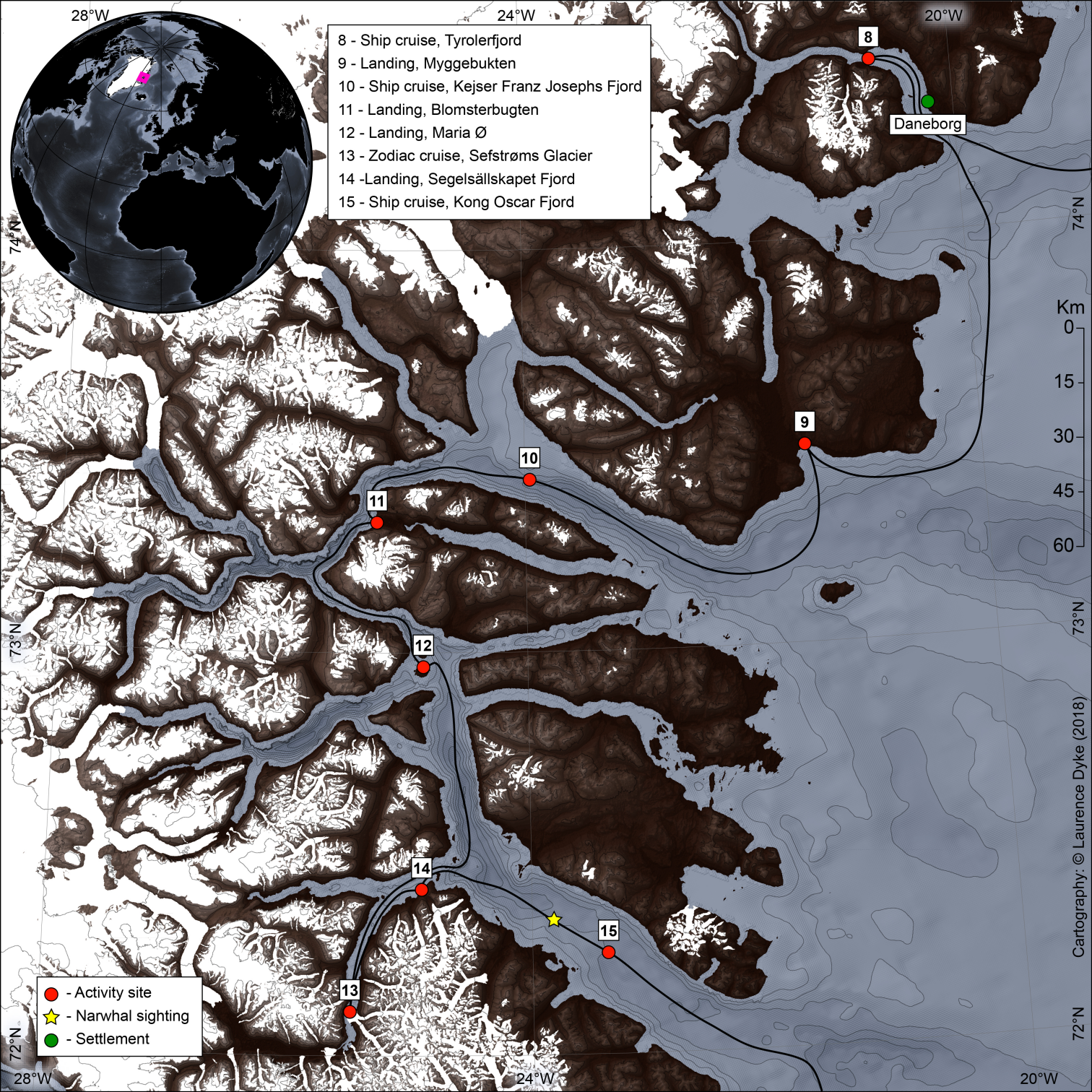
ENTRIES CLOSE OCTOBER 30

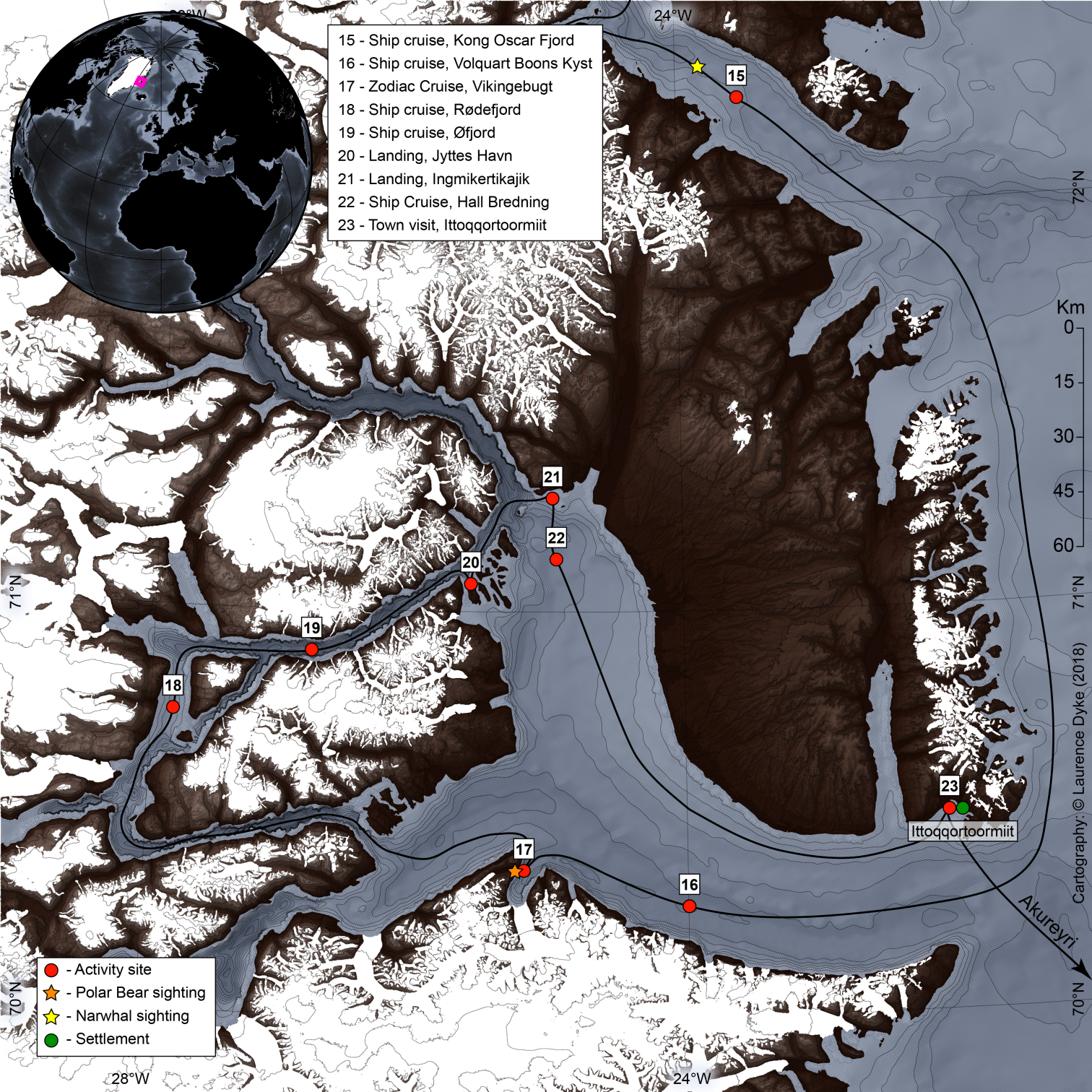
Our lucky winners will be contacted by e-mail and Facebook by November 30, 2018

Read the full terms and conditions on oceanwide-expeditions.com/page/contest-terms









Svalbard, East Greenland, &
Iceland

on board the

Plancius

5th September 2018

Welcome on board!

from 16.00 **Welcome on board!** Your luggage will be delivered to your cabin as soon as possible. Check to make sure you are not missing anything. Feel free to explore around the ship.

~ 1715 First meeting and Welcome Briefing in the Lounge (Deck 5), including a **Mandatory Safety Briefing & Lifeboat Drill**. **All Passengers are required to attend** this very important safety briefing. Please listen for **announcements**.

ca. 18.00 *Plancius* departs Longyearbyen northbound.

~ 1830 **Introduction to the ship** by your Hotel Team and further information by your Expedition Team in the Lounge (Deck 5).

19.30 **Dinner** is served in the Dining Room located on Deck 3 behind reception. Bon appétit!

Svalbard, East Greenland, & Iceland

on board the

Plancius

6th September 2018

Raudfjord, Hamiltonbukta & Moffen

Welcome on board!

- 07.45** Wakeup call by your Expedition Leader Beau. Good morning!
- 08.00** Breakfast buffet is ready for you in the Restaurant for one hour.
- 09.30** **Mandatory** Zodiac & Polar Bear safety briefing in the Lounge for all English speakers. Your Expedition Leader Beau will go over the plans for the day and the general voyage plans. During this time the German speakers will receive their rubber boots in the boot room on deck 3.
- 10.45** **Mandatory** Zodiac & Polar Bear safety briefing in the Lounge for all German speakers. During this time the English speakers will receive their rubber boots in the boot room on deck 3.
- 12.30** Lunch is served for one hour in the Dining Room.
- During lunch we will ship cruise through Raudfjord, in the North-West part of Spitsbergen.
- 15.00** **Zodiac Cruise Hamiltonbukta.** We will head out in the zodiacs, weather permitting, and cruise along a beautiful glacier in a bay known as Hamiltonbukta within Raudfjord. We will split up into 2 groups for this cruise:
- 15.00** Group 1 Deck 4
16.15 Group 2 Deck 2, 3, 5, & 6
- First 3 zodiacs of each group will be German speaking zodiacs.
- 18.30** Daily Recap in the Bar. We will talk about the things we saw during the day, and the plans for the following day.
- 19.00** Dinner is served in the Dining Room. Bon appétit!
- After dinner we will head up towards Moffen, an island sandbank located at 80 degrees north. Walrus are often hauled out on shore so head out on deck and enjoy the view! We will announce via the PA system when we arrive within view of the island.

Svalbard, East Greenland, & Iceland

on board the

Plancius

7th September 2018

At Sea

- 07.45** Wakeup call by your Expedition Leader Beau. Good morning!
- 08.00** Breakfast buffet is ready for you in the Restaurant for one hour.
- 10.00** **English speakers**, please join Andreas in the **Lounge** for his lecture Rock and Roll, a Svalbard Rock story about the geology of Svalbard
German speakers please join Ursula in the **Dining Room** to hear all about walruses.
- 12.30** Lunch is served for one hour in the Dining Room.
- 15.00** **English speakers**, please join Ursula in the **Lounge** for her lecture about walruses – sluggish on land, agile in the water.
German speakers, please join Andreas in the **Dining Room** for a lecture about the geology of Svalbard.
- PM** Expedition afternoon: We hope to reach the **pack ice**, dress warmly and come to the outside decks to enjoy this high Arctic scenery.
- 18.30** Daily Recap in the Bar. We will talk about the things we saw during the day, and the plans for the following day.
- 19.00** Dinner is served in the Dining Room. Bon appétit!

**Svalbard, East Greenland, &
Iceland**

on board the

Plancius

8th September 2018

At Sea

As we are heading towards East Greenland please remember that we have turned our clocks
one hour behind.

- 07.45** Wakeup call by your Expedition Leader Beau. Good morning!
- 08.00** Breakfast buffet is ready for you in the Restaurant for one hour.
- 10.00** **Shelli** would like to explain all about the various species of whales found in the Arctic. This will be for the **English** speakers in the **Lounge**. At the same time, Ursula would like to explain about whales in **German** in the **Restaurant**.
- 12.30** Lunch is served for one hour in the Dining Room.
- 15.00** **Laurence** would like to invite everyone into the **Lounge** for an Introduction to Greenland. **This will be in English but translated into German.**
- PM** **Expedition Afternoon.** As we hope to be around some pack ice at this time, rug up warm and head outside to enjoy the scenery!
- 18.30** Daily Recap in the Bar. We will talk about the things we saw during the day, and the plans for the following day.
- 19.00** Dinner is served in the Dining Room. Bon appétit!

**Svalbard, East Greenland, &
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9th September 2018

Pack Ice & Daneborg

As we are heading towards East Greenland please remember that we have turned our clocks
one hour behind.

- 07.45** Wakeup call by your Expedition Leader Beau. Good morning!
- 08.00** Breakfast buffet is ready for you in the Restaurant for one hour.
- AM** We will spend time along the pack ice near the East Greenland coast and north of Clavering Ø island. Dress up warm and head outside on deck to help us scout for wildlife!
- 12.00** Lunch is served for one hour in the Dining Room.
- 14.30** **Daneborg Perimeter Landing.** We hope to land at a place called Daneborg, which is the headquarters for the Sirius Patrol. This is an elite Danish special forces unit who patrol the North-East Greenland national park via dog sled. We will hail them via VHF radio to ask for permission to land. If permission is granted, then we will go ashore for a tour of their sled dogs, with guides stationed around in a semi-circle for polar bear protection. Please stay inside this half circle of guides. If permission is denied, we will head further into the fjords scouting for wildlife from the ship.
- 18.30** Daily Recap in the Bar. We will talk about the things we saw during the day, and the plans for the following day.
- 19.00** Dinner is served in the Dining Room. Bon appétit!

**Svalbard, East Greenland, &
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10th September 2018

Myggebugten & Keiser Franz Josef Fjord

- 07.45** Wakeup call by your Expedition Leader Beau. Good morning!
- 08.00** Breakfast buffet is ready for you in the Restaurant for one hour.
- 09.30** **Myggebugten Perimeter Landing.** We plan to land at a place called Myggebugten, or Mosquito Bay. This will be a perimeter landing, where the guides will form a half circle and guests are free to roam within this area. A hut stands here with dog kennels, as this is used as a satellite base for the Sirius Patrol. Flat tundra abounds and provides relatively easy walking.
- 12.30** Lunch is served for one hour in the Dining Room.
- PM** **Keiser Franz Josef Fjord.** We will ship cruise up through Keiser Franz Josef Fjord, which is full of amazing geology. Please enjoy the views out on deck as we enter deeper into Greenlandic territory. Listen out for announcements as we may offer a lecture.
- 18.30** Daily Recap in the Bar. We will talk about the things we saw during the day, and the plans for the following day.
- 19.00** A special dinner is served behind the dining room on deck 3 outside. Dress up warm and bring your party hat!

**Svalbard, East Greenland, &
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on board the

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11th September 2018

Blomsterbugt & Maria Ø

- 07.45** Wakeup call by your Expedition Leader Beau. Good morning!
- 08.00** Breakfast buffet is ready for you in the Restaurant for one hour.
- 09.30** **Blomsterbugt Landing.** We plan to land at a place called Blomsterbugt, or Flower Bay. Keep a lookout for arctic hares amongst the tundra and gyrfalcon's flying overhead. Sometimes muskox is seen in the highlands. We will organize into 3 separate hikes on land of a gentle, medium, and fast pace.
- 12.30** Lunch is served for one hour in the Dining Room.
- 15.00** **Maria Ø Landing.** We hope to land at a place called Maria Ø, or Maria Island. Interesting geology awaits us as well as flat tundra plains. We will land and separate into 3 groups for hiking at a gentle, medium, and fast pace.
- 18.30** Daily Recap in the Bar. We will talk about the things we saw during the day, and the plans for the following day.
- 19.00** Dinner is served in the Dining Room. Bon Appetit!

**Svalbard, East Greenland, &
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on board the

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12th September 2018

Segelsällskapet & Alpefjord

- 07.15** Wakeup call by your Expedition Leader Beau. Good morning!
- 07.30** Breakfast buffet is ready for you in the Restaurant for one hour.
- 09.00** **Alpefjord Split Zodiac Cruise.** Alpefjord, or Alps fjord, is so named as it appears similar to the European Alps. This fjord has a huge glacier running down into the water and we will head out in the zodiacs to cruise along this ice edge. Dress up warm! We will split into two groups for this cruise, and the first 3 zodiacs of each group will be German speaking:
- 09.00** **Group 1 Deck 4**
10.15 **Group 2 Deck 2, 3, 5, & 6**
- At 09.15 the crew will perform a fire drill. This does not involve passengers, carry on with your normal activities.**
- 12.00** Lunch is served for one hour in the Dining Room.
- 13.30** **Segelsällskapet's Perimeter Landing.** We plan to land at an interesting area known as Seagull Sells Carpets. We will organize the guides in a semi-circle, while guests are free to roam within this area. Fascinating geology abounds. We will spend at least one hour on shore before shuttling passengers back to the ship.
- 18.30** Daily Recap in the Bar. We will talk about the things we saw during the day, and the plans for the following day.
- 19.00** Dinner is served in the dining room. Bon Appetit!

**Svalbard, East Greenland, &
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on board the

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13th September 2018

Scoresbysund & Vikingebugt

- 07.45** Wakeup call by your Expedition Leader Beau. Good morning!
- 08.00** Breakfast buffet is ready for you in the Restaurant for one hour.
- AM** **Scoresbysund.** We will ship cruise into Scoresbysund, heading for our afternoon destination. Listen out for announcements as we may offer a lecture.
- 12.30** Lunch is served for one hour in the Dining Room.
- 15.00** **Vikingebugt Split Zodiac Cruise.** We will head out in the zodiacs and explore Viking Bay. Icebergs, as well as interesting basalt column formations can be found here. Wildlife is sometimes also spotted here so keep a lookout. We will split into two groups for this cruise, and the first 3 zodiacs of each group will be German speaking:
- 15.00** **Group 1 Deck 2, 3, 5, & 6**
16.15 **Group 2 Deck 4**
- 18.30** Daily Recap in the Bar. We will talk about the things we saw during the day, and the plans for the following day.
- 19.00** Dinner is served in the dining room. Bon Appetit!

In the evening we will scout around the entrance to Gåsefjord, or Goose Fjord. Wildlife is sometimes seen here as well so help us scout the shoreline!

**Svalbard, East Greenland, &
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14th September 2018

Røde Ø & Harefjord

- 07.15** Wakeup call by your Expedition Leader Beau. Good morning!
- 07.30** Breakfast buffet is ready for you in the Restaurant for one hour.
- 09.00** **Røde Ø Split Landing & Zodiac Cruise.** We will offer a split landing and zodiac cruise here. The first 6 zodiacs will land first while the rest zodiac cruise, swapping after about an hour. Red sandstone cliffs overlooking a narrow passage choked with icebergs await us, while the cruisers will cruise amongst some of these majestic icebergs.
- ~ 10.15** Swap-over groups.
- 12.30** Lunch is served for one hour in the Dining Room.
- 15.00** **Harefjord Landing.** We will try to land at a place called Harefjord. This area has rolling tundra hills where sometimes muskox is seen. If a group is spotted, then we will attempt to approach them. Please remain quiet in your hiking group if such an attempt is made, as muskox are easily spooked. We would also like to offer a polar plunge to those who are interested. Wear your bathing attire underneath your clothes as we will plunge at the **end** of the landing before heading back to the ship. Don't worry about towels, we will bring plenty for all!
- 19.00** Daily Recap in the Bar. We will talk about the things we saw during the day, and the plans for the following day.
- 19.30** Dinner is served in the dining room. Bon Appetit!

**Svalbard, East Greenland, &
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15th September 2018

Jytte Havn & Rune Island

- 07.45** Wakeup call by your Expedition Leader Beau. Good morning!
- 08.00** Breakfast buffet is ready for you in the Restaurant for one hour.
- 09.30** **Jytte Havn Landing.** We plan to land at a bay in the Bjørneøer, or Bear Islands, called Jytte Havn, after an old sailing ship. Rolling tundra hills with colorful vegetation awaits us, with northern willows abounding on the slopes. We will all land and then split into 3 groups for hiking at a gentle, medium, and fast pace.
- 12.30** Lunch is served for one hour in the Dining Room.
- 15.00** **Rune Island Landing.** We hope to land at an island called Ingmikertikajik, or Rune Island, where we will split up into 3 separate groups for hiking at a gentle, medium, and fast pace. Thule Inuit culture abounds here, so please be careful walking around. Old stone tent rings, graves, and winter houses can be found. We would also like to offer a polar plunge to those who are interested. Wear your bathing attire underneath your clothes as we will plunge at the **end** of the landing before heading back to the ship. Don't worry about towels, we will bring plenty for all!
- 18.30** Daily Recap in the Bar. We will talk about the things we saw during the day, and the plans for the following day.
- 19.00** Dinner is served in the dining room. Bon Appetit!

**Svalbard, East Greenland, &
Iceland**

on board the

Plancius

16th September 2018

Ittoqqortoormiit & Kap Tobin

- 07.15** Wakeup call by your Expedition Leader Beau. Good morning!
- 07.30** Breakfast buffet is ready for you in the Restaurant for one hour.
- 09.00** **Ittoqqortoormiit Village Landing.** We will land at a Greenlandic village called Ittoqqortoormiit. Once on shore maps will be handed out by Mette, a representative of the local tourism agency Nanu Travel, with points of interest explained. Feel free to leave postcards with exact money (Danish Kroner, USD, or Euro's) for postage to be mailed out at the souvenir shop. Feel free to wander around at one's leisure, and be back to the beach on time for the last zodiac back to the ship.
- 12.30** Lunch is served for one hour in the Dining Room.
- 15.00** **Kap Tobin Perimeter Landing.** We will land at Kap Tobin, just outside the bay from Ittoqqortoormiit. This is the old village where the Greenlandic people lived before Ittoqqortoormiit. Old buildings lay about half in ruin. Please be careful and do not enter any buildings. We will have a perimeter landing, so you can say goodbye to Greenland on your own terms as everyone wishes. Please stay within the half circle of guides.
- 18.30** Daily Recap in the Bar. We will talk about the things we saw during the day, and the plans for the following day.
- 19.00** Dinner is served in the dining room. Bon Appetit!

Svalbard, East Greenland, & Iceland

on board the

Plancius

17th September 2018

At Sea Towards Iceland

- 07.45** Wakeup call by your Expedition Leader Beau. Good morning!
- 08.00** Breakfast buffet is ready for you in the Restaurant for one hour.
- 10.00** **Ursula** would like to invite everyone into the **Lounge** to talk about the hunting strategies of marine mammals. This will be for the **English** speakers. At the same time, **Isabelle** would like to educate everyone about algae, this will be in the Dining Room for the German speakers.
- 12.30** Lunch is served for one hour in the Dining Room.
- 15.00** **Isabelle** would like to educate everyone about algae. This will be in the **Lounge** for the **English** speakers. At the same time, **Ursula** will be in the Dining Room talking about the hunting strategies of marine mammals. This will be for the German speakers.
- ~ 17.00** Time to return your rubber boots! We will call everyone down deck by deck to the Boot Room on Deck 3. Please listen out for announcements for when your deck is called. **Please make sure your boots are clean before bringing them down.**
- 18.30** **Captains cocktails in the Bar.** We will toast to the success of our voyage, while explaining the details of disembarkation for the following day.
- 19.00** Last dinner is served in the Dining Room. Bon appétit!

After dinner we will call everyone down to reception deck by deck to settle your accounts. Please listen out for announcements when your deck is called.

**Svalbard, East Greenland, &
Iceland**

on board the

Plancius

18th September 2018

Akureyri Disembarkation

- 07.15** Wakeup call by your Expedition Leader Beau. Good morning!
- 07.30** Breakfast buffet is ready for you in the Restaurant for one hour. Please remember to put your large check-in luggage outside your cabin door in the hallway **before 07.30** so that we can collect it and set it on the pier for you. Also, don't forget to leave your room key chains at reception when you go for breakfast. The room key cards themselves feel free to keep as a souvenir.
- 09.00** 2 buses will pick those up who pre-ordered to bring you to bus stop Reykjavik city hall center/Radhus Reykjavikur. Please identify your own large luggage on the pier and bring it to the bus you are on so that you know yourself it is put onboard. These buses have been pre-ordered and only those with vouchers are able to board. The trip to Reykjavik takes about 5-6 hours and the buses will stop halfway for a lunch break.

The gangway to the pier is above reception on Deck 4.

Those who are not booked on the transfer buses to Reykjavik feel free to walk off the pier with your luggage. A small tourist shop is next to the jetty where taxis may be ordered. It is only about a 5-minute walk into the city center.

On behalf of Captain Alexey and Expedition Leader Beau, and their respective teams, we wish you a pleasant journey onward.