



**Exploring the Spitsbergen coastline
Longyearbyen, Spitsbergen
22nd of June – 29th of June 2022
On board the
*M.V. Plancius***



MV *Plancius* is named after the Dutch astronomer, cartographer, geologist and minister Petrus Plancius (1552-1622). She was built in 1976 as an oceanographic research vessel for the Royal Dutch Navy with the name Hr. Ms. Tydeman. The ship sailed for the Royal Dutch Navy until June 2004, when she was purchased by Oceanwide Expeditions. In 2007 the ship was completely overhauled and converted into a 114-passenger expedition ship. *Plancius* is 89 m (267 feet) long, 14.5 m (43 feet) wide and has a maximum draught of 5 m (20 feet), ice class 1D, top speed 12+ knots and three diesel engines generating 1230 hp each.

Captain Torry Sakkariassen

and his international crew

of 49 sailors:

Chief Officer	Romanas Vicas	[Lithuania]
2. Officer	Yaroslav Pyetukhov	[Ukraine]
3. Officer	Martin Hansson	[Sweden]
Hotel Manager:	Aleks Lebedev	[Ukraine]
Head Chef:	Ivan Yuriychuk	[Ukraine]
Sous Chef:	Sergey Sklyarov	[Ukraine]
Ships doctor:	Valerie Feijen	[Netherlands]
Expedition Leader:	Pablo Brandemann	[Argentina]
Ass. Exp. Leader:	Marcel Paul	[Netherlands]
Kayak Guide:	Alexis Bellezze	[Argentina]
Expedition Guide:	Elodie Boevier	[Switzerland]
Expedition Guide:	Ben Giunchi	[Argentina]
Expedition Guide:	Beth Hitchcock	[Scotland]
Expedition Guide:	Slava Nikitin	[Rusia]
Expedition Guide:	Michael Green	[UK]
Expedition Guide:	Keechy Akkerman	[Netherlands]
Expedition Guide:	Axel Brandemann	[Argentina]

Day 1 - Wednesday 22nd of June, Longyearbyen

21h00 GPS Position: 78°12.4'N / 014°09.6'E

Wind: N 3 Sea: Slight Weather: Partly Cloudy Temperature: 8°C

Many of the guest arrived at Longyearbyen on the day of embarkation. Throughout the afternoon the luggage was shuttled from the key out to Plancius on anchor in the bay. By 4pm there was an eager line of guests waiting to embark on the Zodiac journey! Our luck with the weather meant that we could save our wet zodiac journeys for later in the trip.

Once on board the evening went by quickly as we were busy with familiarisations, safety briefings, cocktails with Captain Torry Sakkariassen and of course a lovely first dinner. As we set off out of Isfjord in the evening, and northward towards our first scheduled activity of the trip, there was time to enjoy the views of the flat table-topped mountains in the late evening light.



Day 2 - Thursday 23rd of June, Smeerenburg glacier and Smeerenburg Landing

21h00 GPS Position: 79°49.7'N / 011°21.7'E

Wind: NE 6 Sea: Rough Weather: Partly Cloudy Temperature: 4°C

We were woken by the sweet voice of our Expedition Leader Pablo at 7 o'clock sharp. Waters had calmed a lot since the previous evening and continued to do so as we sailed into Smeerenburg fjord right after breakfast. A Minke whale was spotted before we reached our anchoring position in front of the Smeerenburg glacier. Conditions were benign and all of us enjoyed a lovely zodiac cruise.

There is plenty of movement in the glaciers around Svalbard which results in the occasional calving, as displayed by the Smeerenburg glacier. We had a great view of this from the zodiacs, which highlights the importance of keeping our distance from the glacier fronts.



After lunch we all had a quick rest before we landed at Smeerenburg. A fascinating historic site and as a bonus a nice large group of Walrus lounged around on the point. While half the group were visiting the walrus, Marcel told the other half

about the history of Smeerenburg, “Blubber town”. After the switch there was enough time left for a nice walk. Pablo set off in a fast pace leading the hiker’s group while others took a more leisurely pace. Conditions were tough with muddy terrain but nevertheless it was nice to have some exercise and challenge in our day. Those who did not want to walk stayed at the beach with some of the guides or decided to take a shuttle back to the spectacular views from Plancius.

Recap was done by Marcel, Keechy and Elodie. Marcel elaborated on the stories of the overwinterings in Smeerenburg and showed some images of what it looked like in the early 17th century. Keechy explained a bit more about Walrus and Elodie had an interesting recap which introduced us to how glaciers work. Dinner was served shortly after Pablo explained plan A for tomorrow.



The bridge issued a warning about the weather during the evening and the first part of the night as the conditions of the wind and waves were likely to increase. However, before we entered the choppy conditions, we had a look at our first

bears. A mother and two cubs were hanging around on a snow patch on the far corner of Idre Norskoya. We only had a quick look at them so we would not disturb them but nevertheless a good start to the trip, it was still only day one!

Day 3 - Friday 24th of June, Mushamna landing and zodiac cruise with bear sighting at Antenøya

21h00 GPS Position: 80°28.7'N / 014°28.7'E

Wind: ESE 7 Sea: Moderate Weather: Clear Temperature: 1°C

Good morning, good morning on another beautiful day on the Plancius! While we were getting ready for our landing at Mushamna, a Minke whale was spotted, swimming by the ship. The landing also started well, with two ivory gulls flying around the site! We split up in three groups, one went for a long walk up the hill, one for a walk along the beach, and one free roaming on the beach. We also had a group enjoying the calm waters from a kayak. The water acted like a mirror, reflecting the surrounding mountains and glaciers.



Although the landscape looked barren, we did see many nice plants: Mountain avens, Svalbard poppy, Tufted saxifrage and we walked through a 'forest' of Polar willow. The freezing and thawing in the area also led to beautiful stone rings, a form of frost-patterned ground. Around the corner from the beach where we landed there were two trapper huts, one of which was built in 1927 by Hilmar Nøis, who built several huts in the area. The second hut was built in 1987 by Kjell Reidar Hovelsrud in 1987, a relatively big, modern hut that he used for overwintering and trapping until 1994. On the long walk we also found an old wooden trap that was used to catch foxes.



Our plans in the afternoon were slightly disrupted by a bear sighting close to our planned landing site at Worsleyneset. The captain spotted this bear at Antenøya from a distance of 3 km! We circled around the island to get a bit closer and while doing that, we saw another Minke whale and a seal. While a landing would have been too dangerous, we were able to get the zodiacs in the water and go for a cruise, under close observation from the bridge. Whilst moving towards the island, the polar bear was spotted swimming to the peninsula, where he climbed on to the land. We approached the bear carefully and, from a safe distance, we observed him

from the zodiacs. The polar bear was male and seemed well fed and healthy, walking along the beach. What an amazing sighting to finish of the day!

In the evening we passed by Mofsen on our way to the northeast. The flat, low-lying, moraine island is hard to spot on a day with rough seas.

Day 4 – Saturday 25th of June, landing at Faksevågen in Lomfjord and zodiac cruise at Alkefjellet

21h00 GPS Position: 79°46.1'N / 018°10.3'E

Wind: SE 6 Sea: Slight Weather: Clear Temperature: 3°C

At 7am, we were woken by the smooth voice of Pablo, our Expedition Leader: “Good morning everyone, good morning, the air temperature is about 2°C, the weather is amazing and there is not a single cloud in the sky. Plancius has sailed during the whole night and we are now inside Faksevågen, a small fjord on the west side of Lomfjord, in the area of Hinlopen Strait.”



For this morning we have different possibilities of activities: a long hike with Pablo and Elodie to a plateau that offers amazing views of the fjord, the glacier and its meltwater plain; a middle hike with Keechy to a nice lookout to take the time to look at the plants and birds; a walk along the beach with Beth for the keen birders and finally a kayaking trip to have a closer look at the coast.



Faksevågen Fjord is a great area to observe the High Arctic Tundra and its little “Svalbard Forest” no higher than a few centimetres. The Willow Tree is one of the five trees of Svalbard species and grow no more than a few millimetres per year. We could also observe Purple Saxifrage, a small, beautiful pioneering plant that is common in Svalbard but also in the Alps. We also found Mountain Avens with its yellowish white flowers that thrive in this very harsh environment.

The long hikers had the opportunity to observe reindeer: a male, a female, and her calf. The Svalbard Reindeer is the only reindeer in Svalbard, it is smaller than the ones we can find in Scandinavia and they are not domesticated. Two Rock Ptarmigans were observed by the middle hikers group. The female was difficult to see because she was very well-camouflaged.



At noon, we all are back on the ship and Plancius started sailing toward the North to reach the afternoon's destination: Alkefjellet, which means 'Mount Guillemots' (for obvious reasons!). By 3pm all the Zodiacs were in the water and we were ready to explore this amazing place with our guano-proof clothing.

During the summer months, it is thought that approximately 65 thousand Brünnich's Guillemots nest on this 100-meter-high cliff and occupy every centimetre of cliff ledge which is wide enough for a nest, and narrow enough to deter the Arctic Foxes. The females lay one pear-shaped egg in June and then both parents will sit on the nest for a month and feed the chick for another 3 weeks until the chick jumps down the cliff (and might be eaten by an opportunist Glaucous Gull who usually stay in the close surrounding!).



After a bumpy and wet ride back to the ship, we were welcomed by a well-deserved hot chocolate. For the recap, John, one of the passengers and a keen birder, explained some very interesting fact about Brünnich's Guillemots. Beth spoke about the geology behind some of Svalbard's landscapes that we have seen and Elodie told us more about a unique landscape feature that is quite common in

Svalbard: raised beaches. Finally, Pablo explained the plan for tomorrow: exciting adventures in sight, we are heading North!

What an amazing day in the High Arctic!

Day 5 –Sunday 26th of June, wildlife at the edge of the pack ice

21h00 GPS Position: 81°27.6'N / 017°53.4'E

Wind: SW 5 Sea: Smooth Weather: Overcast Temperature: 4°C

Good morning Plancius! Rise and shine!

After breakfast we were ready to go with a plan A, which was to land on Phippsøya island, one of the group of Seven Islands or Sjuøyane. But the landing was cancelled due to the weather conditions; very thick fog which made us feel as though we were inside a ping pong ball. Our Expedition Leader came with plan B so the ship took a course up north to Rossøya island to check the ice and weather conditions around the island. Meanwhile we had a great presentation on history called “The race to the North pole” by Marcel.



It soon turned out that the fog was not going to let us do anything on Phippsøya island because it was impossible to make sure that we could provide safety, while we are on land, since the expedition team could not scout the landing site and surroundings on presence of the Polar bears. So, as on a real expedition, we were faced with an unpredictable situation with unfavorable weather, and we had to deviate our plan. Therefore, we turned to plan C which was to continue up north

to the pack ice in search of wildlife and to have a taste of the real Arctic with the ocean blanketed with sea ice.

After lunch at 1230 we start to see the sea ice. Soon we were extremely lucky to spot 3 Bowhead whales, a couple of ringed seals and a rare Iceland gull! The fog lifted a bit so we could all enjoy the pure beauty of the Arctic. All expedition guides and guests were on the outer decks sharing their experiences of seeing very rare mammals and birds as well as the incredible “landscape” - the sea covered with sea ice. At 15.30 we had great presentation on Sea ice by Elodie, which raised plenty of questions and many discussions, which is a very important part of the education process. Then we proceeded with recap and plans for tomorrow.



During the dinner we changed our course to north-west along the pack ice and we were rewarded with another sighting of a Minke whale, Bowhead whale, seals and walrus on the ice. Today the regular dinner was replaced by BBQ on the outer deck with music and a festive atmosphere. It was absolutely amazing to be the only ship in this area with the endless field of pack ice and whales passing by. The most Northern position we reached was 81°24,667' North 017°52,608' East.

Goodnight Plancius. Tomorrow will be another day, full of new discoveries.

Day 6 – Monday 27th of June, Gråhuken landing and Polar bear sighting

21h00 GPS Position: 79°39.3'N / 011°05.2'E

Wind: S 4 Sea: Slight Weather: Overcast Temperature: 5°C

Gråhuken

After breakfast we went ashore to visit the where the team of three spent the year that is written about in the “The women in the polar night”. We were all amazed by the conditions these people lived in but many thought about whether they could do the same thing. Following the visit to the hut we made a hike choosing from a medium length hike or a longer hike. Whilst walking along the hill or the beach we collected plastic rubbish and learnt about antique fox traps, driftwood, and the animals we saw on the beach. Too soon it was time to return to the ship and we were soon back in the warmth of the ship in time for lunch.



Indre Norskøya.

Wow! We left the ship for a zodiac cruise and soon we saw a mother Polar Bear with two cubs asleep on the rock above the beach. Many guests made images that must become this year's Christmas cards. Just as we were thinking of leaving the site, we saw a male Polar bear in the water swimming towards a whale carcass. Nothing was distracting the bear from his mission, and he swam with purpose. He clambered from the water and began devouring the meat. The mother moved the cubs along the coast where they entered the water and set off on a hasty retreat to another island. As we left the site, we were downwind from the carcass, and we got a smell of it and it was something else. We wondered how he could make such a meal of the smelly meat. It was a wonderful highlight to the trip.

Fuglesongen

To finish our afternoon excursion, we crossed the bay in slightly more challenging conditions to reach our final site of the day. We battled the wind, cold and waves to reach the cliffs to see the colony of Little Auks. It was fascinating to see these little birds taking off in flocks to head out to sea to feed. What a fantastic way to end a superb day of Polar outings.

Day 7 – Tuesday 28th of June, morning landing at Alkehornet and afternoon cruising Billefjord and Skansbukta

21h00 GPS Position: 78°24.6'N / 015°49.6'E

Wind: W 2 Sea: Smooth Weather: Partly Cloudy Temperature: 8°C

Hello Plancius, good morning! Rise and shine!

After breakfast we were ready for our landing in Alkhornet, in the entrance of a fjord called Isfjord. More than 10 reindeers and calf were waiting onshore for us. We took the first group for a long hike, and the second group went for a middle hike. Both in the same direction, but the terrain was a little tricky, with uneven ground on the tundra. Those group had the opportunity to see the reindeers from close by and calfs eating in this incredible place with a big cliff towering over us and the sound of guillemots flying around. The second group spotted an Arctic fox

resting in the grass, so the first group decide to re-route to get a better vantage point to see the Arctic fox. After a spectacular calm landing of wonderful wildlife and landscapes, it was time to return to the ship, have lunch and prepare for the next activity in Billefjord.



After lunch we were ready to start the ship cruising in to Billefjord, cruising in front a historical place, Pyramiden. Named due to the shape of the mountain that forms the backdrop to the town.

Pablo let us know about the history of the town whilst we enjoyed the views from on deck in the sun. “The mining started in 1911, but success was limited. In 1926 the property was sold to Russia and then in 1946 it was taken over by the Russian state-owned company Trust Arktikugol, together with all other Russian interests in Spitsbergrn. By 1989 there were 715 men, 228 women and 71 children living in Pyramiden. Pyramiden was abandoned in 1998, the reasons lay in poor coal reserves. The government in Moscow did not have any interest in supporting the

Russian periphery in the 1990s". We continued the cruising, with some short talks from Beth and Elodie elaborating on the glaciated and magnificent mountainous landscape which surrounded us.

After the ships cruise in the sun, at 5.30 we put a couple of zodiacs in the water and had a zodiac cruise in Skanbukta. Here we could see perched on a beautiful cliff, the puffins, fulmars and a blanket of Jacob's ladder flowers. We came back to the ship to a wonderful dinner and Capitan's cocktail, the welcome back cocktail.

Day 8 - Wednesday 29th of June, arrival back into Longyearbyen

GPS 0800 position: 78°14.5' N, 015°32.6'E (Harbour Longyearbyen)

Wind: Calm Sea: Calm Weather: Rain Temperature: 6°C

Early this morning, we arrive in Longyearbyen. While we enjoyed a last breakfast on board, our suitcases are taken off the ship. It is a sad moment to disembark from the Plancius, which has been a comfortable and cosy home during this unforgettable journey. We have shared many unique moments, seen a range of rarely sighted wildlife, and made new friends. Loaded with fond memories we now must head home.

Expedition Staff



Svalbard 2022

M/V Plancius 22/06 – 29/06

- 1: 22/06 **Longyearbyen** - Embarkation
- 2: 23/06 **Smeeremburgbreen** – Zodiac cruise.
- 3: 23/06 **Smeeremburg “Blubber Town”**- Landing.
- 4: 24/06 **Mushamna** – Landing + hiking + kayaking.
- 5: 24/06 **Andoyane** - Zodiac cruise.
- 6: 24/06 **Moffen Island** - Ship cruise.
- 7: 24/06 **Faksevagen** – Landing + kayaking.
- 8: 25/06 **Alkefjellet** - Zodiac cruise + kayaking.
- 9: 26/06 **Seven islands, Phippsoya** – landing cancelled due to weather conditions.
- 10: 26/06 **At Sea**. The most Northern position reached.
- 11: 27/06 **Grahuken** - Landing + hiking + kayaking.
- 12: 27/06 **Fuglesongen** - Zodiac cruise.
- 13: 28/06 **Alkhornet** - Landing + hiking.
- 14: 28/06 **Skansbukta** - Zodiac cruise.
- 15: 29/06 Arriving at **Longyearbyen**.



MAMMALS

English	Latin	German	Dutch							
Walrus	<i>Odobenus rosmarus</i>	Walross	Walrus		X	X				
Bearded seal	<i>Erignathus barbatus</i>	Bartrobbe	Baardrob			X				
Ringed seal	<i>Phoca hispida</i>	Ringelrobbe	Ringelrob		X			X		
Harp seal	<i>Pagophilus groenlandicus</i>	Sattelrobbe	Zadelrob							
Hooded seal	<i>Cystophora cristata</i>	Klappmütze	Klapmuts							
Common /Harbour seal	<i>Phoca vitulina</i>	Seehund	Gewone zeehond							X
Minke Whale	<i>Balaenoptera acutorostrata</i>	Zwergwal	Dwergvinvis		X	X		X	X	X
Sei Whale	<i>Balaenoptera borealis</i>	Seiwal	Noordse vinvis							
Blue Whale	<i>Balaenoptera musculus</i>	Blauwal	Blauwe vinvis							
Fin Whale	<i>Balaenoptera physalus</i>	Finwal	Gewone vinvis							
Humpback Whale	<i>Megaptera novaeangliae</i>	Buckelwal	Bultrug							
Bowhead whale	<i>Balaena mysticetus</i>	Grönlandwal	Groenlandse walvis					X		
Sperm Whale	<i>Physeter macrocephalus</i>	Pottwal	Potvis							
Narwhal	<i>Monodon monoceros</i>	Narwal	Narwal							
White-beaked Dolphin	<i>Lagenorhynchus albirostris</i>	Weisschnauzendelphin	Witsnuitdolfijn							
Beluga	<i>Dephinapterus leucas</i>	Weisswal	Beloege							
Polar Bear	<i>Ursus maritimus</i>	Eisbär	Ijsbeer		X	X			X	
Arctic Fox	<i>Alopex lagopus</i>	Polarfuchs	Poolvos			X				X
Spitsbergen Reindeer	<i>Rangifer tarandus platyrhynchus</i>	Svalbard Renntier	Rendier			X	X			X

Pablo Brandeman - Expedition Leader



Born and raised in Argentinean northern Patagonia, now living in Ushuaia, Tierra del Fuego, grew up with a Fishing Guide dad that pushed me not only into adventure activities but also into guiding and the tourism industry.

I love Skiing, Snowboarding, Skateboarding, Surfing, Paragliding, Kitesurfing, Climbing, Mountaineering, Boat driving and many other thrilling activities!

I am a well-seasoned Antarctic guide, having worn all the different hats as an expedition staff, with over 150 trips to the southern continent.

I have also worked in the Arctic region and look forward to sharing new polar experiences with my team and guests onboard.

Marcel Paul – Assistant Expedition Leader



From his teens Marcel has been a keen traveller. After camping and trekking with friends, he led groups on trekking's to Austria, Switzerland, England and Scotland. His own travels over the last 20 years brought him to all 7 continents. With his interest in history and as keen hobby photographer, the Polar Regions have always been drawing his attention.

At his first arrival to Svalbard in 2011 and a second trip in 2013, he felt connected with the remoteness of the place and the dynamics of the polar nature. At that time the idea started to grow to become a polar guide and give up a job that is keeping him indoor most of the time.

When the Dutch organised a scientific polar expedition to Edgeøya it seemed the perfect opportunity to gain more knowledge from the area by working with the scientists. He joined the expedition in 2015 as field assistant and participated in various fields of research. In 2016 he went to the Dutch polar station in Ny Alesund, again as field assistant.

From 2017 Marcel has been working as a polar guide in the Arctic followed by the Antarctic in 2018. He now spends about half the year working in both polar regions and the rest of the year is spent either at home in Holland or traveling.

Alexis Bellezze – Kayak Leader



Alexis Bellezze was born in San Luis, Argentina in 1973. He spent his childhood in the center of the country, in a rural area, then moved to the city of Mendoza close to the Central Andes and studied in the Army High School where he fell in love with the mountains and the outdoors. Then moved to Cordoba where he spent 3 years in the Air Force Academy. After that he moved to Italy where he worked and finished a paragliding course, then returned to Argentina to finish his studies as a Veterinarian. In 2006, he did a Residency in the ICU Service of the Large Animal Hospital of the Royal

“Dick” Veterinary College in Edinburgh, Scotland. In 2006 and 2008 he did an internship as a veterinarian surgeon at Milano, Italy. Then he moved to Villa La Angostura, an isolated village in the middle of the Patagonian Lake District where he works as a veterinarian surgeon and runs a kayak company in the Nahuel Huapi National Park.

Since 2018 he has been working as a Polar Kayak Guide and Expedition Guide. He has guided in the Antarctic Peninsula many times, reaching the Antarctic Polar Circle, Svalbard, circumnavigated Spitzbergen, East coast of Greenland and many rivers and lakes in Patagonia. During the last years he travelled the south and north of Chile and Argentina as a Wilderness First Responder instructor working in different environments like the jungle, the Patagonian mountain range, the windy Patagonian estepa and the desert of Atacama. Since 2014 Alexis is the owner and Director of endurance kayak & mountain expeditions based in Patagonia Argentina, offering multiple days kayak trips in this pristine area.

Alexis is divorced, has 3 children and lives in Patagonia Argentina. He likes to cook for them with fire in the wilderness and go camping when is possible.

He speaks fluently Spanish, Italian and English.

Elodie Bouvier - Expedition guide



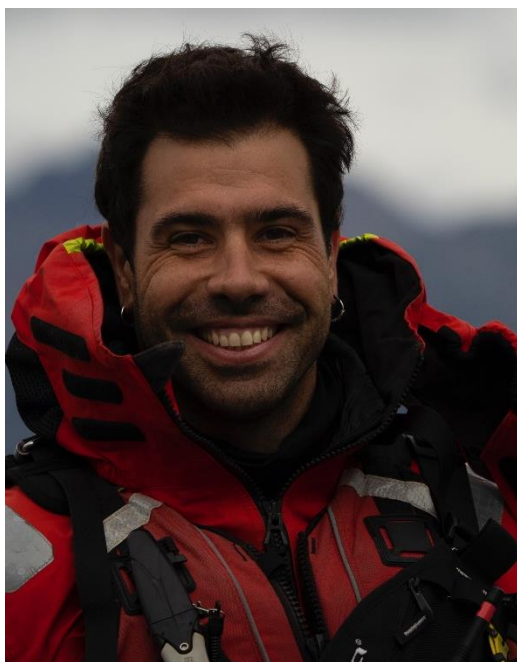
Born in the Swiss Alps, Elodie has always had a passion for mountains; climb them, discover them but also better understand the landscape, the dynamics and the evolution of glaciers and permafrost. After undertaking studies in alpine geomorphology at the University of Lausanne, she took the direction of Quebec in Rimouski where she carried out work on the deglaciation of the Laurentide ice sheet which used to cover a large part of North America.

The polar regions attract her inexorably; this passion led her to the Svalbard archipelago in 2015 for a semester to specialize in nivology and glaciology. Since then, the polar bug has infected her in a way she cannot stop returning year after year up in the North.

Elodie has also worked on the creation of educational trails that raise awareness among hikers of the impacts of climate change in high mountains environment in Switzerland. To her mind, educational communication and sharing knowledge are essential to all scientific activities.

Her passion for the great wilderness led her to discover Norway and Svalbard by ski, on foot and by sail. Elodie is particularly interested in the interpretation of the landscape and in reading the forms left by glaciers during the last ice ages.

Ben Giunchi - Expedition Guide



Ben comes from the countryside of Argentina, known as “The Pampas”. Since a very young age he developed a love of nature and after a few years traveling around his home country he discovered his passion for Patagonia and the mountains. This provoked a fascination for glaciers and wildlife and he soon became a guide around El Calafate and El Chaltén.

Spending time with people from all across the globe whilst working as a tour leader in Argentina, encouraged him to expand his knowledge of the culture and nature of other parts of South America. This newfound knowledge, and a few technical courses in relevant aspects of wilderness guiding, took him closer to his dream... Antarctica!

As we are probably hitting a dram together, I invite you to share all the good vibes and enjoy a unique place in the world with me... WELCOME TO YOUR ADVENTURE!

Beth Hitchcock – Expedition Guide



After graduating from her Geology honours degree in 2018 at Glasgow, Beth balanced two jobs until she succumbed to full time in the guiding world in 2021. Beth worked as a deckhand / guide on a tall ship and, when on the land, as an Engineering Geologist working mainly on Scotland's road and railway networks.

On the tall ships, Beth visited many places around the Atlantic Ocean from the Azores to Cape Town and Tristan da Cunha. In the austral summers she guides on the ship when they visit Antarctica and South Georgia. These

are ideal places to interpret the landscape and explain to the guests how the glaciers and geological processes have carved what we see today. The incredible human history in these regions has a significant impact on the regional geological story and on our understanding of geology globally.

Beth also enjoys spending time in the mountains of Scotland where she works when she is not guiding on board ships. She grew up sailing around the islands of the west coast of Scotland - home to some fascinating geology where she spent many field trips during her undergraduate years. This sparked the desire to explore and embark on adventures to discover new landscapes and cultures around the world.

Slava Nikitin – Expedition guide



Slava was born in Russian town Sergiev-Posad (Moscow region). Studied in Moscow University of sport: Teacher of physical education, swimming teacher, rehabilitation, management of sport. Started to travel in school years and still looking to expand the geography of his trips. Slava's travel credo is to get closer to every new country, using the local transport or hitchhiking to find out more about local people, their culture and history. He threw down many shoes on backpacker's paths in Russia, Europe, Asia, Africa, North America, South America, Australia, Arctic and Antarctic.

So, the most of the time of his last 15 years he was traveling around the World as a photographer, writer, guide and translator. During his travels he loves to do lots of activities such as trekking mountain (Mt Elbrus (5642m), Mt Everest base camp, Mt Annapurna base camp, Mt Cook base camp etc), white water rafting, kayaking, diving, surfing, snowboarding etc. Known as photographer, travel-writer, guide and translator in Russia, he also made presentations and photo exhibitions at school and university. His mountaineering and lifeguard skills on the water and recent experience in a rescue operation are very useful for client's security in crevasse rescue team. In 2013 he got an opportunity to visit Antarctica on a sail boat for the first time and to dive (literally and mentally) in Antarctic waters. It was starting point of his idea to work in cruise industry in Antarctic and Arctic on board of the expedition ships. Afterwards he made another dream come true, he put his feet on the North Pole. At this moment, Slava spent 4 full seasons working in Polar regions (Arctic and Antarctic) on board of expedition ships as a guide and found a use for his long-time interest of sea kayaking and polar history. Slava also has presentations about: R.Amundsen, F.Nansen, R.Scott, E.Shackleton, R.Peary, F.Cook, F.Bellingshausen...

Slava very happy to share his experience and positive vibe with people.

Michael Green – Expedition Guide



He has always loved the Sea and so joined the Navy as soon as he left School. In the Navy he became a diver and have enjoyed diving and instructing all over the world.

He joined Oceanwide Expeditions three years ago as a dive guide and have led and guided both in the Arctic and the Antarctic. He loves both equally. Antarctica is one of the most special places on this planet in my opinion.

He is in his third year of a photography art degree and love seeing your photos they are all fantastic and capture

different aspects of what we are going to see.

If you need any help with your camera or your photos just ask. White balance is a favourite as our cameras aren't used to an all-white background.

He looks forward to helping you get the most from your holiday so please don't be frightened to ask any questions you may have.

His only tip for your trip is to take the time to look, then see and most importantly think.

The nicest moments are when you can be quiet and relaxed, stop listen to the silence and think where you are. Not many people get to do what you are doing so savor every second.

Keechy Akkerman - Expedition Guide



Growing up in a big city (The Hague, The Netherlands) the outdoors has always fascinated Keechy, especially the Polar Regions. She has travelled to Norway repeatedly; for holidays, to work on a sheep farm, and to conduct research on the island Jan Mayen. During her studies in Biology and Geology her passion led her to follow several courses at the University Centre in Svalbard, and she fell in love with the area.

For Keechy's final internship with TNO (The Netherlands Organisation for Applied Scientific Research) in 2015, she had the amazing opportunity to participate in a scientific expedition (SEES) to Edgeøya, located in the southeast of the Svalbard archipelago. The aim of the expedition was to study the impact of anthropogenic activity in one of the most remote and pristine areas on earth, thereby highlighting the relevance of Arctic research in the context of current transitions. This expedition was in collaboration with Oceanwide Expeditions and after talking to the guides, she became very enthusiastic to work as a Polar Tour guide as well.

In 2016 Keechy moved to the UK to take on a PhD on lake ecosystems in Greenland. Her fieldwork allowed her to complete the Arctic Circle Trail in Greenland, a 10-day hike from the ice sheet to the coast. She spends most of her weekends exploring all the national parks the UK has to offer, in the form of hiking, camping, climbing and winter mountaineering. Now that she is in the final stages of her PhD, she is keen to share her love for nature and the Polar Regions as a tour guide!

Axel Brandeman – Expedition Guide



Axel was born and raised in Ushuaia Tierra del Fuego, having been born in a such special region.

Axel was always in touch with outdoors activities and wildlife.

On he's free time, he likes to skateboard, snowboard and wakeboard.

He has a closed relation with antarctica and expedition cruising since been a child, having visited Antarctica three times before reaching penguin size.

Since then he became a zodiac driver, activity logistics and naturalist.

Valerie Fijen- Ship`s doctor



After wandering around the globe and working for 6 years as a military doctor in the Dutch Navy, looking for new adventures.

Just recently finished her GP training and will start working as a general practitioner in the beautiful Maastricht.

Has spent a lot of time at sea, from the Baltic Sea to crossing the Suez canal to scuba diving in the Red Sea (but still gets sea sick).

Big passion for travel, sports and adventure. Hence the choice to join expeditions as a ship`s doctor. Previous medical experience in diving-, travel-,

and emergency medicine. Has been lucky enough to travel once before on the Plancius, to Antarctica. Hopefully there isn`t much work for the physician on board: for all passengers enjoy the fantastic scenery including wildlife and arrive safe and sound back at home filled with spectacular naval stories.



North of Spitsbergen, into the Pack Ice Departure Longyearbyen Wednesday 22 June 2022

- 16:00 **Welcome on board!** Your luggage will be delivered to your cabin as soon as possible. Please check carefully if you are missing anything. Please feel free to look around the ship.
- TBA **Mandatory Safety and Lifeboat Instruction** in the Lounge. **ALL PASSENGERS** are required to participate in this very important instruction.
- 18:30 **Captain's Cocktails!** Captain Torry Sakkariassen and Hotel Manager Aleks Lebedev invite you to join them for a Welcome Drink at the bar, where you will meet your Captain. Hotel Manager Aleks Lebedev will introduce you to life on board, and your Expedition Leader Pablo Brandeman will introduce the Expedition Team to you.
- 1930 **Dinner** Dinner is served in the Restaurant on Deck 3 behind the reception desk. Enjoy your meal

PLEASE NOTE: The Bridge and side wings of the Bridge are closed when the pilot is on board. We will call it as soon as the bridge is open.

Tonight we will be sailing in open water and expect the ship to move. Please make sure that all your valuables (cameras, computers, etc.) are properly stowed in your cabin to avoid accidents. Always use the railings and handholds when moving around on the ship, especially in rough seas. Always one hand for the ship and one hand for yourself. THANK YOU.



North of Spitsbergen, into the Pack Ice Northwest of Svalbard Thursday 23 June 2022

- 07:30 **Breakfast** is served in the dining room
- 08:30 **Mandatory AECO regulations, Zodiac Briefing and Polar bear safety.**
- 10:00 We will be cruising through **Smeerenburg Fjord.**
- 12:30 **Lunch** is served in the Restaurant on Deck 3 behind the reception desk.
Enjoy your meal
- 15:00 We will go for a landing at Smeerenburg.
- 18:30 Join the expedition Staff team in the Lounge for **Recap & Briefing**
- 19:00 Dinner will be served in the Dining Room, enjoy your meal.

"Life is better on skies" Fridtjof Nansen.



North of Spitsbergen, into the Pack Ice Northwest of Svalbard Friday 24 June 2022

- 07:30 **Breakfast** is served in the dining room
- 09:00 We expect to be landing at **Mushamna**, an extended hike will be offered on this site.
- 12:30 **Lunch** is served in the Restaurant on Deck 3 behind the reception desk, enjoy your meal.
- 15:00 We will go for a landing at **Worsleyneset**.
- 18:30 Join the expedition Staff team in the Lounge for **Recap & Briefing**
- 19:00 Dinner will be served in the Dining Room, enjoy your meal.

We don't take a voyage... a Voyage takes us!



North of Spitsbergen, into the Pack Ice Saturday 25 June 2022

- 07:30 **Breakfast** is served in the dinning room
- 09:00 We will go for a landing at **Faksevågen**. In this location we will have the chance to get close to the nesting area of **Little Auks**, and the possibility of an extended hike.
- 12:30 **Lunch** is served in the Restaurant on Deck 3 behind the reception desk. Enjoy your meal
- 15:00 We will be ready to take you on **Zodiac Cruise** along the spectacular **bird Cliffs of Alkefjellet**, on the West side of **Hinlopen Strait**.
- 18:30 Join the expedition Staff team in the Lounge for **Recap & Briefing**
- 19:00 Dinner will be served in the Dinning Room, enjoy your meal.

Bears here, bears there, bears everywhere!



North of Spitsbergen, into the Pack Ice

Sunday 26 June 2022

- 07:30 **Breakfast** is served in the dining room
- 09:00 We will be ready to take you on a **Zodiac Cruise** amongst the group of islands **Sjuøyane**. We will have the possibility of a landing at **Phippsøya** if conditions allow.
- 12:30 **Lunch** is served in the Restaurant on Deck 3 behind the reception desk.
Enjoy your meal
- Afternoon: Into the Pack ice
- 18:30 Join the expedition Staff team in the Lounge for **Recap & Briefing**
- 19:00 Dinner will be served in the Dining Room, enjoy your meal.

Ice, Ice Baby...



North of Spitsbergen, into the Pack Ice Monday 27 June 2022

- 07:30 **Breakfast** is served in the dining room
- 09:00 Hoping we will be able to lose the fog overnight and we can take you all for a landing at Grahuken.
- 12:30 **Lunch** is served in the Restaurant on Deck 3 behind the reception desk. Enjoy your meal
- 15:00 In the afternoon we hope to take you for a landing at Fuglesongen (bird song). A magnificent island with a little auk colony.
- 18:30 Join the expedition Staff team in the Lounge for **Recap & Briefing**
- 19:00 Dinner will be served in the Dining Room, enjoy your meal.



North of Spitsbergen, into the Pack Ice

Tuesday 28 June 2022

- 07:30 **Breakfast** is served in the dining room
- 09:00 Landing at Alkhornet where we expect to see a variety of birds, reindeer and hopefully some Arctic fox action.
- 12:30 **Lunch** is served in the Restaurant on Deck 3 behind the reception desk. Enjoy your meal
- 15:00 Landing at Skansbukta, our last landing. Nice area for free roaming with some history, plants and maybe some last birds.
- 18:00 Join the expedition Staff team in the Lounge for our final **Recap**
- 18:30** **Captains Farewell Cocktail will be held in the Lounge, please join us**
- 19:00 Dinner will be served in the Dining Room, enjoy your meal.

All good things come to an end



North of Spitsbergen, into the Pack Ice

Wednesday 29 June 2022

- 07:00 Please leave your luggage outside of your cabin door before you make your way to Breakfast
- 07:30 **Breakfast** is served in the dining room.
- 09:00 Last Landing! Welcome back to Longyearbyen. We will have buses ready for you to go into town.
- 11:45** Pick up for airport for SAS flight SK4491 outside Svalbard Butikken

"I'm leaving on a jet plane, don't know when I'll be back again" – John Denver.