



**OCEANWIDE**  
EXPEDITIONS

## **North Spitsbergen Furthest North**

### **M/V Hondius**

**23<sup>rd</sup> August 2022 – 30<sup>th</sup> August 2022**



Laura Mony

The *MV Hondius* was built in 2019 in Brodosplit, Croatia, as an expedition vessel for Oceanwide Expeditions. *Hondius* is 107.60m long, 17,60m wide and has a maximum draught of 5.3m and has an exceptionally high Ice class of PC6, a top speed of 15 knots and 3 diesel generators. The *Hondius* sails on LSMGO. Now the ship is sailing as a 176-passenger vessel with 83 cabins. Our beautiful, modern ship carries 369m<sup>3</sup> of fresh water and has a water plant producing 70m<sup>3</sup> per day. It is the perfect vessel for a true polar adventure!

**Captain Toni Salo**  
and his international crew of 72

**including:**

Staff Officer:	<b>Miia Holma</b>
Chief Officer:	<b>Diederik Maarten Scholten</b>
Second Officer:	<b>Igor Nazarov</b>
Second Officer:	<b>Sven Holzhausen</b>
Chief Engineer:	<b>Sebastian Alexandru</b>
Hotel Manager:	<b>Michael Frauendorfer</b>
Assist. Hotel Manager:	<b>Andrius Juodvirsis</b>
Receptionist:	<b>Karolina Guziejko</b>
Head Chef:	<b>Gaurav Bawa</b>
Sous Chef:	<b>Mihai Melinte</b>
Ship's Physician:	<b>Thibaut Vanbaelen</b>
Expedition Leader:	<b>Sara Jenner</b>
Assist. Expedition Leaders:	<b>Laura Mony</b> <b>Marcel Paul</b>
Expedition Guides:	<b>Annelou Hulsker</b> <b>Alexander Romanovskiy</b> <b>Annette Bombosch</b> <b>Ben Giunchi</b> <b>Cas Eikenaar</b> <b>Charlotte Taplin</b> <b>Georgina Strange</b> <b>Koen Jongerling</b> <b>Laura Sommerville</b> <b>Meike Sjoer</b> <b>Tirza Moerman</b>

**We welcome you on board!**

# Day 1: 23<sup>rd</sup> August 2022

## Longyearbyen

**GPS position at 4pm: 78°14.5' N, 11°58.8' E**

**Wind: SW4; Sea State: Slight; Weather: Sunny; Air Temp: 8.5°C**

Our Arctic adventure began under sunny blue skies, as we made our way to the dock near *Longyearbyen* where *MV Hondius*, our home for the next week, awaited.

As we got onboard, we were welcomed by the hotel department and Karolina, the receptionist, who handed us the keys to our rooms. As we were discovering the vessel, we naturally made our way to the observation lounge where coffee and tea were waiting for us, but also where we will have the best view of the surrounding landscape. We anticipated spending lots of time in this space looking out the window, making sure we would not miss any sightings of wildlife, and chatting to old and new friends.

As we set sail, we received a warm welcome and orientation briefing from our Hotel Manager Michael and Expedition Leader (EL) Sara. They gave us an overview of life on board and how to access important information concerning our daily schedules. Then came our first introduction to the Expedition Team who will be helping us to make the most of this adventure with their knowledge of flora, fauna, ice, geology, history and more. Finally, Sara showed Plan A for the voyage – with the understanding that any expedition requires constant making of Plans B, C, D and more as conditions change.



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With that introduction complete, we attended the mandatory safety briefing. Sara and Second Officer Sven explained the major risks and how to avoid them. The Expedition Team demonstrated how to put on the life jackets and floatation suits that are stored in our cabins, in the event of an emergency. When the alarm was sounded for the drill, we all made our way to our muster stations, either the Observation Lounge or the Restaurant. Once all of us had arrived, and confirmed that we were wearing our lifejackets correctly, we were conducted to the lifeboats just as if we were abandoning ship. Some took the opportunity to check out the emergency accommodation in the lifeboats. It felt good to know what to do if required.

It felt even better to head to Deck 4 for our first visit to the restaurant to sample the delicious food prepared by Chef Gaurav and the galley team. Thus fortified, we were called down to the shell doors to get fitted for our Muck Boots which turned into dancing shoes as we rocked out with the Expedition Team.

As the day drew to a close there were dolphin and whale sightings, and eventually the sun got low enough in the sky to give dramatic “sunset” or “sunrise” colours – but of course it neither set nor rose but just circled the sky. This was our first



inkling of how difficult it will be to go to bed. Sleep is useful, but you are always missing something – as Expedition Leader Sara reminded us “sleeping is cheating!”



## **Day 2: 24<sup>th</sup> August 2022 Lillihookbreen and 14<sup>th</sup> July**

**GPS position at 8am: 79°19.6' N, 11°38.8' E**

**Wind: S4; Sea State: Smooth; Weather: Overcast; Air Temp: 4°C**

We started the day with an atmospheric mist hanging over over Lillihookbreen. The captain and officers took the ship as close to the glacier as possible, however some of the waters are uncharted so they didn't want to push it too far. The glacier was beautiful and the 6km wide cliff edge looked small compared to its true magnificent size.

After a delicious lunch to warm ourselves up we all prepared for an afternoon at 14th July glacier. Fjortende Julibukta pays homage to the French National Day. The weather was slightly damp, so we wrapped ourselves up to the eyeballs to prepare for the wet weather. The Expedition Team made a perimeter for us all to walk freely between the guides. We walked to the glacier and saw some beautiful calvings and then walked to the hanging gardens to see breeding Kittiwakes and Puffins.



On the slopes were two Arctic Foxes running around and Reindeer feeding on the tundra. After the landing, we were picked up in a zodiac to do a 40 minute cruise to the glacier, where we were surrounded by brash ice and icebergs. It felt surreal. Even with the cold wind, we loved this afternoon as it felt like a true Arctic experience! After we returned onboard, the Captain's cocktail evening followed with an inspiring speech from the Captain for a safe and adventurous voyage in Svalbard!

## Day 3: 25<sup>th</sup> August 2022

### Monacobreen & Texas Bar

GPS position at 8 am: 79°36.5'N 12°43.5'E

Wind: NW2; Sea state: Calm; Weather: Sunny; Air Temp.: 7.5°C



This morning we woke up in magnificent Liefdefjorden. Our morning destination was Texas Bar where we set out for various hikes. Long hikers were dropped first and enjoyed a good leg stretch and elevation, whereas others choose

medium or shorter walks. One thing all walks enjoyed was beautiful sunshine combined with amazing vistas across the fjord and towards Monacobreen, our destination for the afternoon. We also took a look at the infamous Texas Bar, which is an old trapper's hut, now owned by the Sysseimesteren, showcasing a rather nice spirit selection. This was one of several huts built in the Woodfjord area by the famous Norwegian trapper Hilmar Nois in the late 1920's. The most famous of which is the hut at Grahuken associated with Christiana Ritter and the book "A woman in the polar night". Before we returned to our ship, a few adventurous of our group dared to take a plunge into the icy Arctic Ocean.

For the afternoon, we repositioned a bit further into the fjord towards the magnificent Monacobreen. Once we were all comfortably aboard the zodiacs, we headed towards the ice. We enjoyed cruising amongst icebergs and feeling an arctic breeze blowing from the glaciers. Some of us spotted a bearded seal and an ivory gull, true inhabitants of the



Arctic. We got treated to an incredible calving and witnessed how a massive iceberg was born. Immediately, thousands of kittiwakes soared towards the calving site in search of food. Reluctantly, our drivers brought us back to the ship

although we would have loved to stay longer as conditions were just so fabulous.

After our expedition leader Sara updated us on tomorrow's plans and the team had shared some of their comprehensive knowledge during recap, hotel manager Michael presented today's surprise dinner: a barbecue on the back deck. The team couldn't have chosen a better location than this landscape surrounded by glaciers. Thanks to our



fabulous kitchen team, we enjoyed way too much delicious food. Soon, many of us gathered on the dancefloor to dance the night away – what a privilege to enjoy such an amazing day up in the high Arctic!



## Day 4: 26<sup>th</sup> August 2022 Faksevagen & Alkefjellet

GPS position at 8 am: 79°36.7'N 017°50.6'E

Wind: NNW7; Sea state: Moderate; Weather: Overcast; Air Temp.: 0°C

At 7am we awoke to the news for which we all were longing: a polar bear had been sighted! Or in fact, two polar bears: a mom and first-year cub. From the ship it was a far sighting, requiring the telescope or at least a good pair of binoculars. As the bears were sleeping just behind a small ridge, jumping into the Zodiacs right away made no sense. So, breakfast first and then, during Sara's polar bear lecture, pray the cub would get bored just lying around and stir the mum into some activity. Which it fortunately did, and even better, the bears decided on a stroll towards the beach, the reason being the remains of a walrus. Now it was time for a Zodiac cruise, and what sights we got! We approached the bears to some 150m, which did not disturb them at all, giving us great photo opportunities. The weather played along nicely too, with lots of sunshine. How awesome an observation this was, was also evident from everyone in the Zodiacs be quiet as a mouse, fantastic job all.



Lunch was splendid as always and after a short rest it was time for part two of the day: Alkefjellet. Although the wind had picked up a bit, we all really wanted to Zodiac cruise past these magnificent bird cliffs. The dolomite cliffs of Alkefjellet dramatically rise up 150m straight from the sea and are literally packed with seabirds, mainly Brünnich's Guillemots and Kittiwakes. The towering cliffs alone warrant a visit but packed with birds they are really a must-see in any trip to Svalbard. And as if that was not good enough yet, we spotted three Arctic foxes foraging in the lower reaches of the cliffs. The foxes were prowling for bird remains, and we saw one of them actually digging to store food for the winter. One of the foxes was already almost entirely in its white winter fur, while the others were mottled, with quite a bit of their brown summer fur remaining.



In the meantime, the wind had picked up, making for an adventurous and rather wet (but of course safe) ride back to the Hondius. All in all, an excellent Arctic expedition day!



# Day 5: 27<sup>st</sup> August 2022

## Seven Islands

**GPS position at 8 am: 80°40.6'N 20°44.5'E**

**Wind: N3; Sea state: Slight; Weather: Overcast; Air Temp.: -1°C**

Today we woke up to the wilds of Seven Islands, the most northerly islands of Svalbard.

From here it is 550 miles to the North Pole and it is often known as a place of very harsh weather. Today did not fail to meet those expectations, it was -1 C

and snowing on top of

the mountains that made up the Seven Islands. Each one of these islands was named after a famous explorer.



After breakfast we watched as the Expedition Team scouted Parroya, the island where we would be landing. At 9am we all prepared for the zodiac with warm clothing and waterproofs, and once landing at the beach we began clearing the beach of every big and small material we could find for the Clean Up Sara project in Svalbard. The guides made a perimeter for us to stay in between so they could keep us in a small area just in case a bear came to say hello! Many Arctic Skuas were flying above and chasing Kittiwakes for their food.

The beach had a surprising amount of plastic, we all got stuck in and gathered as much plastic as we could 'to do our part' for the environment. As this was a split landing half of us listened to Laura's inspiring and educational talk on sustainability while the other half

of us were onshore. By 1200 we were all back on Hondius and immediately went to the coffee machine to warm up from the chilly, but beautiful morning.



This afternoon we were all extremely excited by the prospect of Walrus! Already some had been spotted in the water, excellent news! With 10 of us in each zodiac our



wonderful guides took to see a group of Walrus which amazingly had pups in the group, a rare sight in Svalbard. We watched as they curiously watched us from the water and from the land the big brown sausages all rested and grunted amongst each other. Recap was followed by another delicious dinner from the chefs and shortly after a drink at the bar with the two best bar staff, John and Rolando!

## **Day 6: 28th August 2022**

### **In the Pack Ice**

**GPS position at 1200: 81°48'.8 N, 015°19'.9 E;**  
**Wind: NE2; Sea State: Ice/calm; Weather: Overcast; Air Temp: -1 °C**

Ice day! We reached 81° 47 early in the morning in search of an adventure through the pack ice, searching for wildlife. We were all very happily surprised to hear from our expedition leader that we already had found a Polar bear before breakfast! This made an amazing and very promising start to our day at the pack ice. Everybody gathered soon after on the outer decks, looking to our 12 o'clock position (directly in front of the ship) to find the polar bear. We slowly got closer, and the closer we got, the more we could observe that the bear was quite interested in the smells that were coming from our ship, and the bear began moving towards our ship. She came very close to our bow, sniffing around to see if there was anything interesting here. She moved over the ice with extreme ease and jumped here and there from ice floe to ice floe, giving us a great show and a chance to take stunning pictures. She kept on walking close by the port side of the ship, passing by still waters where she created an amazing reflection in the water. Surely this certainly was going to be the highlight of the day and nothing could make this day better. We carried on with the daily program, while enjoyed a late breakfast.



Our first lecture of the day was given by Laura M at 11:00 am on the subject of Sea Ice. We were happy to be inside after couple of hours being out in the chilly arctic air, so she had a full house with many listening ears. After about 30 min however Sara interrupted the lecture to let us know that another polar bear had been found. Everybody rushed out to see the bear, of course. This bear was a little bit less interested in us. The bear could smell us and saw us coming closer but, it didn't really mind our presence too much. Sleeping and resting clearly seemed more important and after finding a comfortable spot on top of an iceberg, the bear snoozed away. It is absolutely incredible to see a healthy bear in its natural habitat being so relaxed and unbothered by us that we can see it sleep whilst being in the vicinity. We kept on observing the bear for a little while but eventually left it to rest on its own. Most people went back to the observation lounge afterwards to enjoy the end of Laura's lecture.



The second lecture was given by Marcel about the exploration of the Arctic. A race whose winner was unknown for a time, after it was made clear that the American Fredrick Cook could not prove that he made it to the North pole in 1908 due to the lack of his seaman's logbook. The British Wally Herbert however did made it to the North Pole many years later in 1969, and became the first man to set foot on the top of the world. After Marcel's lecture, there was another announcement made - and we could hardly could believe it – but yes, another bear had been spotted! This time, it was a male bear that showed very little interest in us in the beginning and remained sleeping on his icy throne. However, after a while he stood up and made his way towards the ship. Slowly he tried to make out what we were, and raised his nose to sniff the air, no doubt smelling the delicious aromas from our kitchen vents. At a certain moment, he turned around and went back towards his throne, where he laid back down resting his body and saving his energy for future hunts. Soon after, we kept on going further south to the edge of the pack ice and left him to his slumber.



Once we arrived at the very edge of the pack ice, the hotel department had a nice surprise. They organized an outside bar on the bow of the ship. Here they served hot chocolate with cream and, if you felt like a real pirate, you could get a shot of rum in there to warm you up in the cold Arctic weather.

The third lecture was given by Koen, who had prepared a presentation about the Evolution of Whales. Many people were surprised to hear that whales evolved from a terrestrial animal around 50 million years ago. After a delicious dinner, we were invited to the last lecture of the day, given by Meike, about Arctic Art. This certainly made for an inspiring end to a truly memorable day.



# Day 7: 29<sup>th</sup> August 2022

## Smeerenburg & Virgoamna

GPS position at 8 am: 79°43.6'N 11°02.1'E

Wind: calm; Sea state: calm; Weather: cloudy; Air Temp.: 1°C

We woke to overcast skies but mild temperatures. We were all eager to get started, While we were having breakfast, the expedition team was already getting splashed by the waves in the zodiacs.

The morning activity was a split landing and zodiac cruise. The cruise was to Virgoamna to view the remains of 2 attempts to fly to the North Pole. In 1897 Salomon August Andrée and 2 companions were lost when their hydrogen balloon disappeared not to be found until 1930. In the early 1900's the American, Walter Wellman, made 3 launches in his airship. All failed soon after takeoff. Wellman gave up, but at least he lived. Along the way we watched Harbour Seals in their typical “banana-shaped” pose on the rocks, and swimming, and were closely watched ourselves by hovering Arctic Terns making sure we were not threats to their nests.



The landing was itself split into two activities. We walked to the ruins of Smeerenburg, which means Blubber Town. In 1630 around 200 persons from seven Dutch whaling companies were living on this little piece of land to work in this lucrative, but oh so dangerous, industry. We saw the leftovers of blubber ovens and whale bones on the beach, and also visited the remains of graves from the whaling era.





On the other side of the landing, we spent time admiring walrus hauled out, then playing and hunting in the water. These giant beasts were surprisingly active for such a big mammal that usually likes to sleep on the beach. We would have spent the whole morning there, but the Expedition Team made us go back for lunch. While the walrus were arguably the “fragrant” stars of the show, there were many other animals to be found,



including many well-camouflaged Sanderlings and Purple Sandpipers along the shoreline, while every so often a great flock of Arctic Terns took to the sky. The Arctic Terns also entertained us with their hovering flight over the sea, as they waited for the perfect opportunity to dive down to catch a fish.

The evening began when Captain Toni invited us to toast the success of this expedition in the Captain's Cocktail Party. The feature presentation was the delightful voyage slideshow created for us by Georgina. As we enjoyed our dinner, many whales were spotted out of the windows of the dining room, causing much excitement! Fin whales and minke whales could be seen gliding through the water, as many of us rounded off this memorable dinner with strawberry milkshakes and fresh chocolate donuts.

## **Day 8: 30<sup>th</sup> August 2022**

### **Longyearbyen**

**GPS position at 8 am: 78°13.8'N 15°36.1'E**

**Wind: N1; Sea state: Calm; Weather: Overcast; Air Temp.: 5.0°C**

Some of us had a head start, but only 7 days ago we all came together. We met, introduced ourselves, learned together, shared awesome experiences, and then shared the stories and pictures of those experiences. Quickly we were friends. We will always be friends, even if we soon will be distant friends. So soon we are parting.

How will we get our other friends back home to understand what it was like to be on this expedition? We can tell them about the pack ice, we can tell them about walrus on a white sandy beach, we can tell them about 24-hour days, we can tell them cruising the glacier, and the hikes, and the seals on the ice, and the bears on the beach – but they can never really know what we know. Our smiles may help them understand, but only our *Hondius* friends can really know what we know – that this was a beautiful, wonderful, magical adventure.

So, we all wished each other farewell, knowing that we may be moving on to the next chapter of our lives, but that this chapter will never be forgotten.



**Thank you all for travelling with us on this voyage, for your enthusiasm, support and good company. We very much hope to see you again in the future, wherever that might be!**

**Total distance sailed on our voyage: 1,004 nm  
Northernmost position: 80°52.2N**

**On behalf of Oceanwide Expeditions, Captain Toni Salo,  
Expedition Leader Sara Jenner, Hotel Manager Michael Frauendorfer  
and all the crew and staff of M/V Hondius, it has been a pleasure travelling with  
you.**

# Oceanwide Arctic Expedition - Farthest North – Spitsbergen

August 23 – 30 2022 | On the ship, the Hondius

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|---|--|
| 1 – 23/08 - PM Longyearbyen Embarkation                           | 8 – 27/08 - AM Phippsøya – Landing/<br>beach cleaning            |
| 2 – 24/08 - AM Lilliehöökreen Ships Cruise                        | 9 PM Parryøya – Zodiac cruise                                    |
| 3 PM 14 <sup>th</sup> of July Glacier - Landing/<br>Zodiac cruise | 10 – 28/08 Day at the pack ice -<br>Ships cruise + 3 Polar bears |
| 4 - 25/08 - AM Texas Bar - Landing                                | 11 – 29/08 - AM Smeerenburg/ Virgohamna                          |
| 5 PM Monacobreen - Zodiac Cruise                                  | 12 PM Ships cruise down south                                    |
| 6 – 26/08 - AM Faksevagen – Polar bears                           | 13 – 30/08 - AM Longyearbyen                                     |
| 7 PM Alkefjellet – Zodiac Cruise                                  |  |



**Birds and Mammals of Svalbard**

English Name	Latin	23.08.	24.08.	25.08.	26.08.	27.08.	28.08.	29.08.
Great Northern Diver	<i>Gavia immer</i>							
Red-throated diver	<i>Gavia stellata</i>							x
Northern Fulmar	<i>Fulmarus glacialis</i>	x	x	x	x	x	x	x
Bean Goose	<i>Anser fabalis</i>							
Pink-footed Goose	<i>Anser brachyrhynchus</i>			x				
Barnacle Goose	<i>Branta leucopsis</i>	x						
Brent Goose	<i>Branta bernicla</i>							
Northern Pintail	<i>Anas acuta</i>							
Common Eider	<i>Somateria mollissima</i>	x		x		x		
King Eider	<i>Somateria spectabilis</i>							
Long-tailed Duck	<i>Clangula hyemalis</i>							
Rock Ptarmigan	<i>Lagopus mutus hyperboreus</i>			x				
Ringed Plover	<i>Charadrius hiaticula</i>							
Purple Sandpiper	<i>Calidris maritima</i>	x	x					x
Sanderling	<i>Calidris alba</i>							x
Dunlin	<i>Calidris alpina</i>							
Ruddy Turnstone	<i>Arenaria interpres</i>							
Grey Phalarope	<i>Phalaropus fulicarius</i>							
Red-necked Phalarope	<i>Phalaropus lobatus</i>							
Pomarine Skua	<i>Stercorarius pomarinus</i>						x	
Arctic Skua	<i>Stercorarius parasiticus</i>	x	x	x	x	x		
Long-tailed Skua	<i>Stercorarius longicaudus</i>						x	
Great Skua	<i>Stercorarius skua</i>		x					
Sabine's Gull	<i>Xema sabini</i>							
Common/Mew Gull	<i>Larus canus</i>							
Glaucous Gull	<i>Larus hyperboreus</i>	x	x	x	x	x	x	x
Iceland gull	<i>Larus glaucooides</i>							
Herring Gull	<i>Larus argentatus</i>							
Lesser black-backed Gull	<i>Larus fuscus</i>							
Great black-backed Gull	<i>Larus marinus</i>							
Kittiwake	<i>Rissa tridactyla</i>	x	x	x	x	x	x	x
Ross' Gull	<i>Rhodostethia rosea</i>							
Ivory Gull	<i>Pagophila eburnea</i>			x			x	
Arctic Tern	<i>Sterna paradisaea</i>	x	x	x	x	x	x	x
Common Guillemot	<i>Uria aalge</i>							
Brunnich's Guillemot	<i>Uria lomvia</i>	x			x			
Black Guillemot	<i>Cephus grylle</i>		x	x	x		x	
Little Auk	<i>Alle alle</i>						x	
Puffin	<i>Fratercula arctica</i>	x	x		x			x
Snow Bunting	<i>Plectrophenax nivalis</i>	x		x		x		

**MAMMALS**

English	Latin	23.08.	24.08.	25.08.	26.08.	27.08.	28.08.	29.08.
Walrus	<i>Odobenus rosmarus</i>					x		x
Bearded seal	<i>Erignathus barbatus</i>			x		x		
Ringed seal	<i>Phoca hispida</i>							
Harp seal	<i>Pagophilus groenlandicus</i>						x	
Hooded seal	<i>Cystophora cristata</i>							
Common /Harbour seal	<i>Phoca vitulina</i>		x					x
Minke Whale	<i>Balaenoptera acutorostrata</i>	x			x	x		x
Sei Whale	<i>Balaenoptera borealis</i>							
Blue Whale	<i>Balaenoptera musculus</i>							x
Fin Whale	<i>Balaenoptera physalus</i>	x						x
Humpback Whale	<i>Megaptera novaeangliae</i>							
Sperm Whale	<i>Physeter macrocephalus</i>							
Northern Bottlenose Whale	<i>Hyperoodon ampullatus</i>							
Bowhead whale	<i>Balaena mysticetus</i>							
Orca (Killer Whale)	<i>Orcinus orca</i>							
White-beaked Dolphin	<i>Lagenorhynchus albirostris</i>	x						x
Beluga	<i>Dephinapterus leucas</i>							
Polar Bear	<i>Ursus maritimus</i>				x		x	
Arctic Fox	<i>Alopex lagopus</i>		x		x			
Spitsbergen Reindeer	<i>Rangifer tarandus platyrhynchus</i>		x					

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# Sara Jenner – Expedition Leader

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For as long as Sara could remember she has had a passion for travel and searching for the wildest and most remote places on earth.

Back in the UK when she was only 10, she remembers trading in her favourite pink bicycle for the money to start her travel fund. Every birthday and Christmas she added a little more in the kitty and finally, at 18 she realised her dream of diving at the Great Barrier Reef! At that point the travel addiction was born. Ever since Sara has been travelling the globe in search of wild and remote places and has spent many

months volunteering on wildlife conservation projects in a bid to help some of our most iconic and endangered species.

Sara's love of wildlife and the great outdoors has taken her to all seven continents and she has travelled extensively in the polar regions including the Antarctic Peninsula, Falklands, South Georgia, Spitsbergen, Greenland, Iceland, Baffin Island and Canadian High Arctic. Returning to the UK, Sara used this knowledge to work in the travel industry as a polar specialist for several years, until the travel bug hit again, when she decided to swap life on the land for a life at sea and joined the Oceanwide Expedition Team in 2016.

During 2020-2021 she worked extensively on a leopard seal identification project and took the opportunity to fulfil a lifetime dream of visiting South Georgia in winter by working on the M/V Pharos, which is deployed by the South Georgia Government as a fishery patrol vessel.

Sara is a keen wildlife photographer and when she is not wrapped up warm in the polar regions she enjoys working as a photographic guide in Botswana, on the beautiful Chobe River and Okavango Delta, so really has a life of two halves.

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# Laura Mony – Assistant Expedition Leader

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The ocean had always been part of Laura's life. She started spending time on sailboats when she was a baby and she sailed around the world crossing several oceans when she was between 12 and 14 years old. That trip increased her passion for the ocean because she discovered its vastness and its importance on the earth's dynamic.

Laura had the chance to start traveling very young and has been all over the world alone, with a backpack, with family or friends. These trips gave her the opportunity to develop an open mind and an intellectual curiosity about the climate phenomena that govern our planet.

Born in France, she grew up in the French part of Canada where she did her bachelor's degree in Geological Engineering. During her bachelor's degree, she became fascinated by the polar regions and wanted to continue her studies in that field. That is why, at the end of her degree, she left Canada for Tasmania, Australia, to do her Master in Marine and Antarctic Science. During that degree she deeply studied this fascinating continent with a specialization in geophysics and glaciology. When she is not guiding, she explores the world with her camera, or she is discovering the backcountry of Quebec with her skis. She likes to discover remote area and meet with local populations.



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## Marcel Paul – Assistant Expedition Leader

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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.

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# Annelou Hulsker – Expedition Guide

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Annelou grew up in a seaside town in the Netherlands known for its navy base and fisheries. There she spent most of her time sailing, hiking, or looking for shiny rocks and shells on the beach. This is where her passion for the Earth began, which she decided to turn into her career.

Annelou specialized in Earth Sciences and graduated from Utrecht University. She specialized in physical geography, where her focus is on land-surface processes, natural hazards, geomorphology, climate reconstruction and climate changes and a minor in sustainability.

The connection between the academic and practical aspects of Earth Sciences, which involves a lot of fieldwork and is highly hands-on, is what she enjoys most. She loves to share her understanding of the Earth in general and the Arctic in particular. She also got a special interest in the history of whaling as it played a large role in her hometown's history.

She is overjoyed to be able to combine her passion for the Earth with traveling the seas by ship.

In her free time she still loves to collect shiny rocks. Most of the time she can be found on the water sailing somewhere in Europe with her family, hiking, or, when at home, bouldering and climbing.

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# Alexander Romanovskiy - Expedition Guide

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Alexander Romanovskiy comes from Saint-Petersburg, the Northern capital of Russia. He was born in 1981. After having graduated from the boarding school Alexander entered Saint-Petersburg State University, where he spent 5 years studying physical geography, ecology, regional geography and international tourism. Afterwards he was working on his PhD thesis in Herzen State Pedagogical University of Russia, doing geoecological researches.

In the year of 2011 however, Alexander decided to pause his scientific career and start doing something completely different, which means working in tourism and traveling the world. He spent 2 seasons working as a trekking guide in Fann mountains (Tajikistan), 1 season on Novolazarevskaya Antarctic scientific station (Queen Maud Land, Antarctica) working as a member of a guesthouse crew.

Since February of 2012 most part of the year he spends on Svalbard. For five seasons in a row Alexander has been living and working as a guide in a ghost town of Pyramiden. In 2016 a new page in Alexander's guiding career was opened: he started working as a naturalist guide on cruise ships in polar regions of the world – Svalbard and Antarctica.

3 to 4 months a year Alexander dedicates to his main passion – traveling the world. No public transport, no hotels, only hitch-hiking and staying overnight with locals or sleeping in a tent. This way he has already visited almost all Soviet republics, Middle East (Iran, Turkey), Asia (China), South America (Argentina, Chile, Paraguay), and it is hopefully far not the end! The world is big, friendly and interesting to explore!

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# Annette Bombosch – Expedition Guide

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Annette was born in Germany and grew up in beautiful Bavaria. Always drawn to marine animals, she studied Marine Biology and obtained a Masters in Marine Conservation in New Zealand. There, she had the once-in-a-lifetime chance to visit Antarctica as part of a postgraduate certificate offered by the University in Christchurch – an absolutely life changing experience.

Returning from New Zealand, Annette spent the next few years pursuing a PhD studying whales in the Southern Ocean, allowing her to visit Antarctica during several multi-week long research cruises on board the German research icebreaker RV Polarstern.

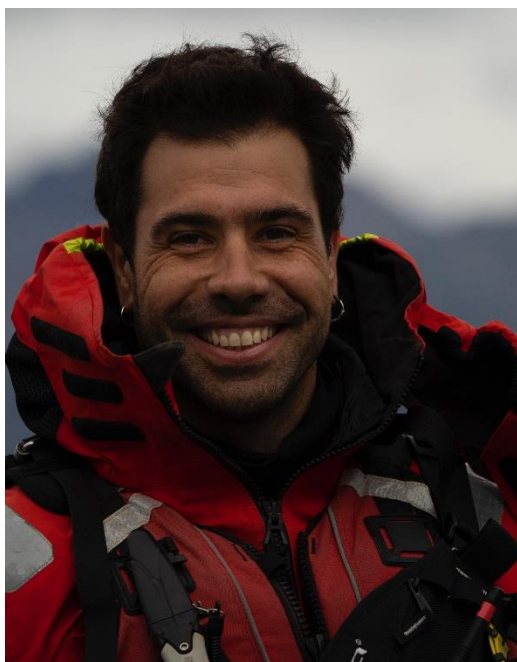
Since 2014, Annette has swapped a job behind the computer for an office with a view and has been working on various expedition cruises to the Arctic as well as the Antarctic. Up North, Annette has guided in Svalbard, Greenland, Franz Josef Land and stood at the North Pole nine times.

Annette biggest passion are marine mammals, but she also makes you look at the tiny Arctic plants and gets you excited about birds. She speaks German and English and is looking forward to spending her Arctic summer with you, sharing her passion for the Arctic as long as the sun is up.

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# Ben Giunchi - Expedition Guide

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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!

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# Cas Eikenaar - Expedition guide

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Cas is a behavioural ecologist with a special interest in birds. He grew up in a small village in the Netherlands, and when six years old already knew that he wanted to become an ornithologist. After studying biology, he travelled the world for more than 20 years to research birds in their natural habitats. Some of these projects took him to the Seychelles, the Galapagos, Australia and the Ecuadorian Andes. He often spent months sharing small uninhabited islands with the enchanting animals and plants living there. Such experiences, he says, fuelled his deep fascination with nature.

Cas currently works at the Institute of Avian Research "Vogelwarte Helgoland" in Wilhelmshaven (Germany), where he studies the relationship between physiology and behaviour in migratory birds. Besides his professional connection to birds, he is an avid birder, sporting a pair of binoculars ever since he was a kid. Birds, however, are by no means the only organisms that draw his attention. Cas is simply deeply passionate about all the living world around us, and has a keen interest in (and eye for) all forms of wildlife.

Cas is Dutch by birth, but also speaks fluent English and German. He would love to share his passion for nature with everyone on board. In doing so, Cas would not only like to help you identify the birds and other animals, but also tell you about their behaviour, ecology and evolution. He is convinced that this will make you appreciate the wonderful nature you encounter during the expeditions with Oceanwide even more.

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# Charlotte Taplin – Expedition Guide

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Charlotte grew up by the Coast in Cornwall, United Kingdom. From a young age she has always been fascinated by wildlife and the ocean. She studied Wildlife Conservation at University and then spent the next 10 years travelling through South America, Australasia and Africa. Charlotte's love for boats began in 2013 where she worked on research and dive vessels visiting remote regions of the Great Barrier Reef. Her interest in Marine Biology grew in

Australia and New Zealand while studying Humpback, Minke and Sperm Whales.

After driving overland in a land rover from South Africa to Jordan she then moved to Mozambique in 2018 where she started her own backpacker hostel. In her spare time Charlotte worked as a Researcher studying Whale sharks and Manta Rays along the Coast of Mozambique. During 2020-2022 she worked as a Deckhand/Divemaster on superyachts and ice breaker explorer vessels. Her hobbies include scuba-diving, surfing, free-diving and hiking. Being surrounded by the ocean is Charlotte's favourite place to be and she is so excited to have started her first season with Oceanwide in 2022.

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# Georgina Strange - Expedition Guide

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Georgina is a professional nature photographer and general wildlife enthusiast from the Falkland Islands. Her rather unique upbringing on a very small and remote island nature reserve has instilled a deep passion for wild places, and you'll most likely find her out on a cliff edge in a storm, revelling in the gales of wind that frequent the Falklands!

Georgina studied in England for sixth-form college, followed by an adventure to Australia for her university degree in Photography.

After managing her family's conservation trust on New Island in the Falklands for many years, regularly working with the many visiting expedition ships shoreside, Georgina swapped a land-based life for an ocean-based one and started as expedition photographer to South Georgia and the Antarctic in 2017, and to the Arctic in 2019, often switching roles to work as the on-board ornithologist to share her love of the winged creatures of the world, too!

During her off-ship season, Georgina runs her own wildlife photography tours at home to fulfil her passion for making captivating images of nature. Whenever possible, she most enjoys balancing out the time spent guiding in cold and windy places for quality time in the hotter and sunnier climes of the world!

Georgina's photography has made it to Outdoor Photographer of the Year, Bird Photographer of the Year, Wild Art Photographer and the finals of the prestigious Wildlife Photographer of the Year, as well as several well-known nature photography magazines and smaller competitions. Always happy to share knowledge and techniques, maybe you will go home with some competition-worthy images of your special trip, too!



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# Koen Jongerling - Expedition Guide

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Having grown up in the Netherlands Koen always knew he wanted to live in a more rugged landscape than the rather flat lowlands that surrounded him. That is why after finishing his outdoor education in 2011, he chose to move to Patagonia, Chile to find the mountains he was longing for.

Combining his love for nature and the desire to learn more, he started guiding expeditions through the mountain ranges of Patagonia. Travelling back and forth to Europe for additional mountain courses - every time feeling more at home in the rough conditions of Patagonia. In 2017 he started his own guide company, introducing travelers to the beauty of Southern Chile.

Living in Puerto Natales he came to love the cold and extreme weather and after years of working in one of the most southern mountain ranges in the world, he could not stop looking further south to the great white continent, Antarctica.

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# Laura Somerville - Expedition Guide

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Laura is originally from Scotland, and is currently living in the eastern part of Switzerland. Her first degree was in physics, and she began her working life as an actuary, working for a life assurance company in the field of financial statistics and risk analysis. However, her passion for the natural world and for sustainability issues led her down a different path.

She has studied marine biology at the University of Glasgow in Scotland; at the University of Iceland, she studied fish ecology and marine mammals. Her interest in environmental pollution in the

Arctic led her to UNIS (the University Centre in Svalbard), where she has taken part in a research project measuring snow albedo (the “whiteness” of the snow) in the northern fjords of Svalbard. The social and economic aspects of sustainability are Laura’s current research focus, and she has studied economics and international affairs at the University of St Gallen in Switzerland, and is currently working towards a master’s in education for sustainable development at the University of Gothenburg, Sweden.

If you are interested in ice swimming, you can ask Laura about the time she trained in ice bathing and breathing techniques with Wim Hof (the “Ice Man”) in the Netherlands. She also has quite strong opinions about Scotch whisky, especially the Islay malts. She speaks English, German, French and a little bit of Spanish.

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# Meike Sjoer - Expedition Guide

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From early on Meike has been a passionate naturalist and traveller who just loves birds.

At the age of 7 she bought her first bird book. Being outdoors all the time, she wanted to learn more about the amazing creatures she encountered. Investigating and learning about nature and wildlife has been a passion ever since.

Meike has a master degree in film and television from the University of Utrecht. For the last 25 years she has been working as a television director. Her stories involve nature, wildlife and environmental topics. If not travelling, she is directing the prime-time wildlife television program Vroege Vogels.

When time permits, she volunteers as a nature guide for the Dutch institute for nature and education. As a teenager Meike started sailing the oceans but her true love for the life in the oceans began 14 years ago when she started working with Sea Shepherd on the mediateam.

Meike is thrilled to be your guide on this trip and looking forward to sharing knowledge and the passion for this magical polar world with you.

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# Tirza Moerman – Expedition Guide

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Tirza is currently doing a PhD in ecology on the interaction between Svalbard reindeer and parasites. She did her bachelor and master's degree in biology, and her master research project on the effects of grazing of large herbivores on soil fauna in the Dutch Lauwersmeer. During this, she discovered that her main interest and enjoyment lies in understanding species interactions and conducting fieldwork. This PhD combines these two main interests: 1) understanding how parasites and reindeer interact with each other, and how this interaction is affected by environmental factors such

as temperature and moisture, 2) conducting fieldwork and field experiments during the summer in Svalbard.

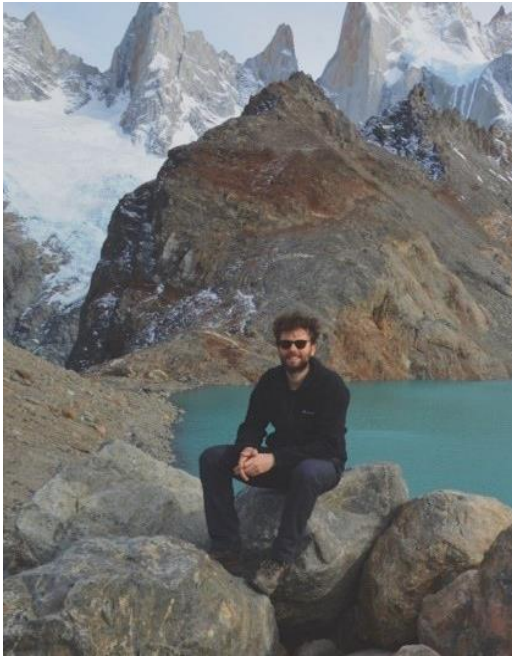
This is the second summer that Tirza is doing fieldwork on Svalbard. During fieldwork she for example observes reindeer and collects reindeer faeces. The reindeer faeces is used to extract and count parasites from. Furthermore, this summer she is setting up a field experiment to study how migration behaviour of the parasites is affected by temperature and moisture and how this links to contact rates with reindeer.

Besides parasites and reindeer and species interactions in general, Tirza has a broad interest in nature. That is why she also did volunteer work in South Africa and Namibia for nature conservation projects. She really enjoys travelling, be outdoors and enjoying the beautiful natural sights. She hopes she could share this interest and enjoyment with you during the cruise.

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# Thibaut Vanbaelen – Ship's doctor

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Thibaut is the ship physician for this trip! He graduated from the Medical School of the Catholic University of Louvain in 2015 and then specialized in Family Medicine. He also got a postgraduate in International Health and Tropical Medicine from the Institute of Tropical Medicine in Antwerp. He has experience in primary care as well as in out-patient hospital care, especially in infectious diseases and travel medicine. He currently works as a Medical Doctor and researcher at the Institute of Tropical Medicine in Antwerp and is a PhD candidate at the University of Antwerp.

He also works in the on-duty medical doctors service in Brussels.

Thibault is an avid traveller and never misses a chance to travel, for work or leisure. He already set foot in more than 40 countries on 6 continents. He particularly appreciates combining traveling and working, as it allows him to join his two passions together. Apart from traveling he enjoys photography, cooking (not always successfully!), a large range of sports such as tennis and swimming, reading a good book etc.

It is a great honour for him to be part of Oceanwide Expeditions' team and he will do everything he can to ensure you have an (healthy) unforgettable experience!



## **North Spitsbergen - Farthest North** *Welcome aboard M/V Hondius!*

**23<sup>rd</sup> August 2022**  
***Day 1 – Embarkation, Longyearbyen***

Please make yourselves at home in your cabins and check you have received all your luggage!

Tea/coffee is available in the lounge located on Deck 5.

### ***PLEASE LISTEN FOR ANNOUNCEMENTS***

17:15+/-

Ship safety briefing, in the Observation Lounge on Deck 5. Attendance to this is **MANDATORY**.

After the briefing the emergency alarm will be sounded, and you will need to go back to your cabin and get your life jacket.

All guests accommodated on Deck 3 (Cabins 301-337) will go to **MUSTER STATION A which is the Restaurant on Deck 4**

All guests accommodated on decks 4, 6, and 7 (Cabins 401-414, 601-619, and 701-714) will go to **MUSTER STATION B which is the Observation Lounge on Deck 5**.

18:15+/-

The Hotel Manager and Expedition Leader will do a welcome briefing, to orientate you to life on board and the plan for the forthcoming days. You will also be introduced to your Expedition Team.

This will take place in the Observation Lounge on Deck 5.

19:30

Buffet dinner in the Restaurant on Deck 4.

21:00

Muck Boot distribution. Please listen for announcements, as you will be called deck-by-deck to Deck 3. Please bring your thick socks to find the best-sized boots for you!



## North Spitsbergen- Farthest North

24<sup>th</sup> August 2022

*Day 2 – Lilliehookbreen & 14<sup>th</sup> of July Glacier*

- 07:00 Wake- up call.
- 07:30-8:30 Breakfast buffet in the Restaurant, Deck 4.
- During the course of the morning, we will sail into Lilliehookbreen, so we encourage you to spend time on the outside decks looking for wildlife and enjoying the views of this magnificent glacier.
- 09:30 A **Mandatory** AECO, Polar bear and Zodiac briefing will take place in the Observation Lounge on Deck 5. Attendance will be checked.
- 11:00 Cas invite you to the lounge for **an introduction to birds of Svalbard** and their adaptation to life at sea.
- 12:30-13:30 Buffet lunch will be served in the Restaurant on Deck 4.
- 13:45 Please can the **Blue** Group be ready at the shell doors on Deck 3 for a Landing at the 14<sup>th</sup> of July Glacier.
- 14:00 Please can be the **Red** Group ready at the Shell doors on Deck 3 for a Zodiac Cruise at the 14<sup>th</sup> of July glacier
- Groups will swap during the course of the afternoon.
- 18:45 Please join the expedition team in the Lounge for Captains Cocktail and daily recap.
- 19:30 Dinner will be served in the Restaurant on Deck 4.



## North Spitsbergen- Farthest North

25<sup>th</sup> August 2022

*Day 3 – Texas Bar and Monacobreen*

- 07:00 Wake- up call.
- 07:30-8:30 Breakfast buffet in the Restaurant, Deck 4.
- 08:30 We would like to invite **the long hikers** to be ready at the Shell doors for a landing at Texas Bar. This will be a 3 to 3.5 hours hike over steep, uneven ground.
- 09:30 Please can **all other guests** be ready at the Shell door for a landing at Texas Bar. You can choose between a medium hike of 2-2.5 hours or a leisurely walk of 1-1.5 hours. The terrain on the landing is steep and uneven.

This morning, we hope to offer a Polar Plunge. If you would like to take an Arctic dip, please wear your swimmers under your expedition clothes. We will provide the towels. This will be at the end of the morning's activities.

13:00-14:00 Buffet lunch will be served in the Restaurant on Deck 4.

- 14:30 We would like to invite the **Red Group** to be ready at the Shell doors on Deck 3 for a Zodiac Cruise at Monacobreen.
- 14:45 We would like to invite the **Blue Group** to be ready at the Shell doors on Deck 3 for a Zodiac Cruise at Monacobreen.
- 18:15 Please join the expedition team in the Lounge for daily recap.
- 19:00 Dinner will be served.





## North Spitsbergen- Farthest North

**26<sup>th</sup> August 2022**  
***Day 4 – Faksevågen and Alkefjellet***

- 07:00 Wake- up call.
- 07:30-8:30 Breakfast buffet in the Restaurant, Deck 4.
- 08:30 We would like to invite **the long hikers** to be ready at the Shell doors for a landing at Faksevågen. This will be a 3 to 3.5 hours hike over steep, uneven ground.
- 09:30 Please can **all other guests** be ready at the Shell door for a landing at Faksevågen. You can choose between a medium hike of 2 hours or a leisurely walk of 1 hours. The terrain on the landing is steep and uneven.
- We would like to invite everyone ashore to participate in Svalbard Clean Up program during the morning activity at Faksevågen landing site.
- 12:30-13:30 Buffet lunch will be served in the Restaurant on Deck 4.
- 14:30-14:45 We would like to invite the **Blue Group** to be ready at the Shell doors on Deck 3 for a Zodiac Cruise at Alkefjellet.
- 14:45-15:00 We would like to invite the **Red Group** to be ready at the Shell doors on Deck 3 for a Zodiac Cruise at Alkefjellet
- 18:15 Please join the expedition team in the Lounge for daily recap.
- 19:00 Dinner will be served in the Restaurant on Deck 4.
- 21:00 Sasha invites you to the lecture room for an evening of story-telling about his time as **the guardian of Pyramiden**, the Arctic Ghost Town, and his life in this remote settlement.



## North Spitsbergen- Farthest North

27<sup>th</sup> August 2022

### *Day 5 – Seven Islands- Parryøya and Phippsøya*

- 07:00 Wake- up call.
- 07:30-08:30 Breakfast buffet in the Restaurant, Deck 4.
- 09:00 Please the **Red** group be ready at the shell doors for a landing at Sandvika, Parryøya.
- 10:15 Please the **Blue** group be ready at the shell doors for a landing at Sandvika, Parryøya.

We would like to invite everyone ashore to participate in the Clean Up Svalbard program during the morning activity at Sandvika, Parryøya. landing site.

Laura S will be giving a presentation about about **New perspectives on sustainability** in the lecture room for those guests not on the landing site, this will be repeated during the morning so all guests can attend.

- 12:30-13:30 A buffet lunch will be served in the Restaurant, Deck 4.
- 14:00 Please the **Blue** group be ready at the shell doors for a zodiac cruise at Phippsøya
- 14:15 Please the **Red** group be ready at the shell doors for a zodiac cruise at Phippsøya
- 18:15 Please join the expedition team in the Lounge for Daily Recap.
- 19:00 Dinner will be served in the Restaurant on Deck 4.



## North Spitsbergen- Farthest North

28<sup>th</sup> August 2022

*Day 5 – Heading north in search of the Ice edge*

07:45 Wake- up call.

08:00-09:00 Breakfast buffet in the Restaurant, Deck 4.

We hope to reach the farthest North point of the voyage during the day and we will be close to the sea ice, so please join the expedition team on the outside decks or the bridge and help look for wildlife.

11:00 Laura invites you to the lounge for a presentation about **Sea Ice in the Arctic Ocean.**

12:30-13:30 A buffet lunch will be served in the Restaurant, Deck 4.

15:00 Marcel invites you to the lounge to tell you about **The Quest for the North Pole.**

16:45 Koen invites you to the lounge for a presentation about the **Evolution of whales.**

18:15 Please join the expedition team in the Lounge for Daily Recap.

19:00 Dinner will be served in the Restaurant on Deck 4.

21:00 Meike invites you into the lecture room for an interactive evening about **the Dutch Explorers of Nova Zembla & Arctic art.**



## North Spitsbergen- Farthest North

**29<sup>th</sup> August 2022**  
**Day 7 – Smeerenburg, Virgohamna**

07:00 Wake- up call.

07:30- 08:30 Breakfast buffet in the Restaurant, Deck 4.

08:45 Please can the **Blue** Group be ready at the shell doors on Deck 3 for a landing at Smeerenburg.

09:00 Please can the **Red** Group be ready at the shell doors on Deck 3 for a zodiac cruise at Virgohamna.

Groups will swap during the morning.

12:30-13:30 Buffet lunch will be served in the Restaurant on Deck 4.

15:30 Annette invites you to the lounge for a lecture about **Whaling and conservation now**

17:00 We will collect your rubber boots at the Shell Door on Deck 3.  
**Please clean up your boot in your shower before bringing them down**

During the afternoon you can settle your accounts with the Hotel Department, they will announce when they are ready to process payments. We will collect your rubber boots before dinner, please listen for announcements.

18:15 Join the expedition team in the lounge for the Captains Farewell Cocktail and a viewing of the voyage slideshow.

19:00 Dinner is served in the Restaurant on Deck 4.



## North Spitsbergen- Farthest North

**30<sup>th</sup> August 2022**  
***Day 8 – Longyearbyen***

- 07:00 Wake-up call.
- 07:15 Please leave your large luggage in the corridor outside your room for the staff to collect. Crew and staff will bring it to the pier, where you will need to personally identify it and bring it your bus.
- 07:30-08:30 A breakfast buffet is served in the Restaurant on Deck 4.
- 09:00 Please be ready for disembarkation, but please listen for announcements before approaching the gangway.

Buses will be departing from the quayside to the town.

Thank you all for a wonderful voyage, for your company, good humour, and enthusiasm. We hope to see you again in the future and share more adventures with you.