



OCEANWIDE

EXPEDITIONS

Around Spitsbergen in the realm of Polar Bear and Ice

24th June – 3rd July 2024

M/V Hondius



M/V Hondius was built in 2019, as the first-registered Polar Class 6 vessel in the world, meeting the latest and highest Lloyd's Register standards for ice-strengthened cruise ships. Surpassing the requirements of the Polar Code adopted by the International Maritime Organization (IMO), Hondius represents the most flexible, advanced, innovative touring vessel in the polar regions, thoroughly optimized for exploratory voyages that provide you the utmost first-hand contact with the Arctic and Antarctica. Hondius complies with the latest SOLAS-regulations (Safety of Life at Sea). M/V Hondius is 107.6 m long, 15.3 m wide and has a maximum draft of 5.3 m, Polar Class 6 (equivalent 1A-Super), 15 knots average cruising speed and has 2 x ABC main engines; total 4,200 kw.

**Captain Arthur Yakovlev
and his international crew**

Staff Captain:	Matei Mocanu	Romania
Chief Officer:	Sven Holzhausen	Germany
2nd Officer:	Nino Cizmic	Croatian
3rd Officer:	Giovanni Simene	Philippines
Chief Engineer:	Guntis Dizbite	Estonia
Hotel Manager:	Albert Don	The Netherlands
Assist. Hotel Manager:	Karolina Guziejko	Poland
Head Chef:	Ralf Barthel	Germany
Ships Doctor:	Rebecca Boys	United Kingdom
Expedition Leader:	Bitao 'Jerry' Zhao	China
Assist. Expedition Leader:	George Kennedy	Australia
Assist. Expedition Leader:	Christan Long	New Zealand
Expedition Guide:	Philip Konietzko	Germany
Expedition Guide:	Sven Joest	Germany
Expedition Guide:	William Kennedy	Germany
Expedition Guide:	Joyce Mulder	The Netherlands
Expedition Guide:	Jada Heister	The Netherlands
Expedition Guide:	Meike Sjoer	The Netherlands
Expedition Guide:	Gabi Kolodko	Poland
Expedition Guide:	Simon Davies	United Kingdom
Expedition Guide:	Marco Rosso	Italy
Expedition Guide:	Rose Li Hong	China
Expedition Guide:	Katlyn Taylor	United States
Expedition Guide:	Julian Robinson	United Kingdom
Expedition Guide:	Valeria Sainz Herrera	Argentina
Kayak Leader:	Fran Potheary	United Kingdom
Kayak Guide:	Kelly Pearson	United Kingdom
Translator	Ting Gu	China

Day 1 – Monday, June 24th 2024

Embarkation – Longyearbyen, Svalbard

GPS 16:00 Position: 78°20.5' N 15°32.0' E

Wind: WNW-1, **Sea State:** Rippled, **Weather:** Part. Cloudy, **Air Temp:** 9°C, **Sea Temp:** 5.8°C

A fantastic day to begin our Arctic adventure, cloudless blue sky, bright sunshine and calm waters. The Expedition Team lifted luggage aboard and then greeted everyone as they walked up the gangway of our ship, M/V Hondius.

Once all passengers and their luggage were aboard Expedition Leader Jerry, and the Chief Officer Sven commenced the mandatory ship safety briefing. During the safety briefing we were shown how the life jackets are put on, followed by the mandatory drill for abandon ship.

Before dinner we reunited once again in the lounge to receive more information from Hotel Manager Albert, the Expedition Team was then presented by the Expedition Leader Jerry and finally we all cheered with a glass of Prosecco with Captain Artur to a good and successful voyage. Soon after dinner was served in the restaurant prepared by chef Ralf and his team.

Eventually after a full day of travelling and lots of important information many of us headed to bed to be well rested for our first full day of expedition.

Day 2 – Tuesday, June 25th 2024

Location: Ny Ålesund (am) and Fjortende Julybukta (pm)

GPS 12:00 Position: 79° 07.5' N 11° 49.9' E

Wind: S-1, **Sea State:** Calm, **Weather:** Overcast, **Air Temp:** 5°C, **Sea Temp:** 6.5°C

Our first morning of operations found us at Ny-Ålesund. It is a special treat to visit this research station. Many countries have projects happening at this site and due to the sensitive equipment in use, we were asked to not bring our phone ashore and to turn off all Wi-Fi and Bluetooth features on all our electronics the night before.



As we made our approach to the anchorage, we held our zodiac and polar bear safety briefings, which was especially appropriate since there was a polar bear on shore near the station! Resting on a small island just off the coast of Ny-Ålesund was an adult polar bear. Likely it was looking for bird eggs to eat or young seals resting on the shoreline. Ny-Ålesund is a well defended and monitored town so we could still visit with a bear in the vicinity. Eventually the bear left the island and swam to Ny-London.

The expedition team led guided walks throughout the town to see various sites; here we learned about the history of this remote settlement. Originally created as a mining town in the early XX century, due to various incidents and the poor viability of the minerals extracted here in the early '60 the mining was abandoned and the town soon became an important research area. Today around 20 countries have year-round managed bases in Ny-Ålesund with a floating population of 80 to 20 people between seasons.



At the Amundsen monument Will gave an interesting presentation about this interesting explorer. Later on there was even a chance to visit the gift shop and enjoy a waffle or coffee. We had some wildlife sightings in addition to the polar bear including Arctic terns, eider ducks, harbor seal pups, skua and more.

After lunch we began our operations at Fjortende Julibukta, right at the entrance of Krossfjorden. The weather was amazing; glassy calm sea conditions and partly sunny skies for our zodiac cruises and landing. Julibukta is home to beautiful hanging gardens and cliffs where a variety of seabirds nest. We had sightings of reindeer, Brunnich's guillemot, black guillemot, black legged kittiwakes, and Atlantic Puffins.

Opposite of the bird cliffs is a stunning glacier, Fjortendejulibreen, which could be seen from the zodiacs and by a short walk from the landing site on shore. The blooming flowers turned the slopes of Fjortendejulibukta pink and purple; even tundra plants have beautiful blooms in the summertime.

What a great day to begin our journey in this remote archipelago of the Arctic ocean!



TRAK kayaking program: Fjortende Julybukta (pm)

The group of 6 TRAK kayakers had spent until midnight on our embarkation day building the kayaks for today's paddle. This was all part of the plan and gave us a sense of satisfaction putting together our own craft, although once we had left Isfjorden, the swell made a few of us a little seasick. No matter, today we woke up refreshed and raring to go. The afternoon saw us at Fjortende Juliabukta, which offers some beautiful paddling under cliffs populated by guillemots and puffins, and the opportunity to paddle around rock stacks. There was a slight swell off the headland, but it soon eased as we paddled towards Juliabreen. We watched some kittiwakes preening on glacier ice, and the sun came out at that point, emphasizing the blue of the ice. All too soon we were back at the ship, having got familiar with our boats and ready for the next adventure.

Day 3 – Wednesday, June 26th 2024

Location: Texas Bar (am) and Monacobreen (pm) - Liefdefjorden

GPS 12:00 Position: 79° 36.4' N 12° 43.7' E

Wind: NE-3, Sea State: Rippled, Weather: Overcast, Air Temp: 5°C, Sea Temp: 7°C

We started the day with lovely morning call in Liefdefjorden by our Expedition Leader Jerry; the "Love bay" named after a Dutch sailing ship of the XVII century, the fjord branches out from the main Woodfjorden into the west-southwest for 30 kilometers into Albert I land in the Northwestern Spitsbergen island. We were excited for our first landing of the voyage at Texas Bar with some exciting hikes planned. While everyone enjoyed their breakfast the Expedition Team spotted a Polar Bear during the scouting of Texas Bar. This thrilling news led to a change of plans and the landing was cancelled. Instead we started very soon to lower the Zodiacs; quickly our Deck and expedition team launched sixteen zodiacs in the water, and everyone prepared themselves for a promising zodiac cruise on the south shore of Texas Bar.



After everyone got into the Zodiacs we slowly made our way towards the location where the Polar Bear was spotted earlier. As we approached slowly, surrounded by the pointy mountains of which many were covered in clouds, you could see already the bear in the distance walking along the shoreline. When we arrived, everyone was in excited mood and enjoyed

this spectacular sighting of our second bear of our voyage. The moment was fantastic, the young female bear rather than taking the higher route which would have hidden her from us, decided instead for a leisure stroll on the coastline. First she navigated onto some big boulders, then climbed a rocky cliff and finally descended near the beach for some photographical moments. Eventually she ended up taking a rest on a snow patch, absolutely at ease with our respectful presence.

After two long hours in the Zodiacs it was time to head back the ship and warm up with a tea or a coffee and process the sighting and also check with much excitement the pictures which has been taken. While M/V Hondius was repositioned towards Monacobreen all of us enjoyed our lunch with the Monacobreen in sight and had some rest. In the afternoon we started to load the Zodiacs and started our cruise around this beautiful and picturesque icy fjord, accompanied by three glaciers: Monacobreen, Seligerbreen and Emmabreen.



Thanks to Simon we spotted already from the ship before the cruise started some White Whales in the distance and everyone was very excited to see them from a closer distance. While we were cruising alongside the snouts of this massive glaciers we started to see plenty of Beluga in the water around the icebergs from the glaciers. Everyone was very happy and glad to have some close encounters with these beautiful marine mammals. Beside the belugas we also spent some time and watched the Arctic Skuas, Black-legged Kittiwakes and the beautiful icebergs from the glaciers around us.

After two hours in the zodiacs everyone was ready to return to the ship and warm up again, before dinner we had our daily recap where Jerry told us the plan for the next day. After that William informed us about Speirs Bruce and Katlyn shared information about Beluga Whales. After an amazing dinner we all went to the outside decks and the lounge while we approached the Island of Moffen where we spotted plenty of Walrus on land and in the water. Simultaneously we celebrated our passing of 80° North.

This was a very special occasion and a great way to end this outstanding day.



TRAK kayaking program: Monacobreen (pm)

As is often the case, our plans to kayak at Texas Bar were disrupted – by the exciting news that there was a bear on shore. However, after a morning spent bear watching from Zodiacs, we took to the water for a long afternoon in front of Monacobreen and Seligerbreen Glaciers. The glaciers have receded so much that many islands have begun to appear which gave us some good sport, slaloming between them whilst keeping an ear out all the time for the crack and collapse of the glacier front. We also observed belugas who at one point looked like they were going to approach and check out our quiet, craft engineless craft!



Day 4 – Thursday June 27th 2024

Location: Phippsøya (am) and Parryøya (pm) - Sjuøyane

GPS 12:00 Position: 80° 40.6' N 20° 57.0' E

Wind: W-2, Sea State: Calm, Weather: Overcast, Air Temp: 0°C, Sea Temp: 3°C

Today we explored Sjuøyane, or the Seven Islands, which are the Northernmost islands of the archipelago. This region is especially known as bear territory, as it connects to the sea ice during wintertime. Being only 1024 kilometres away from the geographical North Pole, we were closer to the North Pole than to the Arctic circle. Not only that, according to Marine Traffic, we were the northernmost vessel on the planet (with AIS on, excluding military vessels)!

Unlike the previous days, the weather was rather cold, but this did not make us stop from landing on Phippsøya. The islands are quite barren and only hosted some mosses and lichens, as this region is categorized as 'high Arctic' and thus holds no climate for flowering plants. There wasn't much wildlife to see, apart from some seabirds like Kittiwakes and Black Guillemots. Although, expedition guide Meike spotted a place where a Polar Bear has slept, and even found some fur where the bear had slept. Next to the landing, we made



a zodiac cruise from which we could also see Markensøya. Indeed, it was quite chilly once we drove around the corner where there was no shelter from waves and wind.

Therefore, between 13:00 and 14:00 o'clock, the lunch offered a great opportunity to warm up. After that, it was time to head back out again. We only transited South for a little while, to get closer to a Walrus colony near Parryøya. To see them up close, we boarded the boats on a zodiac cruise where we observed the Walrus but also the dynamic surroundings. The Walrus colony had many females and calves, which is quite special to see! As a surprise, we had a 'bar zodiac' going around handing out warm glühwein, amid the high Arctic!

After everyone got back onboard and had a nice long shower to warm up, it was time for a daily recap. After Jerry announced his plans for the following day, Katlyn started off with a recap about the walrus



that we just saw! It is always nice to have a bit more information on what you've just seen. She mentioned for example that walrus have a gestation period of 15 months, and that calves are between 35 to 75 kilograms when they are born! Then Jade talked to us about the three different North Poles and where to find them. She mentioned that the geomagnetic North Pole is always on the move and might end up in one your houses someday!

Day 5 – Friday June 28th 2024

Location: Drifting Pack Ice around 81° N

GPS 12:00 Position: 80° 58.0' N 23°13.8' E

Wind: S-1, Sea State: Calm, Weather: Overcast, Air Temp: 3°C, Sea Temp: 2°C

We awoke to overcast skies for our planned day in the sea ice but most importantly it was beautifully flat calm with hardly a breath of wind. We could see the edge of the ice off our port bow and Captain Artur kindly waited for the wake-up call before turning the ship to enter this incredible environment. We were instantly immersed in this incredible, unique world and everyone from the passengers to the guides were soon entranced by its serenity and peacefulness.

All eyes were out scanning from various vantage points around the ship, entertained by our constant companions of Kittiwakes, Black Guillemots, Brunnich's Guillemots and Little Auks along with a distant, super-rare and delicate Sabine's Gull. We soon picked up our first Pinnipeds with a couple of nice, fat Bearded Seals giving great views, some distant Ringed Seals sat on the ice, offering a tempting snack for any passing charismatic megafauna that may be in the area and a few groups of Harp Seals in the water.



The lecture program was due to start late morning with Katlyn talking about Polar Bears but with the screens down and everything cued up, ready to go the call went out that there were some Walrus on the ice ahead of the ship so naturally, we concentrated on the big, blubbery beasts and talk of Polar Bears would have to wait. After lunch it was Marco's lecture on sea ice's turn to be interrupted by events out across the wilderness – this time it was the very exciting news that a Polar Bear had been spotted, distantly directly in our path.



Half an hour later and some expert maneuvering from the officers on the bridge, slowly brought us closer and closer to the Polar Bear where soon, everyone right around the ship from the bow to the bridge to those up on deck eight had awesome views of this wonderful apex predator in its natural habitat, at home in this pristine wonderland. For a moment though this fearsome hunter forgot its terrible reputation and just rolled around in the snow without a care in the world – a fabulous illustration of the world we must protect and cherish.

With a long way to travel for tomorrow's activities we reluctantly left the Bear (it actually followed the ship for a while afterwards!) and turned south, back to Svalbard. This certainly didn't mark the end of the days entertainment with the Polar Bear postponed hot chocolate with rum served on the bow and a pair of fascinating lectures on the history of polar exploration in English by Will and in Mandarin by Rose.

A wonderful day spent losing oneself in the peaceful, calming world of the pack ice, with the mirror-like ocean blending seamlessly into the horizon, only told apart by the floating ice floes, separating sea from sky in this unreal, beautiful world of ice and water.



Day 6 – Saturday June 29th 2024

Location: Faksevågen (am), Alkefjellet (pm) and Wahlbergøya (evening)

GPS 12:00 Position: 79° 34.9' N 18° 36.3' E

Wind: SE-4, **Sea State:** Rippled, **Weather:** Clear Sky, **Air Temp:** 4°C, **Sea Temp:** 5°C

We awoke early this morning as we were excited to the day was to come. Before started the activities, we all attended the restaurant for a hearty breakfast. Faksevågen, will be the landing site. Lomfjord is a side bay in the northern part of Hinlopen Strait. It is not the world's biggest fjord, but it has one lovely side bay on its western side, called



Faksevågen (Fakse bay). In contrast to most other areas around Hinlopen Strait, there are green tundra areas in Faksevågen.

Some of us decided to burn some calories and took the option for a long walk. The mountain Faksefjellet, with its 360m height, is not Mount Everest, but still, the view from the top, which is decorated with a large erratic boulder, is stunning. The other groups chose to walk around the slopes and beach. Almost at the end of the operation, an alert on the radios made our hearts jumped a little bit, a Polar Bear was swimming in the water. Calmly and with a bolt professionalism, all the guides made the evacuation in just a few minutes as soon as the hikers were safely guided back from the top of the ridge. After that excitement morning, we could have the opportunity to watch the Bear from the safety of our beautiful Hondius.

Before we knew it, it was time for lunch. We enjoyed a delicious buffet before heading up to our second activity of the day. We were excited to enjoy a Zodiac cruise amongst the famous Alkefjellet, “mountain of the guillemots”.



This popular Arctic location is the most famous cliff of the Svalbard archipelago.

Alkefjellet is a major bird cliff that is home to around 60,000 pairs of breeding Brünnich's guillemots as well as a smaller number of glaucous gulls and kittiwakes. The cliffs are high and sheer and in places around 100 meters (330 feet) tall, some of them free-standing towers and others part of the main body of rock. All are impressive examples of dolerites intrusions from the Jurassic or late Cretaceous period.

We had the opportunity of seeing meltwater from glaciers creating small waterfalls that spilled down the rocks in long clear streams. The Guillemots were flying all over our heads, certainly a breathtaking scenery. When we were almost approaching the end of the cliff, an Arctic Fox made its way down the lower slopes and we had the chance to have a glimpse of how much they work for food constantly. Smiling



faces in all in our zodiacs showed how much delighting and amazing our day had been so far.

We Returned to the ship to warm ourselves up and had the Dayli recap, Jerry explained about the activities of the day and the next day. Ting, taught us about lichens, and Meike all about Guillemots.

To cap off a wonderful day, our expedition team went ashore in Wahlbergøya and set up the site for us to go ashore. Wahlbergøya is the largest island in the Vaigattøyane archipelago, a group of islands in the Hinlopen Strait. The almost triangular island is about 13 km long from its northwest cape Ryggneset to its southeast cape Jåderinneset.

We just started to load the zodiacs, when through the radio the call made change our plans, the second Polar Bear of the day, was in the area. We did a zodiac cruise instead, and we had an amazing close view from a beautiful group of Walruses. With their voluminous bodies and long tusks, the outing gave us the opportunity to fill our memory cards with hundreds of pictures.

The day was over, but we stayed for hours in the lounge with the Expedition team, it had been such an incredible day that it was almost impossible to go to rest, needing to share stories and pictures.



TRAK kayaking program: Faksevågen (pm)

Another day of light winds and calm waters in Faksevågen. We left the ship at exactly 08.01 at a time when most people were finishing up their breakfasts. We took the Zodiac out to the northwest point at the fjord entrance and quickly got into our kayaks. Then we started west with a light breeze pushing us along. Kelly took advantage of the good conditions to teach us some techniques for turning the kayaks, looking at combining edging and sweep strokes. Maryse took the edging a bit too far at one point and tipped in, however she stayed in her kayak and with the support of the bow of Fran's kayak and Kelly flipping her upright, she avoided a full swim!



After paddling to the coastal river plain at the head of the fjord we came back on the other side and just shortly before we were going to the cry went up from the front of the group "polar bear!". Yes, a polar bear was swimming across our path about 500m distance, heading for the opposite shore. The keen eyes of Maryse spotted its creamy yellow head above the waves! How exciting. We swung into immediate action, and it was less than ten minutes before we were all safely on board the Zodiac with the kayak strung neatly behind – a credit to the

calm attitude and skill of us all. Back at the ship we offloaded and our Zodiac driven by Kaitlyn made it's way to shore to help with the landing evacuation.

Day 7 – Sunday June 30th 2024

Location: Olgastretet (am) and Storfjordbanken (pm)

GPS 12:00 Position: 77° 00.3' N 24° 27.2' E

Wind: SW-4, Sea State: Rippled, Weather: Overcast, Air Temp: 2°C, Sea Temp: 4°C

During the night M/V Hondius had sailed a great distance, passing Edgeøya on our starboard side and in the morning, we woke to find ourselves en route to Hornsund, with a substantial portion of the 410 miles already behind us. The sun played hide and seek behind the clouds, casting a soft, muted light over the gently rolling waves that caressed the bow of our ship. With no early excursions planned, we enjoyed a leisurely morning. Some of us chose to sleep in, while others relished a fresh cup of coffee served by the ever-friendly hotel staff.

After breakfast, we gathered for an engaging lecture by Katlyn on polar bears. Interrupted previously by wildlife sightings, today we had ample time to absorb fascinating facts about these majestic creatures. We learned so much about their lives and habitats, fueling our excitement to spot one in the wild from the safety of our ship or a zodiac.



Outside, the landscape showcased a palette of fifty shades of grey. The guides on the bridge mingled with guests until Hotel Manager Albert invited us to lunch. Chef Ralf and his galley team prepared a delightful meal, which we enjoyed over lively conversations about the incredible experiences we've had on this expedition.

In the afternoon, we attended Simon's lecture on the birds of Svalbard. His imitation of the kittiwake's call was a highlight,

making the session both educational and entertaining. The atmosphere around the ship was relaxed. Some guests played cards and board games, while others enjoyed the views from the deck. Our guides spotted a fin whale in the distance, prompting Chief Mate to slowly turn the ship for a better view. As luck would have it, the whale surfaced right in front of our bow, giving us an unforgettable close encounter. Hearing its powerful exhalation was a truly magical moment.



As the fin whale continued its journey, Meike and Rose began their lectures on marine pollution. Rose spoke in her native Mandarin, catering to our Chinese-speaking guests. Meike's talk featured the Northern Fulmar, a bird that soared gracefully alongside the Hondius right at the time of her lecture. Fulmars are abundant and widespread seabirds known to regularly ingest litter from the ocean. Nearly 95% of beached individuals having stomachs full of plastic, which caused their death. OSPAR (15 governments) monitors and assesses plastics in the stomachs of northern fulmars as an indicator of the marine environmental quality.

With a day rich in informative talks, we sailed smoothly into the daily recap with Expedition Leader Jerry sharing plans for the next day. Valeria provided insights into the actual sizes of the animals we had seen, and Julian shared fascinating geological facts about how Svalbard's unique landscape was formed. As we drifted off to sleep, the Hondius continued her journey through the icy waters, carrying us ever closer to our next polar adventure.



Day 8 – Monday July 1st 2024

Location: Hansbukta (am) and Gnålodden (pm)

GPS 12:00 Position: 77° 09.6' N 15° 52.9' E

Wind: ENE-3, Sea State: Calm, Weather: Overcast, Air Temp: 3°C, Sea Temp: 5°C

The week started with a wake up call in Hornsund. Hornsund is the most southerly fjord in Spitsbergen and also one of the most spectacular in terms of scenery. It was known to the whalers of the 17th century for a long time and one of them, the Englishman Johnas Poole, named it Hornsund "They brought a piece of a Deers horn aboard, therefore I called this sound Horne Sound". In the Bay Gåshamna was for a short period of time in the 17th century also a English whaling station.



We actually wanted to see one of the most spectacular places in Hornsund, the Gnålodden bird cliff, but the weather put a spanner in the works. A thick bank of fog at the exact point of the fjord where we wanted to land disrupted our plan; therefore plan B had to be used. The crew lowered all the Zodiacs

and we set off on a Zodiac cruise. We headed to explore the north-western coast of Hornsund between Gnålodden and Hansbreen in Isbjørnhamna Bay. Right at the start a humpback whales made its appearance and we could approach it for a few minutes.

On the drive to Hansbreen we enjoyed the rugged, alpine mountain world of Hornsund. In front of Hansbreen, we wended our way between small icebergs and marvelled at the 2.5 km long break-off edge. A glance at the map told us that this glacier is also on the retreat and that we had been cruising around on the glacier for a long time, at least according to the map. Isbjørnhamna Bay is also home to the Polish research station, which was established 1957/58 as part of the International Polar Year. Since the 1970s,

the station has been continuously manned by scientists in both summer and winter who conduct all kinds of Arctic-related research here.

On the way back to the Hondius, the humpback appeared again directly in front of our Zodiacs. After lunch, the fog had completely cleared and we could land at Gnålodden. Gnålodden is Norwegian and means something like the eternally humming mountain. And as soon as we land here, we realized that the mountain lives up to its name. Thousands of seabirds, mostly kittiwakes and thick-billed guillemots, breed in the cliffs. Down in the lush green tundra stands a small trapper's hut. It is one of the huts next to the hut in Hyttevika and was used to extend the trappers' territory. The Arctic fox was trapped, especially in winter, as the white fur was the most sought-after and expensive. The fox traps were spread over a large area and it was rarely possible to reach the furthest trap in one day. The trappers therefore made use of small side huts where they spent the night or, in bad weather and storms, sometimes several nights or weeks.



The hut at Gnålodden was also used for several years by one of Spitsbergen's most prominent female trappers. Wanny Wolstad was one of the first women to work as a trapper on Spitsbergen. Together with her husband, she spent 6 winters in Hornsund. Two of them were spent with her children, who were actually at an age when they should have been at school rather than hunting polar bears. Tragically, Wanny died in a traffic accident in Tromso in 1959. But her story lives on and is vividly told by Will at the hut at Gnålodden. Otherwise, our guides have secured an area in which half of us could move freely while the others went on a zodiac cruise into Burgerbukta at the same time.

Finally the day was wrapped up by Albert call for a fantastic barbecue. With no wind, small icebergs and ice



floes floating on the glassy water we fully enjoyed this great surprise and while M/V Hondius was making her way west out from Hornsund a considerable group of dancers continued the party on Deck 5 till it was time to go to sleep.

TRAK kayaking program: Hansbukta (am) and Burgerbukta (pm)

The morning was still and foggy over Burgerbukta so plans to land at Gnålodden were abandoned and both kayakers and cruisers got to experience the bay under Hansbreen adjacent to the Polish Research Station at Isbjornhamna. As we headed over in our safety Zodiac we saw a humpback whale – which was also feeding in the area when we returned. We spent the morning kayaking around the rocky shore of Fannypynnten and into Hansbukta where we encountered ice from the glacier, and the peaks of Flogtoppen revealed themselves for a brief time, time enough to take photos with the calving face of the glacier as a backdrop. We paddled so far that our journey back took nearly 50 minutes but rather than get cold, we enjoyed the scenery and sang French Canadian songs!



The plan was to do a combined kayak and landing this afternoon but by the time we arrived in West Burgerbukta, we were so taken with the scenery and almost completely windless conditions, that we decided not to rush and spend all our time on the water instead. Therefore, we spent a couple of hours in almost total silence, paddling with our own thoughts and quietly marveling at the breathtaking cliffs, cut with iron-red streams of water from the melting snow patches above. It was a sad moment when we had to climb back on the Zodiac, but as it turned out, it was our last opportunity to kayak and we could only be profoundly grateful to have left the Arctic with this stunning day as a lasting memory.

Day 9 – Tuesday July 2nd 2024

Location: Ahlstrandhalvøya (am) and Ingeborgfjellet (pm)

GPS 12:00 Position: 77° 33.8' N 15° 02.9' E

Wind: SE-4, Sea State: Rippled, Weather: Clear Sky, Air Temp: 8°C, Sea Temp: 6°C

The sweet voice of Jerry woke us up with the promise of a grand day as the sun was shining and the temperatures were almost summery as we made our way to our first landing of the day Bamsebu. The sea made itself felt this morning and its spray kissed our faces in its cold embrace as we made our way to land on the zodiacs. We took a long walk along the shoreline and witnessed piles of whale bones from the whaling days.

The cabin of Bamsebu was made famous by two Norwegian women spending a winter in the cabin, the story told in a documentary called Hearts in Ice to sensitise people about climate change. Those of us stayed on board were treated to a fascinating lecture by the bubbly Jade and her never ending enthusiasm. Before getting back on board, the bravest among us stripped down to the bare essentials and threw themselves in the frigid Arctic waters for our traditional polar plunge! Rosy bodies, screaming from the shock, jogged their way eagerly back up the beach to hug themselves in a warm comforting towel.

After a final buffet where once again we rejoiced on finger licking food, we cruised under the beating sun to Ingeborgfjellet. This spectacular place offered us a stunning landscape with rugged rocks, grassy plains and endless cliffs populated of thousands of birds. Up on the hill we could see a family of foxes, the young daring to adventure themselves in the open, exploring their environment.

Time came for the farewell of our proud Captain Arthur. As during the welcome, his words were few but full of emotion, a man proud of a job well done. We applauded our expedition Staff who relentlessly bent over backwards to accommodate us and share with us this stunning adventure. One last dinner was shared in the dining hall and the crew took the chance to receive a well deserved round of applause. Tomorrow back to reality but with bags full of sweet memories.



Day 10 – Wednesday July 3rd 2024

Disembarkation – Longyearbyen, Svalbard

GPS 8:00 Position: 78° 16.8' N 15°30.2' E

Wind: VAR-1, **Sea State:** Smooth, **Weather:** Cloudy, **Air Temp:** 9°C, **Sea Temp:** 7°C

Slowly but steadily M/V Hondius made her way into Isfjord, the biggest and more branched of all Svalbard's fjords. Unfortunately, time had come to conclude our fantastic trip around this remote Arctic archipelago. The week we had spent between the frigid waters of the Arctic and the barren although wildlife-rich tundra of Svalbard was beyond expectations; great encounters, beautiful weather, sea ice navigation, hikes, zodiac cruises but most importantly new friends with whom to share future travels and memories. Once alongside Longyearbyen's main pier, we walked down the gangway, hugged and shook hands with the Expedition Team, before starting our way home.

NORTHERN MOST POSITION: 81° 04.2' N 23° 34.1'E

DISTANCE SAILED: 1348.6 nautical miles

Goodbye and thank you from the Expedition Team



OCEANWIDE
EXPEDITIONS

Around Spitsbergen in the realm of Polar Bear and Ice

24th June – 3rd July 2024

M/V Hondius

- 1. Ny-Alesund
- 2. Fjortende Julibukta
- 3. Texas Bar (Zodiac Cruise)
- 4. Monaccobreen (Zodiac Cruise)
- 5. Seven Islands – Phippsøya
- 6. Seven Islands - Parryoya (Zodiac Cruise)
- 7. Faksevagen
- 8. Alkefjellet (Zodiac Cruise)
- 9. Wahlbergoya (Zodiac Cruise)
- 10. Gnalodden (Zodiac Cruise)
- 11. Gnalodden - Burgerbukta
- 12. Bamsebu
- 13. Ingeborgfjellet



Common /Harbour seal	<i>Phoca vitulina</i>	Seehund	Phoque commun	Gewone zeehond	B														
Minke Whale	<i>Balaenoptera acutorostrata</i>	Zwergwal	Petit rorqual	Dwergvinvis	T				X										X
Sei Whale	<i>Balaenoptera borealis</i>	Seiwal	Rorqual boréal	Noordse vinvis	V														
Blue Whale	<i>Balaenoptera musculus</i>	Blauwal	Baleine bleue	Blauwe vinvis	T														
Fin Whale	<i>Balaenoptera physalus</i>	Finnwal	Rorqual commun	Gewone vinvis	T													X	
Humpback Whale	<i>Megaptera novaeangliae</i>	Buckelwal	Baleine à bosse	Bultrug	T														X
Bowhead whale	<i>Balaena mysticetus</i>	Grönlandwal	Baleine du Groenland	Groenlandse walvis	T														
Sperm Whale	<i>Physeter macrocephalus</i>	Pottwal	Cachalot	Potvis	V														
Narwhal	<i>Monodon monoceros</i>	Narwal	Narval	Narwal	V														
Northern Bottlenose Whale	<i>Hyperoodon ampullatus</i>	Entenwal (Dögling)	Hyperoodon arctique	Butskop	V														
Orca (Killer Whale)	<i>Orcinus orca</i>	Schwertwal (Orca)	Orque	Orka	V														
White-beaked Dolphin	<i>Lagenorhynchus albirostris</i>	Weisschnauzendelphin	Lagénorhynque à rostre blanc	Witsnuitdolfijn	V														
Beluga	<i>Dephinapterus leucas</i>	Weisswal	Béluga	Beloege	B					X									
Polar Bear	<i>Ursus maritimus</i>	Eisbär	Ours blanc	ijsbeer	B			X	X			X	X						
Arctic Fox	<i>Alopex lagopus</i>	Polarfuchs	Renard polaire	Poolvos	B													X	X
Spitsbergen Reindeer	<i>Rangifer tarandus platyrhynchus</i>	Svalbard Renntier	Renne du Spitzberg	Rendier	B	X	X	X					X					X	X

Jerry Zhao – Expedition Leader



Jerry has been in love with nature and wildlife and traveling all his life. Soon after completed his degree in Business Administration at Drexel University in Philadelphia, Jerry began a career in the travel industry. Jerry first started as an international travel consultant and tour leader and led exclusive small high-end groups throughout Europe.

He then became partner in an international traveling consulting firm and focused on route planning and employee training.

As he searched for more adventure, He collected skills and knowledge while he traveled around to world. Finally, his step stopped at polar regions, and joined Oceanwide Expeditions as an expedition guide. He has since guided expeditions to the North Pole, Svalbard, Greenland, Antarctic Peninsula and South Georgia many times.

Along the way as he spends more time in polar regions and learns more, he becomes more and more interested in the polar regions. He has self-studied the geography, wildlife and history and is beginning to learn wildlife photography.

When Jerry is not in polar regions, he likes to spend his time in the forest, dessert, and plains in the Northwestern part of China. He loves nature, wildlife, and he loves to share all that he knows to everyone.

George Kennedy – Assistant Expedition Leader



George is an Australian social scientist specialising in polar geopolitics. He completed a Masters in Anthropology at Monash University in 2016 and a Graduate Diploma in Antarctic Governance at the Australian Institute for Marine and Antarctic Science in 2021. Since completing his studies, George has worked within the policy office of the Australian Antarctic Division, collaborating with other Antarctic Treaty Parties to develop sustainable tourism practices, environmental protection frameworks and fisheries management strategies.

Prior to his political studies, George worked as an ALS Paramedic in Australia, as well as a community development coordinator for conservation organisations in Latin America. George has a passion for travel, boats, and motorcycles. Over a three-year period, he rode a motorcycle from Patagonia to Mexico, exploring Latin America on two wheels. It was during his time in Patagonia that his passion for the Polar Regions developed, working closely with conservation organisations in Tierra del Fuego and visiting Antarctica for the first time in 2017. George has been guiding in Antarctica and the Arctic since 2019, sharing stories of its incredible wildlife, landscapes and, of course, its unique politics!

Chris Long –Assistant Expedition Leader



Chris grew up as a part of New Zealand's remotest family two long days hike from the nearest road at a place called Gorge River, on the South Islands West Coast, New Zealand.

His family lives as self-sufficiently as possible in a small cabin surrounded by the jungled rainforest, the rough rugged coastline, and an untouched emerald green river. Most of their food comes from a huge vegetable garden or is fished from the ocean. This wild untouched natural corner of New Zealand was Chris's home for the first 17 years of his life, until, one day, he set

off to explore what the rest of the world had to offer.

Since leaving Gorge River, Chris has set out to see, explore and experience as much of the globe as possible. This constant search for adventure has seen him travel to over 65 countries on all seven continents. Along this journey, he spent two full summer seasons living and working as a field trainer at Scott Base, a New Zealand research station in Antarctica, as well as multiple voyages to the Ross Sea, Antarctic Peninsula, East Antarctica and the Atlantic Ocean.

Chris is also no stranger to the arctic. He once sailed the notorious northwest passage across the top of Greenland, Canada, and Alaska on a small yacht and spent much of the covid pandemic living with 150 husky dogs in Tromso, northern Norway. Here he endured two long cold dark arctic winters training for long distance dog races. He also guides with Oceanwide in Svalbard each summer.

In 2022, Chris published a best-selling autobiography "*The Boy From Gorge River*" and when he is not at sea you will find him training for his commercial fixed-wing pilot's license or exploring a new corner of the globe.

Philipp Konietzko - Expedition Guide



Growing up in the countryside in northern Germany, Philipp was always eager to be out in nature. No matter if with his self-made raft, with his sailing dingy, or on the bicycle, he was always on tour and out in nature.

While he was studying electrical engineering in Berlin, he used all his semester breaks to travel by bicycle, preferably in the north. In winter 2015, he spent one entire month on Svalbard with his tent and some skis. That's when he finally caught the arctic bug and fell in love with Svalbard and the vast landscapes of the north. Since then, he

has managed to come back to Svalbard every year for at least three months.

He worked a lot as a trekking guide on multi-week hikes, but soon started to work on small and larger expedition ships as well. As a guide and wildlife monitor on scientific expeditions, he had the opportunity to go to places on Svalbard where only a few people go.

When he is at home in the north of Germany, he works as an engineer and spends his leisure time working on his farm-like house with the associated apple tree orchard, where he is also beekeeping. He also has a little workshop where he brazes bicycle frames, and of course he is riding these bikes a lot.

His fields of special interest are the history and expedition history of Svalbard and the Arctic in general. But there are so many exciting things to discover in every field, and so he is looking forward to your questions, which often inspire him to explore new topics.

Sven Joest – Expedition Guide



Sven is an arctic enthusiast from Bonn, Germany, with a passion and expertise in the area of geomorphology. During his undergraduate study in geography at the University of Bonn, it was his semester abroad in Joensuu, Finland, that sparked his interest in the wilderness of the north and the arctic.

Since then, he has pursued his enthusiasm for adventure through several trips to northern Norway, and is currently continuing his academic journey with a master's degree specialising in Peace and Conflict

Transformation, at the Arctic University of Tromsø, Norway, which is the most northern university in the world. From here he is able to pursue his passion for the outdoors and the cold by skiing, hiking, and exploring these vast and remote environments.

As an enthusiastic hobby photographer, and an increasingly keen birder since volunteering at a bird nature reserve on the island of Fehmarn, you'll most likely find him out on deck taking snaps of the landscapes and the wildlife in his spare time during the voyage.

Excited to continue expanding his knowledge and experience in all aspects of the polar expanses, he welcomes you to chat at any point during the adventure about any questions you may have or your own polar interests and stories.

William Kennedy – Expedition Guide



William was brought up in the west coast of France in an Irish household. From a very young age he travelled to visit relatives on the emerald isle and the bug for discovering other cultures and lifestyles caught him.

Curiosity brought him all over Europe, working as a farmer in Iceland, building cabins in the Pyrenees, bartending in Scotland, carpentering in Norway and becoming a kitchen chef in Sweden. While living yet another adventure on the remote archipelago of Svalbard, he discovered the polar world and its famous adventurers.

He since then has been sailing the Arctic and Antarctic waters, blending his passion for history, storytelling, and travel by shining the light on unsung polar heroes, events and adventures.

When not on the ships he lives in Malmö, Sweden where he found a place to call home. Hiking and sailing are his main past times along with playing rugby and ice hockey, depending on the season.

Joyce Mulder – Expedition Guide



Joyce is a passionate guide with an interest for exploring and understanding the marine life in polar regions. Her journey began in 2018 as a whale-watching guide in the Azores, where she developed a deep appreciation for marine life. After this, she studied the Arctic snowfall variability at the Royal Netherlands Meteorological Institute, laying the foundation for her future career in Polar research.

Continuing her academic pursuits, Joyce studied Arctic biology at the University Centre in Svalbard in 2019, acquiring insights into the valuable ecosystems of the far north. With a bachelor's degree in Coastal and Marine Management, she followed a master's program in the same field in Ísafjörður, Iceland, making it her home from 2021 to 2023.

Her academic journey also brought her to the Norwegian town of Tromsø, where she studied fish migrations, further honing her expertise in marine biology. For her master thesis, she joined a research vessel in Greenland, where she studied the benthic communities by mapping the seabed in previously unexplored regions in both 2022 and 2023.

Now, Joyce brings her knowledge and interest for marine wildlife to Oceanwide Expeditions as an expedition guide. Through her role, she shares her expertise and fosters a deeper appreciation for the polar regions.

Jade Heister – Expedition Guide



Jade is a science communicator from the Netherlands. She is currently working as a tv editor, where she writes for different tv programs for a family audience on public channels. She is mostly involved in programs that show earth's biodiversity, as she strives to make all (Dutch) children and adults love and understand nature.

Jade is a nature lover herself. She loves to hike, ski and explore on horseback. She has always been fascinated with the polar regions, and she feels right at home in cold climates. Back home in the Netherlands, she enjoys to practice

improvised theatre and taking up new DIY projects such as woodworking. Which she admits to not always finish, caught up with the new creative idea already.

She has a degree in molecular life sciences, with a master in science communication and education. She will always geek out on any biological or chemical phenomenon, with a special interest in genetics and evolution. She has been a primary school science teacher for two years and she has performed in a scientific theatre show that has aired for two seasons all across the Netherlands.

Her love for the ocean and all marine life – big and very very small – continued to grow. This resulted in a summer spend assisting in multiple citizen science and outreach ocean conservation programs in South Africa. In addition she has been a whale watching guide in Plettenberg Bay, South Africa, before she joined Oceanwide as an expedition guide.

Meike Sjoer - Expedition Guide



Meike Sjoer, a dedicated birder, nature enthusiast, and polar expedition guide, has spent her life immersed in the beauty of the natural world. Growing up in the heart of the Dutch forest, Meike developed a profound love for nature from a young age, a passion that would shape her extraordinary journey as a birder and wildlife explorer. She holds a Master of Arts from the University of Utrecht. During her studies Meike discovered a natural inclination towards sharing her wildlife experiences with others.

For the past 26 years, she has devoted her talents as a television director for the Dutch National Television. In this role, she dedicated herself to directing programs that involved stories of nature, wildlife, and environmental conservation. Meike's talent for filming and editing led her to directing the renowned Dutch National Wildlife television program *Vroege Vogels* for the past 15 years. Beyond her television work, Meike is a certified nature guide for the Dutch Institute for Nature and Education. When she is not sailing across polar waters, she takes great pleasure in guiding birding and wildlife tours within the second largest National Park of the Netherlands.

Additionally, driven by her deep concern for the well-being of our planet, Meike was part of the Sea Shepherd media team for 5 years and played a role in raising awareness about the urgent need to protect marine life and preserve delicate ecosystems.

Yet, it is in the polar regions of Antarctica and the Arctic that Meike finds her greatest fulfilment. Here, surrounded by icy vastness and majestic wildlife, she is happiest creating outdoor experiences that challenge individuals to connect with their inner selves and develop a profound respect for the planet we call home. Meike is thrilled to be your guide on this trip and looking forward to sharing her passion and knowledge for wildlife with you.

Gabi Kolodko - Expedition Guide



Having been exposed to the pristine wilderness of Alaska, Canada, and Lapland before turning ten, she developed a deep-rooted passion for cold climates and the great outdoors. She has dedicated every summer to sailing, a journey highlighted in 2012 when Gabi crossed the Baltic Sea from Poland to Scandinavia and back aboard the Zawisza Czarny, a historic 42-meter vessel originally built in 1952.

Her draw towards art, culture and history has led her to explore and focus on the rich tapestry of Antarctica's past and present.

Gabi's enthusiasm for the cold extends beyond mere travel; she is a dedicated practitioner of the Wim Hof method, engaging in ice baths, walrusing, and cryotherapy throughout the year. A significant encounter in 1993 with a herd of Musk Oxen at Herschel Island off the Canadian Arctic coast solidified her fondness for this majestic Arctic animal. In Antarctica, the jury is still out (but Emperor chicks are top on the list).

As an alumna of the Nature Outdoors Leadership School, she is a certified Wilderness First Responder and an esteemed member of the Polar Tourism Guide Association.

Her journey, marked by a profound connection to the Arctic wilderness and a lifelong pursuit of adventure, positions her as a passionate advocate for the natural world and its preservation. Through this lens, she aims to share the beauty and challenges of the polar regions with others, fostering a deeper appreciation for these extraordinary landscapes.

Simon Davies - Expedition Guide



Simon is a life-long birder and naturalist and after achieving a master's degree in Ecology focusing on seabirds, he has undertaken a broad range of wildlife related contracts around the world.

His career has predominantly been focused on birds (with the only notable 'blip' coming during a year researching Meerkats in South Africa) during which his focus has ranged from research to conservation to guiding and much in between. Most recently he has been working in Scotland and Sweden studying both breeding birds and migratory species through

ringing/banding, a wide range of surveys and other tracking methods.

He is an experienced guide, having led bird and wildlife tours in Australia and many tours, walks and talks in his native UK, enthusiastic about sharing the wide range of seabirds in the colonies he loves.

Among the recent studies he has participated in has included putting geolocators on Black Guillemots in Scotland to find out where they are foraging, fixing satellite transmitters on migratory wading birds in Australia to track their movements as they move up and down the East Asia flyway and affixing geolocators on Great Reed Warblers in Sweden to work out migratory routes.

A large part of his recent work has also been training others in bird ringing/banding and surveying, hopefully inspiring others to a career in research or conservation.

Most of his spare time is also spent birding and wildlife watching and he has undertaken many trips around the world including Australia, Europe, India, Venezuela and the USA, always chasing the next bird!

Marco Rosso - Camping Guide



Marco was born in the country of Pasta & Pizza. He graduated in Mechanical Engineering at the University of Padua, his native city in Italy, and subsequently achieved a Master's degree in "Turbomachinery and Fluid Dynamics" at the Von Karman Institute in Brussels, Belgium.

After a few years working in the industry, he decided to embark himself on a quest. For two years he carried his tent and camping equipment; backpacking from the steamy jungle of Mexico and Central America, through the snowy peaks of the Peruvian Andes and the dry highlands of Bolivia. Rolling all the way down to the tip of South America.

The raw and powerful beauty of Patagonia convinced him to swap Mother Nature wonders for mankind artifacts. Fascinated by applied geophysics, he therefore decided to use his deep and broad knowledge in thermodynamics and fluid mechanics to satisfy his innate curiosity, thus self-teaching Earth Science natural processes such as geological volcanism, sea ice and glaciers formation and dynamics, wind patterns and oceanic currents.

During the last decade he has been living in Puerto Natales, Chile; leading groups as a trekking guide and tour leaders in some of the most beautiful and rugged trails of Patagonia, such as Torres del Paine, Fitz Roy and Cerro Torre circuits as well as the southernmost trekking in the world, Dientes de Navarino.

One step further from Patagonia lies the Antarctic peninsula, where he is willing to share with you an incredible camping experience in this truly pristine and untouched environment.

Rose Li Hong - Expedition Guide



Originally from China, Rose Li Graduated from Wuhan college with a major in Interior Design. She has worked on well-known international cruise ships since 2014 as an expedition guide and in Asia as a VIP services shift leader and Head cruise ambassador on a Mediterranean cruise line.

She has worked in the polar regions since 2017, as expedition guide, Zodiac driver, Chinese interpreter and guest services manager.

She has many talents such as dancing, drawing, skiing, hosting, and loves creating new activities. Her two academic passions are history and geology.

During her spare time, she has continued to develop her passion for traveling, and has visited more than 40 countries and looks forward to visiting many others in the near future.

Katlyn Taylor – Expedition Guide



Katlyn is an Expedition Guide originally from the Pacific Northwest of the United States. She grew up learning tidepool animals on the Oregon Coast.

She comes from a background as a captain and guide on whale watching boats all over the US. She has worked in both the North Atlantic and North Pacific for over 9 years. In 2023 she shifted her career to expedition guiding and has worked in Antarctica and Alaska. She has guided trips in the Bering Sea, Aleutian Islands and Southeast Alaska throughout the past summer.

Her passions are facilitating experiences with wildlife, educating people about the marine life they encounter, and inspiring conservation actions among her guests. She loves the community that can be built around citizen science projects in these remote places in the world. Staying curious about the natural world and spending time outside looking for wildlife are two of her favorite things to do each trip.

She received bachelors' degrees from Oregon State University in Marine Biology and International Studies. She's a Junior Fellow with the Safina Center of Stonybrook University. Her biggest passion and love are marine mammals, especially whales. She co-hosts a show called The Whalenerd's Podcast, a science communication project about whales and other ocean related topics.

Julian Robinson – Expedition Guide



Originally from the SE of England, Julian has lived in Aberdeen, Scotland, since 2000.

He is a geologist and since studying geology for a BSc at Durham University and researching Structural geology at for a PhD at Cardiff University, Julian went on to have a successful career in oil and gas exploration and development. He worked on a variety of projects with exposure to many different geological settings across the world. At his current stage of life, he saw a great opportunity to combine geology with his lifelong passion for the outdoors and

began guiding with Oceanwide in 2024.

He is at home in the mountains of Scotland and enjoys several pursuits such as hiking, orienteering, climbing, biking and ski touring, although it is paragliding that he is most passionate about: he has visited many parts of the world seeking out some of the most interesting places to fly such as the Karakoram of Pakistan. It is, however, the rare crisp days soaring above the Scottish Highlands that he enjoys more than anywhere else. He also flies competitions and has represented his country several times in World and European championships.

Valeria Sainz Herrera- Expedition Guide



Valeria Sainz Herrera is an Argentinian photographer with almost seven years of business background. She grew up in Buenos Aires, which is the capital of Argentina, a beautiful place with a lot of culture and interesting things to do. Throughout the years she founds that one of her biggest passions is to travel. So, travelling as much as she could, she found in photography a profession that defines her in so many ways and gives her the freedom to know and live in different locations around the world.

Nowadays she spends her life between Argentina and Brazil; working during the summer season as a Guide for Oceanwide Expeditions and during the rest of the year you could find her in a beautiful island named Ilhabela in Brazil, working in the tourism area or in Ushuaia (Argentina) as a photographer at the Ski Center.

Living in different countries allows her to learn and practice many activities that she enjoys, especially in natural environments, like rock climbing and skiing in the Argentinian Patagonian Andes or trekking in the central region of Argentina and, in Brazil, she learned other kinds of sports like diving, kayaking and sailing.

The Antarctic and The Arctic were always a dream for her, and now are part of her life.

Fran Pothecary – Expedition Guide



Though originally from the flatlands of east England, Fran has lived in the Highlands of Scotland for the past 35 years where she started her career in outdoor guiding and instruction. She loves the wild and remote places of the world and is happiest walking, kayaking, climbing, biking and skiing in these places. Her most memorable sea kayak expedition was spending three months journeying up the Inside Passage from Vancouver to Juneau with a team of able-bodied and disabled paddlers.

She has a Diploma in Outdoor Education and a M.Sc. in Managing Sustainable Mountain Development. In 2013 after 10 years working in recreation management for the Cairngorms National Park, she joined the British Antarctic Survey (BAS) and spent several seasons as a Field Guide, including overwintering at Rothera Research Station. Further contracts included a year as Station Leader at King Edward Point on South Georgia where gentoo penguins, elephant seals, fur seals and leopard seals were her fellow residents on the island all year – as well, of course, her 8 human companions. Post-Covid and another summer with penguins on Signy in the South Orkneys, she came back to the ships and branched out into the Arctic with trips to Svalbard, Greenland and Iceland.

Working for Oceanwide has brought her in contact with amazing people many of whom have become friends. She loves to see the expressions on people's faces when they first encounter whales and penguins in their own environment – from the fragile hull of a sea kayak! And hearing the buzz about it in the bar afterwards. She splits her time between guiding on (and off) ships, working for BAS and watching Sergio Leone westerns.

Ting - Expedition Guide/Translator



Ting Gu was born and raised in Shanghai, China. She had a strong foundation in the field of finance. After graduating from university with a degree in finance, she gained two years of valuable practical experience in the financial industry. However, her heart yearned for a future that was more expansive and unpredictable. Fueled by this desire, she embarked on a globe trotting adventure, embracing the unknown with open arms. With each journey, she discovered a profound sense of fulfillment and purpose in her role as a tour leader. She is also an experienced global tour leader and interpreter, guiding clients across continents and oceans, allowing them to

immerse themselves in diverse cultural landscapes.

She is trilingual, fluent in Chinese, English, and Spanish. Armed with academic achievements, linguistic proficiency, and cross-cultural insights, she embarked on a fulfilling career as an interpreter. In her profession, she leads diverse groups of clients from various cultural backgrounds, ensuring they have unique and memorable experiences. Outside of work, she is an avid enthusiast of skiing and scuba diving, embracing extreme sports and constantly progressing on her dream of learning to fly a plane.

She possesses a deep passion for ecology and sustainable tourism. Her commitment to the environment and conservation is evident in every aspect of her work and personal life. Beyond her role as a tour leader, she actively engages in environmental initiatives and participates in conservation projects. Whether it's volunteering for beach clean-ups, supporting kids in African tribes, or advocating for eco-friendly policies, she dedicates her time and efforts to protect the planet's delicate ecosystems. She demonstrates that small actions can collectively make a significant impact on preserving the planet for future generations.



Dr Rebecca Boys - Doctor

Rebecca is a British doctor currently working in the Highlands of Scotland. She undertakes a mixture of work in Intensive Care and Emergency Medicine for the UK National Health Service, alongside her work as an expedition doctor.

On her days off, Rebecca greatly enjoys adventuring in the mountains of the Highlands of Scotland where she lives.

Occasionally she has been known to be tempted for a wild swim in the local lochs or the sea.

Being an aspiring mountaineer and climber, Rebecca is currently pursuing a diploma in mountain medicine; further enhancing her skills and knowledge in providing medical care in remote and high-altitude settings. Her love for the outdoors is complemented by her enthusiasm for wildlife photography and trying to capture the beauty of the natural world with each expedition.

Recently Rebecca worked as a doctor for British Antarctic Survey. During this time, she completed a summer season in South Georgia which is now one of her favourite places in the world. Just one memorable highlight was St Andrews Bay with its breath-taking glacial mountain landscape and enormous colony of half a million King Penguins. Her year at the British research station of Rothera further increased her love for exploring the polar regions. Experiencing the magic of an Antarctic winter was something she will never forget.

Rebecca eagerly anticipates volunteering as the ship's doctor for Oceanwide in the Arctic, drawing from her experience aboard the Royal Research Ship Sir David Attenborough. She looks forward to ensuring the health, safety, and adventurous spirit of all travellers to facilitate their own enjoyment of the wonders of the polar regions.



Around Spitsbergen, In the realm of Polar Bear & Ice

Date: 24/06/2024

Day: 1: Longyearbyen - Embarkation

Welcome aboard! Please make yourselves at home in your cabins and check you have received all your luggage! Tea/coffee is available in the bar 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 will go to **MUSTER STATION B** which is the **Observation Lounge on Deck 5**.

18:30+/- We would like to invite you to **Captains Cocktails** in the **Observation Lounge on Deck 5**. The Hotel Manager and Expedition Leader will do a welcome briefing, to orientate you to life on board and explain the plan for the forthcoming days and you will meet your Expedition Team.

19:30 Buffet dinner in the Restaurant on Deck 4.

20:30+/- The Expedition Team invites you to **Deck 3** the zodiac loading area to collect your Muck boots. You will be called by deck. Please bring your thick socks for the perfect fit and Please listen for the announcements.

Make sure that all your belongings are put away safely and that doors and drawers in your cabin are tightly closed. Walk slowly on the ship, always use one hand for yourself and one for the ship and beware of your fingers because of doors slamming!



DAILY PROGRAM

Around Spitsbergen, In the realm of Polar Bear & Ice

Date: 25/06/2024

Day 2: Ny-Ålesund and Fjortende Julibukta

06:45 Wake-up call.

07:00-08:00 Buffet breakfast will be served in the Dining Room on Deck 4.

08:00+/- Please join us for AECO, Bear safety, and Zodiac safety briefing, in the **Observation Lounge on Deck 5**. Attendance to this is **MANDATORY**.

For our shuttle to the ship everyone must be wearing waterproof clothing, zodiac lifejacket and muck boots.

10:00+/- We invite the **Blue** group to the zodiac boarding area on deck three for a zodiac landing at Ny-Ålesund. A map will be available at reception for you to take a photo of for orientation.

10:15+/- We invite the **Red** group to the zodiac boarding area on deck three for a zodiac landing at Ny-Ålesund. A map will be available at reception for you to take a photo of for orientation.

During our landing in Ny-Ålesund, you can roam freely on the roads within town. You are welcome to visit the shop and museum, but please remove your boots when visiting the shop. Please do not enter any other buildings without permission. Public toilets are available at the harbour office near the dock. Please turn off your Wi-fi and Bluetooth on your mobile phone so as not to interfere with scientific research equipment.

10:45 We invite the **Blue** Group to meet the Expedition Team at Amundsen's Bust for a 20 minute talk with a look at Amundsen's Mast.

11:15 We invite the **Red** Group to meet the Expedition Team at Amundsen's Bust for a 20 minute talk with a look at Amundsen's Mast.

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

15:15 We invite the **Red** Group to the zodiac boarding area on deck 3 for a landing at Fjortende Julibukta.

15:30 We invite the **Blue** Group to the zodiac boarding area on deck 3 for a Zodiac Cruise in Fjortende Julibukta.

15:45 Can the kayakers please be ready at the front sell door on deck three.

18:45 Please join the Expedition Team in the Bar for recap.

19:30 Plated dinner will be served in the Dining Room.



DAILY PROGRAM

Around Spitsbergen, In the realm of Polar Bear & Ice

Date: 26/06/2024

Day 3: Texas Bar and Monaccobreen Glacier

- 06:45 Wake-up call.
- 07:00-08:00 Buffet breakfast will be served in the Dining Room on Deck 4.
- 08:15+/- Can the kayakers please be ready at the front shell door on deck three for kayaking at Texas Bar.
- 08:30+/- We invite the long hikers to the zodiac boarding area on deck 3 for a long hike at Texas Bar.
- 08:50+/- We invite the medium hikers to the zodiac boarding area on deck 3 for a medium hike at Texas Bar.
- 09:00+/- We invite the short hikers to the zodiac boarding area on deck 3 for a short hike at Texas Bar.
- 12:30-13:30 Buffet lunch will be served in the Dining Room on Deck 4.
- 14:30+/- We invite the **Blue** Group to the zodiac boarding area on deck 3 for a zodiac cruise at Monaccobreen.
- 14:45+/- We invite the **Red** Group to the zodiac boarding area on deck 3 for a Zodiac Cruise at Monaccobreen.
- 18:15 Please join the Expedition Team in the Bar for daily recap.
- 19:00 Plated dinner will be served in the Dining Room.



DAILY PROGRAM

Around Spitsbergen, In the realm of Polar Bear & Ice

Date: 27/06/2024

Day 4: The Seven Islands, Phippsøya & Parryoya Island

07:15 Wake-up call.

07:30-08:30 Buffet breakfast will be served in the Dining Room on Deck 4.

09:00+/- We invite the **Red** Group to the zodiac boarding area on deck 3 for a Landing at Phippsøya.

09:15+/- We invite the **Blue** Group to the zodiac boarding area on deck 3 for a zodiac cruise at Phippsøya.

During the landing we will offer guided hikes for those who would like to explore more of Phippsøya. Halfway through our morning activities the Red and Blue groups will swap, so everyone will get to land and Zodiac Cruise.

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

15:00+/- We invite the **Blue** Group to the zodiac boarding area on deck 3 for a zodiac cruise at Parryoya.

15:15+/- We invite the **Red** Group to the zodiac boarding area on deck 3 for a Zodiac Cruise at Parryoya.

18:15 Please join the Expedition Team in the Bar for daily recap.

19:00 Plated dinner will be served in the Dining Room.



Around Spitsbergen, In the realm of Polar Bear & Ice

Date: 28/06/2024

Day 5: Exploring the sea ice

During the day we plan to be exploring the sea ice to the north of Svalbard in search of wildlife. We encourage you to be on the outside decks, the bridge, and the bow to enjoy this spectacle. Listen for announcements regarding and wildlife spotting's. If we have wildlife close by the announcements will only be made inside the ship to avoid disturbing the wildlife.

- 07:45 Wake-up call.
- 08:00-09:00 Buffet breakfast will be served in the Dining Room on Deck 4.
- 11:00 We would like to invite you to the observation lounge for a lecture by Katlyn about Polar Bears
- 12:00-13:00 Buffet lunch will be served in the Dining Room on Deck 4.
- 14:00 We would like to invite you to the observation lounge for Marco's lecture titled "Introduction to sea ice formation and dynamics"
- 16:15 Will invites you to the Lecture Room for a lecture exploring the epic history of Arctic expeditions in the late 19th century.
- 16:15 Rose invites you to the Observation Lounge for a lecture in Mandarin exploring the epic history of Arctic expeditions in the late 19th century.
- 18:15 Please join the Expedition Team in the Bar for recap.
- 19:00 Plated dinner will be served in the Dining Room.



DAILY PROGRAM

Around Spitsbergen, In the realm of Polar Bear & Ice

Date: 29/06/2024

Day 6: Faksevågen, Alkefjellet and Wahlbergøya

- 06:45 Wake-up call.
- 07:00-08:00 Buffet breakfast will be served in the Dining Room on Deck 4.
- 08:00+/- We invite the Trak kayakers to the zodiac boarding area on deck 3.
- 08:15+/- We invite the Long Hikers to the zodiac boarding area on deck 3 for a long hike at Faksevågen
- 08:30+/- We invite the **Red** Group to the zodiac boarding area on deck 3 for a Perimeter Landing at Faksevågen
- 08:45 Joyce invites the **Blue** Group to the Observation Lounge for her lecture, Svalbard Below, Exploring the Deep Benthic Communities.
- 09:45+/- We invite the **Blue** Group to the zodiac boarding area on deck 3 for a Perimeter Landing at Faksevågen
- 10:30 Joyce invites the **Red** Group to the Observation Lounge for her lecture, Svalbard Below, Exploring the Deep Benthic Communities
- 12:00-13:00 Buffet lunch will be served in the Dining Room on Deck 4.
- 13:30+/- We invite the **Red** Group to the zodiac boarding area on deck 3 for a zodiac cruise at Alkefjellet
- 13:45+/- We invite the **Blue** Group to the zodiac boarding area on deck 3 for a zodiac cruise at Alkefjellet
- 17:15 The Expedition Team invites you to the Lounge for our daily recap.
- 18:00-19:00 Buffet dinner will be served in the Dining Room on Deck 4.
- 19:30+/- We invite the **Blue** Group to the zodiac boarding area on deck 3 for a landing to visit walrus at Wahlbergøya
- 20:30+/- We invite the **Red** Group to the zodiac boarding area on deck 3 for a landing to visit walrus at Wahlbergøya



Around Spitsbergen, In the realm of Polar Bear & Ice

Date: 30/06/2024

Day 7: Exploring the Olgastretet and Storfjordbanken

- 08:15 Wake-up call.
- 08:30-09:30 Buffet breakfast will be served in the Dining Room on Deck 4.
- 11:00 Katlyn would like to invite you to the Observation Lounge for her lecture about Polar Bears, Kings of the Arctics
- 12:30-13:30 Buffet lunch will be served in the Dining Room on Deck 4.
- 14:30 Simon would like to invite you to the Observation Lounge for his lecture exploring the Seabirds of Svalbard.
- 16:30 Meike invites you to the Observation Lounge for a lecture on Northern Fulmars and their role as Indicators of Marine Pollution.
- 16:30 Rose invites you to the Lecture Room for a lecture in Mandarin on Marine pollution and Arctic research.
- 18:15 Please join the Expedition Team in the Bar for our daily recap.
- 19:00 Plated dinner will be served in the Dining Room.



DAILY PROGRAM

Around Spitsbergen, In the realm of Polar Bear & Ice

Date: 01/07/2024

Day 8: Gnålodden and Burgerbukta

07:15 Wake-up call.

07:30-08:30 Buffet breakfast will be served in the Dining Room on Deck 4.

09:00+/- We invite the **Red** Group to the Zodiac boarding area on Deck 3 for a landing at Gnålodden.

09:15+/- We invite the **Blue** Group to the Zodiac boarding area on Deck 3 for a zodiac cruise around Gnålodden.

Please note that the groups will change around halfway through the morning so all passengers will get to do both activities.

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

14:45+/- We invite the **Blue** Group to the Zodiac boarding area on Deck 3 for a zodiac cruise at Burgerbukta.

15:00+/- We invite the **Red** Group to Zodiac boarding area on Deck 3 for a zodiac cruise at Burgerbukta.

18:15 Please join the Expedition Team in the Bar for recap.

19:00 BBQ dinner will be served on the back of Deck 5. Dress warm!



Around Spitsbergen, In the realm of Polar Bear & Ice

Date: 02/07/2024

Day 9: Bamsebu and Ingeborgfjellet

- 06:45 Wake-up call.
- 07:00-08:00 Buffet breakfast will be served in the Dining Room on Deck 4.
- 08:30+/- We invite the **Red** Group to the Zodiac boarding area on Deck 3 for a landing at Bamsebu
- 09:00 Jade invites the **Blue** Group you to the Lecture Room for her lecture, 4.5 billion years in 45 minutes – a history of life on Svalbard
- 10:15+/- We invite the **Blue** Group to the Zodiac boarding area on Deck 3 for a landing at Bamsebu
- 10:45 Jade invites the **Red** Group you to the Lecture Room for her lecture, 4.5 billion years in 45 minutes – a history of life on Svalbard
- During our landing we will be doing our polar plunge at Bamsebu. Please wear your swimsuit under your normal waterproof expedition clothing. We will supply towels so there is no need to bring your towel from your cabin.*
- 12:30-13:30 Buffet lunch will be served in the Dining Room on Deck 4.
- 15:00+/- We invite the **Blue** Group to the Zodiac boarding area on Deck 3 for a landing at Ingeborgfjellet
- 16:15+/- We invite the **Red** Group to Zodiac boarding area on Deck 3 for a landing at Ingeborgfjellet
- 18:30 Please join the Expedition Team and the captain in the bar for Captains farewell cocktail.
- 19:00 Farewell plated dinner will be served in the dining room on deck 4
- 20:30 We will be collecting your muck boots at the shell doors on deck 3



Around Spitsbergen, In the realm of Polar Bear & Ice

Date: 03/07/2024

Day 10: Longyearbyen

07:15 Wake-up call.
Please ensure your luggage is outside your room before going to breakfast.

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

PLEASE NOTE:

Upon arrival in Longyearbyen, we will provide complimentary busses to town in the morning at 0900. We will also offer several shuttles from town to the airport throughout the day. Details can be found below, depending on your flight. All luggage must be left outside your cabins by 7:30am and we will move it to the pier.

- For all those going directly to the Funken Hotel please use **Blue** luggage tag. After disembarkation, please place your luggage in the bus with you to the hotel.
- For all those with **flights SK4425** please use **Yellow** luggage tag. After disembarkation, please place your luggage in the luggage truck on the pier, and board our busses to town. Your airport shuttle from town will be at 12:30
- For all those with **flights SK4491** please use **Orange** luggage tag. After disembarkation, please place your luggage in the luggage truck on the pier, and board our busses to town. Your airport shuttle from town will be at 14:30
- For all those with **flights DY391** please use **Pink** luggage tag. After disembarkation, please place your luggage in the luggage truck on the pier, and board our busses to town. Your airport shuttle from town will be at 17:45

08:30+/- We invite all guests to disembark. Please identify your luggage on the pier and ensure it is placed in the right transport.

From all the Expedition Team and Crew on board the MV Hondius, we wish you safe onward travel, and thank you for sharing this incredible voyage with us. We look forward to sailing with you again in the future.