



# OCEANWIDE

EXPEDITIONS

## Around Spitsbergen in the realm of Polar Bear and Ice 12<sup>th</sup> July – 21<sup>st</sup> 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 Artur Iakovlev  
and his international crew**

Staff Captain:	<b>Matei Mocanu</b>	Romania
Chief Officer:	<b>Sven Holzhausen</b>	Germany
2nd Officer:	<b>Nino Cizmic</b>	Croatian
3rd Officer:	<b>Giovanni Simone</b>	Philippines
Chief Engineer:	<b>Guntis Dizbite</b>	Estonia
Hotel Manager:	<b>Albert Don</b>	The Netherlands
Assist. Hotel Manager:	<b>Karolina Guziejko</b>	Poland
Head Chef:	<b>Gauraw Bawa</b>	United Kingdom
Ships Doctor:	<b>Rebecca Boys</b>	United Kingdom
Expedition Leader:	<b>Marcel Paul</b>	The Netherlands
Assist. Expedition Leader:	<b>Jerry Bitao Zhao</b>	China
Assist. Expedition Leader:	<b>Hazel Pittwood</b>	United Kingdom
Expedition Guide:	<b>Katlyn Taylor</b>	United States
Expedition Guide:	<b>Joshua Peck</b>	Falkland Islands
Expedition Guide:	<b>William Kennedy</b>	France
Expedition Guide:	<b>Valeria Sainz Herrera</b>	Argentina
Expedition Guide:	<b>Jens Biderup</b>	Denmark
Expedition Guide:	<b>Grant Hewett</b>	South Africa
Expedition Guide:	<b>Fran Housden</b>	South Africa
Expedition Guide:	<b>Aitana Forcén-Vázquez</b>	Spain
Expedition Guide:	<b>Fran Pothecary</b>	Scotland
Expedition Guide:	<b>Ting Gu</b>	China
Expedition Guide:	<b>Renno Hokwerda</b>	The Netherlands
Expedition Guide:	<b>Daan Vreugdenhil</b>	The Netherlands
Translator:	<b>Li Ye</b>	China
Translator:	<b>Zoy Li</b>	China

## **Day 1 – Friday 12<sup>th</sup> July 2024**

### **Embarkation – Longyearbyen, Svalbard**

GPS position at 16:00: 78°14.6'N 015°32.5'E

Wind: SE7-8, Sea State: Slight, Weather: Overcast, Air Temp: 5°C, Sea Temp: 8°C

Today we boarded our good ship Hondius at the Coal Pier just out of town. The gloomy and damp weather did not affect our spirits and it was with great sense of anticipation that we all arrived in Longyearbyen for our trip of a lifetime around the Svalbard Archipelago on Hondius. Many of us had arrived earlier today from Oslo, but some of us had already been spending some time in the picturesque town of Longyearbyen. The largest of the settlements on the island of Spitsbergen, it is home to c.2000 people (and a few reindeer!) in the summer months and has all the modern amenities and attractions one could wish for.



With Hondius docked nearby to town, it was time in the mid-afternoon to be welcomed aboard by the staff and crew. We settled into our cabins for the journey and got a quick moment to explore the ship and were soon called up to the lounge for a mandatory safety briefing.

Following on from our safety drill and a trip to view the lifeboats, we were again invited to the lounge for cocktails and tasty canapes and a welcome from Captain Artur who will be our navigator around the rocky shores of Spitsbergen. Then Hotel Manager Albert gave us some tips about ship life and lastly, we met the Expedition team, led by Marcel. Then it was time for our first taste of Hondius cuisine - a buffet of salads, baked fish and roast meat with plenty of fruit and a huge platter of cheeses to finish off. As many of us had been travelling in today from far and wide, it was time after dinner to rest our heads and prepare for all the adventures ahead in the realm of polar bears and ice!

## **Day 2 – Saturday 13<sup>th</sup> July 2024**

### **Location: Krossfjorden (am) and Ny Alesund (pm)**

GPS position at 12:00: 79°02.7'N 011°30.5' E

Wind: NNW-3, Sea State: Rippled, Weather: Foggy, overcast, Air Temp: 6°C, Sea Temp: 6°C

We got our first Expedition Leader Wake Up Call, warmly announcing that a new day had dawned full of adventures ahead of us. According to the planning we would sail into Krossfjorden, which the captain did, but little was to be seen. Not even a single ray of sunshine was able to break through the clouds, so no signs of Krossfjorden. The clouds hung low above the water and the mountains, so we enjoyed the warmth of the ship a little longer. On board we got the last mandatory briefing, picked a pair of Muck Boots, leaving us ready to set off!

Around noon we got out to the unique science village of Ny-Alesund, where the scientists from eight countries take measurements of almost anything you can measure in the Arctic. It was our first experience with Zodiacs! We walked freely through the quiet streets in between the historic houses, paying a visit to the shop, museum, waffle stand and, for those with Chinese roots, a selfie with the Chinese Polar Institute, Yellow River. Some of us were lucky enough to see a cheeky Arctic Fox cross the streets and a Harbour Seal check out the Zodiacs, while the Arctic terns screamed goodbye when we were leaving.



Some of us took a guided tour to learn more about Roald Amundsen, the famous Norwegian polar explorer who started his life on skis, then changed to boats, then to planes and at last an airship. The “mast”, to which his airship “Norge was attached, still stands at Ny Alesund and is reminiscent of this great piece of history. Much to our pleasure, the drizzle cleared and was replaced by a few watery rays of sunshine – but only for a while. The Arctic, in the end, is mostly white: if not because of the ice, it’s because of the clouds.



Impressed with our first bit of wilderness, we steamed back out of Kongsfjorden, while the kind crew was serving some neat dishes to full our empty stomachs. Nothing was planned for the evening, but the captain steered the ship into the great wide open towards the whaling grounds. Fingers crossed if we're able to see any! It took a while, but a minute before we called it a day, perseverance was rewarded by a glimpse of a whale fin. Two minke whales were happily feeding on probably on a meal of plankton, allowing us to enjoy the sight of their backs breaking the surface every so many minutes. After we lost track of them, the bridge closed, and the captain waved the last of us to a good night rest. Lots of impressions to process!

### **Day 3 – Sunday 14<sup>th</sup> July 2024**

Location: **Gravneset/Waggonwaybreen (am)** and **Smeerenburg (pm)**

GPS position at 12:00: 79°33.5'N 012°03.9.8'E

Wind: SSW-2, Sea State: Rippled, Weather: Overcast, Air Temp: 7°C, Sea Temp: 7°C

Calm, glassy water greeted us as we entered Magdalenefjorden, heading for our first true expedition day. We had a clear view of Gravneset to the south as we arrived in the fjord. After breakfast, the blue group was called to land at Gravneset, where the conditions were perfect. We explored an old gravesite of early British whalers, and Will shared stories of their hard lives. We also spotted some fantastic birds like Arctic skuas, snow buntings, and Arctic terns, along with Arctic poppies and other plants.



Meanwhile, the red group went on an adventurous Zodiac cruise deeper into the fjord to Waggonwaybreen Glacier. They saw stunning icebergs, glaciers – some even witnessed a large calving of the glacier front - and harbor seals. After this brilliant cruise, the Zodiacs returned to the shore, and the groups switched activities. Around 11:30 am, the brave polar plungers took an icy dip in the frigid waters, which made everyone hungry for a delicious lunch back on board.



After lunch, the red group headed out for a Zodiac cruise to the two islands of Danskoya and Amsterdamoya. At Danskoya, they cruised past the historical site of Swedish engineer Saloman Andree's basecamp for his attempted North Pole Expedition. The expedition was a failed one and the lives of the three men ended on Kvitoya (White Island) way to the east. The Zodiac cruise then meandered towards a haul out of Walrus at Smeerenburg on Amsterdamoya. On the way there we managed to watch flocks of Arctic Terns fishing in the strong currents. At the haul out we then spent a long time just watching these magnificent creatures interact. Meanwhile, the blue group enjoyed a brilliant presentation from Dan about the local birds. Then, the two groups switched activities.



Back on board we had a briefing from Marcel and a delicious dinner from our hotel team! We then ended the day off with bags of popcorn in the lecture room and a streaming of the European League Final between England and Spain.

#### **Day 4 – Monday 15<sup>th</sup> July 2024**

Location: **Phippsøya (am)** and **Parryøya (pm)**

GPS position at 12:00: 80°40.6'N 020°57.2'E

Wind: NNW-3, Sea State: Smooth, Weather: Overcast, Air Temp: 4°C, Sea Temp: 5°C





It was another memorable day in Svalbard as we explored the northernmost islands in the archipelago - Sjuøyane. Our morning began with a little too much wind and fog for the landing, so we had even more time to enjoy our wholesome breakfast. Luckily for us the weather soon improved, and we all headed ashore to enjoy the landscapes of Phippsøya. The landing was on a beautiful beach full of Siberian driftwood and had some lovely views from the surrounding ridgelines. Next to the landing site is a tiny emergency hut, one of many built by the Norwegian government throughout Svalbard in the 1930's. They are collectively known as Merckoll huts after the German mining inspector who installed them. While some of us enjoyed stretching our legs and exploring the island, others of us enjoyed a brilliant lecture onboard from our Assistant Expedition Leader, Hazel, about her favorite Arctic animal, the Walrus! When half of us finished the landing, we then swapped so both groups could get time ashore and listen to Hazel's insightful presentation.



Following on from the morning's activities, and another brilliant lunch from the Galley team, it was time to head over to the neighboring island of Parryøya for a zodiac cruise. There was a large haul-out of Walrus on a rock just offshore the island of Parryøya, so we all got to enjoy some great views (and the smells!) of them. There was also a group of incredibly curious young males and females who decide it was time to follow the Zodiacs and get as close as they could, leaving us moving slowly away from them! It was an interesting role reversal when we are normally the ones looking at them!



After another wonderful day exploring, it was time to grab a drink and join the Expedition Team in the lounge for an educational and entertaining recap. Just as we settled in for dinner following recap, the sun burst through the clouds, and we were treated to a gloriously sunny evening sail north towards the ice. Hopefully a good omen for our day tomorrow exploring the frozen Arctic Ocean.

### **Day 5 – Tuesday 16<sup>th</sup> July 2024**

**Location: Edge of Pack Ice near 81° N**

GPS position at 12:00: 81°19.5'N 015°41.8'E

Wind: W-5, Sea State: Calm, Ice: Drift Ice 9/10, Weather: Fog, Air Temp: -1°C, Sea Temp: +2°C

We awoke early this morning as we were excited for the day to come. Before getting started, we all attended the restaurant for a hearty breakfast. A true Arctic experience was ahead of us, our much-anticipated Sea Ice Day as we sailed North into the “pack” ice.

Pack ice is formed by the freezing of seawater. Seawater, because of the salt it contains, freezes in a different manner compared to fresh water. The density of seawater steadily increases as it cools, until it reaches the freezing point of around -2°C (although this depends on how salty the water is). At the onset of winter, cold air chills the surface waters until a relatively large layer of water at -2°C has formed on the surface. A soupy crystalline mixture known as “frazil” ice begins to form in the upper layer. As this soup thickens, a thin film of ice known as “grease” ice forms. This film is strong enough to support the weight of a seabird and can ripple with the waves passing beneath. As the surface temperature continues to drop, the ice forms a solid layer and is then called “pack” ice. Ice that forms each winter and melts each summer is known as annual ice and is usually about six feet thick.



Throughout the day, some of us took to the Bridge, and some braved the cold wind outside at the Bow or on Deck 8 with the clearest views. We filled our memories card with videos and photos as Hondius broke through the ice. The seascape was breathtaking, although often wreathed in atmospheric fog. The morning was the moment for an interesting lecture about Polar Bears, with Katlyn who explained all the details about these magnificent animals. After coffee and more photos of the landscape, Aitana gave us a lecture about the sea ice that surrounded us.



We continued sailing north until we reached the most northern point of the trip: **81° 22.7'N 017° 30.5'E** The expedition and hotel team had one more surprise for us: Hot Chocolate and Baileys with whipped cream at the bow to celebrate our position! A lot of pictures, laughs and the amazing view made our afternoon fly by but not before Will helped us get to know the famous Norwegian explorer Fridtjof Nansen, and some of the Arctic expeditions in the late 19<sup>th</sup> century.



Later Marcel called us for the recap, talking about our plans for tomorrow and as we slowly left the ice over dinner, we reflected on another great day to remember.

### **Day 6 – Wednesday 17<sup>th</sup> July 2024**

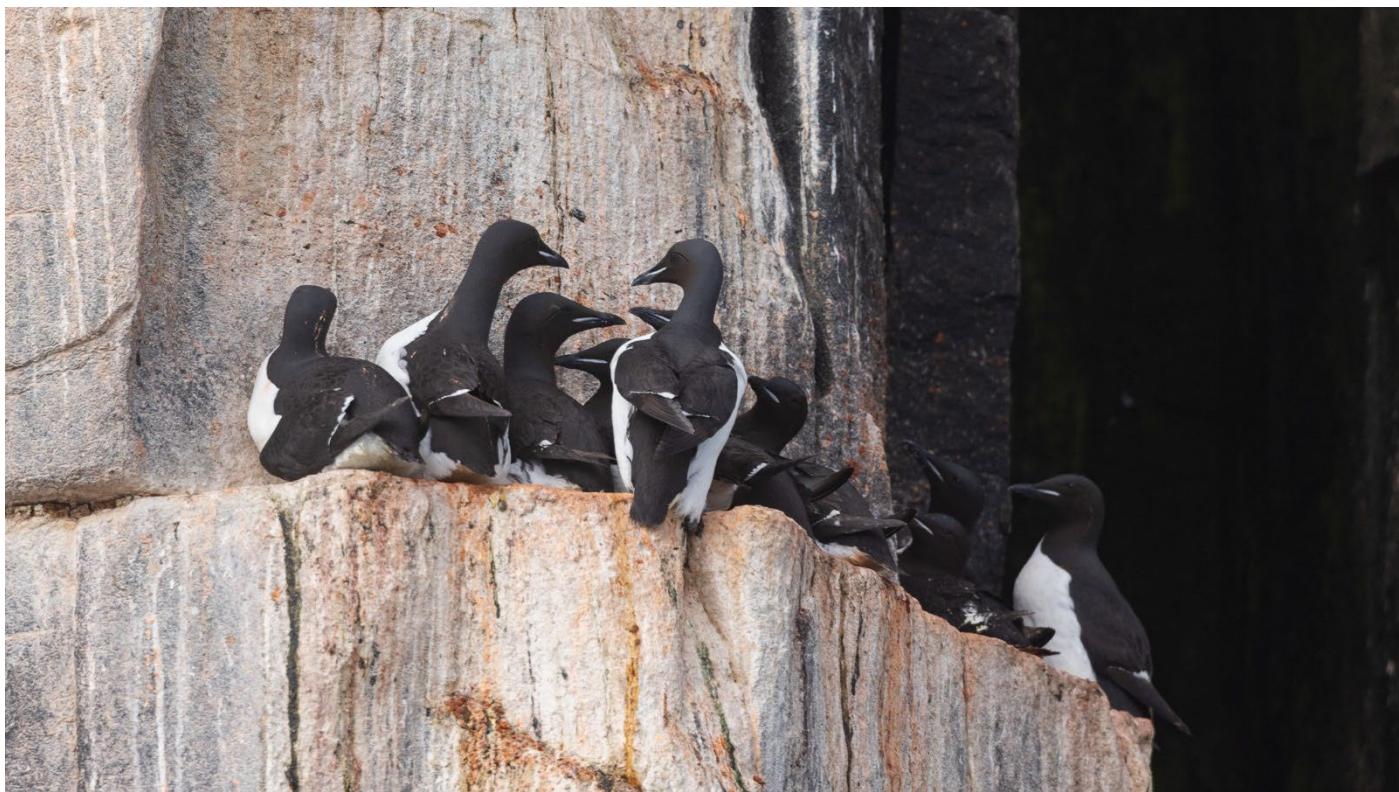
**Location: Alkefjellet (am) and Hinlopenstretet**

**GPS position at 12:00: 79°35.8'N 018°29.0'E**

**Wind: SE-3, Sea State: Rippled, Weather: Clear Sky, Air Temp: 3°C, Sea Temp: +4.7°C**

After early wake-up call, this morning we arrived early at Alkefjellet or the Auk Mountain, or that is what the expedition leader told as everything was covered in a thick blanket of fog that didn't allow us to see a few metres beyond the ship. Still, after a delicious breakfast, and embracing our best expedition spirit, we boarded the Zodiacs and headed off towards the cliff or where the guides thought the cliffs were!

The sight of the cliffs through the fog was magical. We started at the waterfalls where we met the first few pairs of Brunnich's Guillemots of the nearly 60.000 that breed here. The weather turned out to be not so bad despite the fog. There was no wind and the flat ocean allowed us to get close to the cliffs, enjoying the wonderful scenery that opened up before us. You could see the different colour of the ocean where the glacial melt water was trying to mix with the water of the ocean.



Thousands of guillemots flew around the cliffs which were covered with nesting birds. We were told not to open our mouths in awe when looking up, to prevent the ingestion of special guillemot delivery! Around the corner we discovered a Glaucous Gull enjoying a breakfast of dead Kittiwake. A little bit further down, we discovered a couple of Glaucous Gull nests with three chicks.



When we arrived at the glacier at the north side of the cliffs, we still couldn't see anything but the close cliffs. We decided to go back as a group with Jerry leading our way back to Hondius in the fog. When we were all safely onboard, Hondius took off to find our first polar bear. Our expedition leader Marcel had found a bit of land that didn't have fog, so we headed that way. We sailed into Hinlopen Strait towards Wahlbergoya Island looking for bears, but it was still very foggy. Suddenly, out of nowhere, the sun started shining through the fog and all the islands appeared before us. Guests were quite excited and we had all eyes on the islands - guides and passengers alike!

Finally, after a long wait, we heard the melodic voice of Grant announcing that there was a polar bear. Hooray!! Soon after Daan spotted two more from almost 3 miles away! We managed to spot all 3 bears. Unfortunately, the bears were too high up the islands to be able to see them from a Zodiac, so we could not lower Zodiacs to get closer. However, the captain maneuvered Hondius in such a way we could get as close as possible. We spent all afternoon in beautiful sunny calm weather looking at these fantastic animals – the first we had seen on this trip!



We had a short recap as people could not get enough of the bears, rightly so! Grant gave a recap about the rocks we had seen in the morning that morning in Alkefjellet. We had dinner and everyone went to bed with a sense of happiness after such a successful day.

### **Day 7 – Thursday 18<sup>th</sup> July 2024**

**Location: Sundneset (am) and Negribreen (pm)**

GPS position at 12:00: 78°07.6'N 020°49.6'E

Wind: Calm, Sea State: Calm, Weather: Clear Sky, Air Temp: 13°C, Sea Temp: 7°C

We woke in Freemansundet, the narrow channel between Edgeoya and Barentsoya. We had left the foggy days behind us. Bright sunlight filled our eyes. When we rounded the corner, we approached our first intended stop of Kapp Walberg. It had taken us 6 days to finally spot the white fluffy predator of the North, but from now on, we were plenty to be seen. When we approached the landing site there sat a large polar bear on the ridge exactly at the spot we intended to land. Clearly the landing was cancelled. We had a look at the bear and the Captain moved the ship towards Kapp Lee with our intention to land there in the afternoon. On our way towards this destination, another bear was spotted just at the point of Sundneset. It was knocking on the door of the Wurzbürger hut! Luckily no one was home. Some of us thought it was a small bear until we saw it putting its front paws on the roof! Expedition Leader Marcel decided to launch all 16 Zodiacs and start to Zodiac cruise towards the bear. It appeared and disappeared behind rock ridges as we moved in closer but in the end the bear appeared on the beach at Sundbukta where we all had a fantastic view. It was a female, and she was very playful. She rolled on the grass, stepped into the water, swimming, and playing with seaweed, curious about this line of rubber boats that queued up to watch her from a safe distance. We loved to see her up close in her natural environment.





In the afternoon we went to the next landing site at Doleritteneset, just south of Kapp Lee. Unfortunately (or not!) there was another bear roaming the shore, so this landing was also cancelled. We decided to sail to the glacier front of Negribreen. We had a few hours of sailing so we had an impromptu lecture when Fran told us all we should know about the plants that adapted to the High Arctic.

When we arrived the 16 Zodiacs were launched once more. There were many, many icebergs in all different shapes and sizes. We had not seen such massive bergs before today. What a splendid colour they had - blue, green, white, yellow, and black. The shapes and textures of the bergs were very special with stripes, diamonds or heart shaped. We drove through to Negribreen to the sound of brash ice popping and crackling as it released gases during its slow melting. An enormous glacial front welcomed us which was very impressive. It is the third largest glacier of Spitsbergen. However, we also saw a lot of moraine debris and rock scars from a much larger glacier that lay here only a couple of years ago. We all got to see the impact on climate change.



When we were about to head out, Hazel called over the radio she found another bear. What?! It was even two bears - a mother with a cub. We drove for a while passing magnificent bergs on the way in. There we formed a carousel with the boats, passing quietly and cautiously so as not to disturb them. The cub was born this year and around 6 months old. They were laying on the beach just looking at us with the blue glacier in the background. We all had a long look at the bears because they really were at ease with us being there. When looking at the bears there were many ivory gulls and even the very rare Sabine's Gull flying around. After what felt like a blink in time, we made our way back to the ship where the galley made us another splendid dinner. Despite all the changes we had a truly fantastic day in the polar regions!



**Day 8 – Friday 19<sup>th</sup> July 2024**

**Location: Russebukta (am) and Boltodden (pm)**

**GPS position at 12:00: 77°36.0'N 020°55.9'E**

**Wind: SSW-5, Sea State: Smooth, Weather: Overcast, Air Temp: 11°C, Sea Temp: 6°C**





On this Thursday 19th July, which in 1903 marked the end of the first ever Tour de France, we woke up to a Mediterranean sunshine, a blistering 13 degrees and a cloudless sky. Spitsbergen is not a prime cycling destination so we decided that today would be a hiking day, and there is no better place than the endless landscape of Russebukta. Home of the Russian Pomor hunters for centuries, where hut remains can be found, it offered a lush vegetation and a thriving wildlife population.

As we set foot on the shallow dark sands on shore, we were welcomed by Marcel who divided us in three groups, the long, medium and short hike. All three offered a spectacle - reindeer grazing peacefully in the valleys, some even curious enough to come dare a sniff for up close. Moulting foxes on the hunt, getting dizzy from the number of geese bobbing along on the many lakes scattered in the landscape. Along with the geese, a plethora of birds gave us much to admire and we trod along, sometimes in deep soggy terrain that must have claimed a pair or two of boots! Underfoot, summer had really arrived, and we saw plenty of colour from the tough, low-growing flowers of Svalbard – Arctic poppy, pale whitlow grass, moss campion, Polar dandelion, bistort, yellow marsh saxifrage, Polar cress and woolly lousewort – the latter being a hemiparasitic plant that steals some of its nutrients from other plants in this barren ground. Along with the thick mosses in all shades of green and rust and orange, the somewhat drab colours of Svalbard were enlivened by the vegetation and blue skies. Back at the landing site, some of us who chose the longer hike came back satisfied and sweaty, they got a real workout and walked close to ten kilometres.

Back on board we enjoyed some well-deserved rest after a hearty meal yet again. A nap was allowed as our destination for the afternoon was three hours away. Boltodden on the east coast of Spitsbergen offers a rare opportunity to see dinosaur prints etched into the rock! Unfortunately, the sea conditions encountered at our arrival did not meet our safety standards and our expedition staff decided against a landing. Instead, the

ship Hondius located to another fabulous glacier, Strongbreen, and whilst it did so, we heard from Daan about the lives of trappers life in Svalbard in the early 20th century and from Katlyn about reindeer, a truly well adapted Arctic mammal, then Valeria drew out a long piece of rope and showed us 'how big the animals of the Arctic' are, from the fox to the blue whale.

And whilst Albert gave us information about disembarkation, the barbecues on deck 5, which had laid dormant since the beginning of the trip, woke with fire, and the enchanting smell of cooked food made its way to the lounge. So straight to the Deck 5 where free drinks were provided along with some music. The food was exquisite, and the legs let lose! We danced for the better part of the evening accompanied by some crew and the Staff. A great day for all!

## **Day 9 – Saturday 20<sup>th</sup> July 2024**

**Location: Gnålodden (am) and Samarinbreen (pm)**

GPS position at 12:00: 77° 00.9'N 016° 17.0'E

Wind: NW2-3, Sea State: Rippled, Weather: Overcast, Air Temp: 6°C, Sea Temp: 7°C

The glorious, jagged mountain scape of Burgerbukta was not the only thing that greeted us on the 9<sup>th</sup> and final morning of our trip - a few Humpback whales had come out to say hello as well! Due to their presence, Marcel woke us up a little ahead of schedule this morning and we hurried out of beds, cameras ready, to see the wildlife spectacle many had prayed for all trip. Four whales were seen blowing and feeding around the ship with a flock of Gulls, Kittiwakes and Fulmars behind them. What a fantastic start.



After breakfast half of us got into the zodiacs and braved the sunny, albeit quite wet and windy, drive out to Gnålodden for a morning landing. The whales were ever-present and some of us were even treated to a family of Beluga who had decided to visit the zodiacs landing area ashore. After reaching the beach we strolled along the coast admiring the bright flowers of purple saxifrages and moss campions and enjoying the breeding kittiwakes on the cliffs above. Some opted to walk to the nearby hut and hear a bit about the fearless female trapper who visited there, Wanny Waldstad, whilst others spent time enjoying a light leg stretch at their own pace.



After landing, a switch took place during which time the group ashore swapped with the group onboard who were enjoying a lecture from Daan about Climate Change and its effects in Svalbard. His insight as a former researcher from this area shed a new light on the area so many of us had now grown to appreciate over the course of our voyage. We were fortunate enough to have the whales feed around the ship throughout the morning and those of us coming back to the ship for lunch even caught a final glimpse of the whales enjoying their mealtime as well.

The morning's wind had dropped off by the afternoon and the vast glacier of Samarinbreen reflected in a calm and lake-like sea. At around 1430 we boarded the Zodiacs for a final cruise of this 20km wide glacier. Due to the calm and tranquil conditions, many of us enjoyed just observing the glacier in the sun and watching as chunks of diverse sizes calved off its face. It was a serene farewell to the snowscapes of Svalbard.



Back on board that evening we completed various administrative tasks like returning Muck boots, paying bills and packing bags before joining the captain and the expedition team in the lounge for farewell champagne. The real high of the evening was the post-voyage slideshow made by Grant, which had plenty of photos and videos from the last few days that captured a small snapshot of the memories, emotions, and experiences we shared as a group during the trip. It was truly a packed trip and one with encounters that will leave a mark on us for many years to come.

### **Day 10 – Sunday 21<sup>st</sup> July 2024**

#### **Disembarkation – Longyearbyen, Svalbard**

**GPS Position at 08:00 - 78°14.6'N 015°32.5'E**

Wind: Variable, Sea State: Rippled, Weather: Overcast, Air Temp: 9°C, Sea Temp: 9.7°C

Slowly but steadily Hondius made her way into Svalbard's largest fjord, Isfjord. Sadly, time had come to conclude our amazing 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. Some of us left very early in the morning – their last Zodiac ride to the jetty at Longyearbyen - whilst others woke at a more reasonable hour and, once alongside Longyearbyen's Kullkaia, we walked down the gangway, hugged, and shook hands with our new friends and the Expedition Team, before starting our way home.



**NORTHERN MOST POSITION: 81° 22.7'N 015° 30.5'E**  
**DISTANCE SAILED: 1262.3 NM**

Goodbye and thank you from the Expedition Team



**OCEANWIDE**  
EXPEDITIONS

# Around Spitsbergen in the realm of the Polar Bear and Ice

12<sup>th</sup> July – 21<sup>st</sup> July 2024

M/V Hondius

1. Ny-Ålesund, Spitsbergen
2. Virgohamna & Smeerenburg (Zodiac Cruise)
3. Phippsøya, Seven Islands
4. Parryøya, Seven Islands (Zodiac Cruise)
5. Alkefjellet, Spitsbergen (Zodiac Cruise)
6. Sundneset, Barentsøya (Zodiac Cruise)
7. Negribreen, Spitsbergen (Zodiac Cruise)
8. Russebukta, Edgeøya
9. Gnålodden, Hornsund
10. Samarinbreen (Zodiac Cruise)





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# Marcel Paul - Expedition Leader

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From his teens Marcel has been a keen traveller. After camping and trekking with friends, he led groups trekking to Austria, Switzerland, England, Wales, and Scotland.

His own travels over the last 30 years brought him to more than 65 countries on all 7 continents.

With his interest in history, ice, cartography, exploration, and as a 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 was keeping him indoors most of the time.

When the Dutch organised a scientific polar expedition to Edgeøya it seemed the perfect opportunity to gain more knowledge about Spitsbergen, the uniqueness of the islands and their eco systems by working with the scientists.

He joined the expedition in 2015 as field assistant and participated in various fields of research. In 2016 he spent time in the summer at the Dutch polar station in Ny Ålesund, again as field assistant. From 2017 Marcel has been working as a polar guide in the Arctic followed by Antarctica in 2018.

Today he still spends about half the year onboard with Oceanwide whilst sailing around Spitsbergen, Greenland, Jan Mayen, Antarctica, Falklands, and South Georgia. The rest of the year is spent either at his homes in Holland and Slovakia or traveling with his wife and their dog.

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# Jerry Zhao – Expedition Leader

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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.

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# Hazel Pittwood -Assistant Expedition Leader

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Hazel grew up in the county of Dorset on the South coast of the UK. A childhood spent pond dipping, bug hunting and exploring the countryside and coast nurtured her love of the natural world.

She has worked in practical conservation and community engagement roles for a variety of habitats, including heathland and coastal nature reserves. Hazel also has experience surveying rare protected species and is a trained wildlife rescue volunteer and marine mammal medic.

Whilst she is broadly learned about the natural world, Hazel has specialised in marine mammals and seabirds since 2014. At that time, she began volunteering as a marine mammal and seabird surveyor, collecting sightings data regarding these animals for UK based conservation charities. In 2017 she worked on a passenger ship travelling between the UK and Spain across the Bay of Biscay for six months, delivering talks and leading wildlife watching sessions out on deck.

Hazel has been working as a guide and lecturer on cruise ships for over three years. This role has taken her to Norway and Svalbard, Iceland, Alaska, Canada, the Faroe Islands, the Canary Islands, the Caribbean and Central America. She is a World Cetacean Alliance certified responsible whale watching guide, championing the highest standards of wildlife experiences.

The polar regions host an incredible diversity of seabird and marine mammal species, and Hazel looks forward enhancing your encounters with these incredible animals with her knowledge, skills and enthusiasm.

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# Katlyn Taylor – Expedition Guide

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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.

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# Joshua Peck – Expedition Guide

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A native Falkland Islander, Josh has always been fascinated by the natural world and exploring new destinations.

Growing up in the wildlife haven of the Falklands - with the polar regions on his doorstep - Josh has spent most of his life living alongside penguins, seals and whales, most recently in South Georgia where he was based for 4 months working for the Government of South Georgia.

Josh loves living and working in remote locations and on isolated islands, especially in his homeland of the Falklands, where he has been involved in conservation projects since an early age. Josh has also travelled and worked extensively around the world from the USA and Canada to Iceland, Zambia, Australia and Poland.

Following on from obtaining degrees in History and Politics in Bristol and London in the United Kingdom, Josh returned home to the Falkland Islands to pursue his passion for wildlife and wild places, co-founding a local tour company with two childhood friends in 2016. Focussing on nature and historical tours, Josh worked for the following four seasons guiding and sharing his love of his home with the many guests that visited.

An avid photographer and an international footballer for his home country (soccer), he is always looking for new experiences and places to visit to broaden his horizons, and is looking forward to more adventures with Oceanwide Expeditions this season.



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# William Kennedy – Expedition Guide

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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.

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# Valeria Sainz Herrera- Expedition Guide

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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.

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# Jens Binderup – Expedition Guide

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Born on a farm in central Denmark, later working as an air traffic controller in Copenhagen for many years, now living near the coastline on the countryside south of the capital.

A keen interest in wildlife has been a lifelong companion, and the majority of travelling through the years has been to all 7 continents, where animal life- and behaviour was the main focus.

Whether it was swimming with the orcas in northern Norway, dogsledding in Finland, experiencing the abundance of wildlife in southern Africa or enjoying the magnificence of landscapes and animal

life in the Arctic and Antarctica.

Jens is a sociable and talkative person, loving to share all the experiences with our guests – and his enthusiasm has made him guiding friends and colleagues on several occasions.

He also possesses a deep interest in the polar expeditions – both to the Arctic and Antarctic – made by the brave men a hundred years ago, exploring the last frontiers by ships, planes, airships and dogsleds.

When not travelling, spare time is used enjoying the massive migration of birds of prey near his home, mountain biking, trekking in the Scandinavian wilderness and flying gliders together with all the predatory birds.

Fulfilling a lifelong dream of being an expedition guide, Jens is looking forward to his first season in the Antarctic with passion and enthusiasm, sharing the magnificent experiences that await all on an expedition cruise.

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# Grant Hewitt – Expedition Guide

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Grant is a South African waterman with a deep love for nature. Originally from a farm in Zimbabwe, he relocated to South Africa's East Coast at a young age. It was here that he developed a strong connection to the outdoors, particularly the sea.

Grant graduated with a degree in Geography and Photojournalism from Rhodes University. He then went on to complete his Honours Degree in Environmental Water Management where his passion grew for Earth System Processes.

Grant now works full-time in the Expedition Industry, combining his knowledge with his love for nature. Grant has been lucky enough to work in many regions throughout the world including Madagascar, Seychelles, Antarctica, South Georgia and various areas in the North Atlantic.

Grant is also a PADI-certified free diver, sea kayak guide and National Sea Rescue Institute survival swimming coach/ocean educator. When he is not on expeditions, he is usually found in the ocean somewhere around South Africa chasing swells to surf or paddling through unexplored rivers.

With a true passion for wildlife and the natural world, he loves sharing these experiences and moments with like-minded people.

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# Fran Housdon – Expedition Guide

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Fran was born in Cape Town South Africa and raised by a family of sailors, writers, and outdoor enthusiasts. After completing her honours degree in journalism, Fran went on to work as an environmental journalist and all-around media person covering climate change, sustainability, and technology for organizations and non-profits across Australia, South Africa, and the US.

While working remotely, ran a surf camp & lodge on the south coast of Kwa-Zulu Natal and spent time exploring and surfing around Indonesia. Since then she has spent the past few years working as a guide, zodiac driver and lecturer on ships all over the globe, with a heavy focus on the Indian Ocean and the polar regions.

Outside of this, she is a kayaker, plant lover, PADI free-diver, very slow trail runner, and enthusiastic naturalist. She is passionate about all aspects of conservation and sustainability and hopes to spend the rest of her life writing, reading and preserving beautiful places.

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# Aitana Forcén-Vázquez - Expedition Guide

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Aitana is a passionate oceanographer and adventurer, bringing a wealth of knowledge and experience to her role as a polar guide. Originally from Spain, she spent 12 years in New Zealand, where she earned her PhD in Physical Oceanography— focusing on unravelling the mysteries of how the ocean moves.

Her expertise extends to large-scale currents, waves, ice and water mass formation, and climate, with an unwavering enthusiasm for discussing these topics. Aitana's conversations can seamlessly

transition from the intricacies of oceanography to her love for endurance sports and the art of knitting.

With a strong background in ocean-going fieldwork, Aitana served as the Principal Investigator for the Ross Sea Outflow Experiment, a groundbreaking initiative examining the export of cold water from the Ross Sea. She made history as one of the most junior-ever physical scientists to assume the role of voyage leader on the R V Tangaroa, New Zealand's esteemed research vessel, during an oceanographic voyage to the Southern Ocean.

Aitana's career has been as diverse as the marine environments she has explored. From driving a weather boat for two editions of the America's Cup as a meteorological technician to transitioning into the private sector, where she provided vital marine forecasts for port operations and Defence exercises. In these roles she has been a key player in ensuring the safety and efficiency of maritime operations. When adventure allows it, Aitana shares her knowledge with university students as an associate lecturer, fostering the next generation of marine scientists.

In her free time, Aitana is an avid open water swimmer, a dedicated communicator and content creator, and a seeker of unconventional road trips off the beaten path.

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# Fran Pothecary – Expedition Guide

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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.

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# Ting Gu - Expedition Guide/Translator

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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. Fuelled 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 fulfilment 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.



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# Renno Hokwerda – Expedition Guide

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Renno fell obsessed with the crisp Arctic air after a trip to Greenland at 17 years old, on a route from South Greenland to Disko Bay. The Arctic grip never slipped.

Did you know that many seabirds can fly 10,000s of kilometres in one go, but can't cross this magical seal called the sea surface deeper than 1 meter? That puts things into perspective. Seabirds are these messengers of a different world. However, Renno's obsession started with the people in the Arctic, who eke out an existence out of barren lands and rich but perilous seas. Other fascinations are marine mammals, whaling history and physical geography.

Renno graduated in Environmental Planning and Geography in 2017 at Groningen University, and also took courses at the Arctic Centre. Later he moved on to teach the courses Life and Exploration of Polar Areas himself to the new students. His current mainstay is a desk job at the Netherlands Polar Programme (the main Dutch fund for polar research), which grants him the privilege to deal with Arctic research on a daily basis. It doesn't include fieldwork, so in the weekends hiking is a must.

In July 2022 Renno joined the Scientific Expedition Edgeøya Svalbard (SEES), to the relatively unknown island Edgeøya in Southeast Svalbard along with 50 scientists and 40 passengers. Earlier experience with guiding is aboard *Fram* and with IVN Natuurschool, which runs educational school excursions to the Wadden Sea.

Renno lives in Groningen and commutes 1-2 times per week to The Hague. The train forms a perfect cocoon for reading, drawing, pondering fulmar life, and browsing Wikipedia A to Z.

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# Daan Vreugdenhil – Expedition Guide

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The Arctic and Antarctic are in Daan's blood. Although 2011 was his last visit to the region, the icy mountains, King eider ducks and Svalbard reindeer were never far from his mind.

His first visit was in 2004 at an age of 21 when he started ecological research in Ny Alesund, the world most northerly village. The research covered surveys on geese, vegetation, nest counts and measuring grasses. He returned for this research in '05 and '06. In 2007 he started guiding for

Oceanwide Expeditions in the Antarctic. Since then, he visited both poles until 2011. From 2011 he founded a wilderness and awareness school in the Netherlands. In 2024 he could not resist the call of the north any longer!

Daan lives and works in the Netherlands as an ecologist for Natuurmonumenten, a Dutch nature organisation. At home he loves to watch birds, walk large distances or go camping in wild European environments with his wife Mirte.

He is a keen birdwatcher and loves to see the Northern fulmar glide along the boat, the little auk squeaking on the rocky slope or the long call of a red throated diver. The conscious walk of an Arctic fox stepping on the smallest tree of the world, the polar willow, or a white Beluga whale in the water. He also loves to share the art of reading the landscape. Daan loves to speak about the large processes which form our surroundings. In short, he likes to take guests on a journey to experience the rich and well-adapted flora and fauna of the polar region.

What makes the polar regions so special for him is the pristine environment with the crisp air. This gives a feeling of being feral and free. The special adapted animals who live the tough life and feel at home. He loves to share his knowledge with you in lectures and even better, in the field!

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## Li Ye - 翻译 (Translator)

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Li was born and raised in China, her childhood dream was to travel the world and she had visited more than 50 cities in more than 20 countries around the world.

She fell in love with polar expeditions on her first trip to Antarctica and plans to continue her career in this field to become a professional expedition guide.

Li has wide range of hobbies; she likes calligraphy, incense, tea, sports and travel. When not working in the polar region, Li also likes to try new things.

It's hard to imagine such a slim girl like her once went to Chiang Mai, Thailand, to learn Muay Thai by herself. Li is also an influencer who loves to share her experiences traveling around the world and working in the polar regions.

叶丽在中国出生并长大，她从小梦想是环游世界，她的足迹遍布全球20多个国家，50多个城市。在她第一次来到南极时，她便爱上了极地探险，并计划在这个行业继续深入，成为一名优秀专业的探险队员。

丽的爱好广泛，她喜欢书法，香道，茶道，运动健身和旅行。当不在极地工作时，她也喜欢尝试和挑战新鲜事物，很难想象像她这样一个苗条的女生，曾独自一人去泰国清迈学习泰拳。丽也是一名博主，她喜欢与大家分享她在旅行和极地工作时的所见所闻。

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## Zoy Li - 翻译 (Translator)

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Originally from China, Zoy has a major in tourism management with Bachelor's degree.

She has worked for a high-end tailor-made travel agency in China which focuses on travel to the polar regions since 2014. There she had several job functions: travel consultant, product planning, sales-support, tour operation and tour leader, and got many chances to lead groups to the Arctic, Europe, Central America, Galapagos, South America and Antarctica.

In 2019, she joined the expedition cruise industry, working as an interpreter and expedition guide on board, and has experienced a multitude of wildlife expeditions in various remote areas of the world. She is so fascinated by every element of nature, she has a great passion for sharing the most breathtaking scenes with every distinguished passenger to the polar region.

来自中国湖南，本科学历，旅游管理专业；

从 2014 年开始，在中国的一家高端定制旅行社工作，主要负责极地地区的团队运营。在那里，她身兼数职：旅游顾问、产品规划、销售支持、出团操作和出行领队；曾带领团队前往北极、欧洲、中美洲加拉帕戈斯群岛、南美洲和南极；

从2019年开始转探险邮轮，在船上担任翻译和探险向导。多次参与野生动物探险活动的经历，足迹遍布世界各个偏远地区，逐渐增强了她对大自然各种元素的迷恋，尤其热衷于极地，每年就像动物迁徙一样夏季回到北极，南半球的夏季回到南极。



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## Dr Rebecca Boys - Doctor

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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: 12/07/2024

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.

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!



## Around Spitsbergen, In the realm of Polar Bear & Ice

Date: 13/07/2024

Day 2: Lilliehookbreen & Ny-Alesund

07.45 Wake-up call.

08:00-09:00 Buffet breakfast will be served in the Dining Room on Deck 4.

09:00 Please join us for AECO, Bear safety, and Zodiac safety briefing, in the **Observation Lounge on Deck 5**. Attendance to this is **MANDATORY**.

The briefing in Chinese will be in the observation lounge at deck 5.  
The briefing in English will be in the lecture room, both at deck 5.

11.30 The Expedition Team invites you to **Deck 3** the zodiac loading area to collect your Muck boots. Please, bring your thick socks for the perfect fit and Please listen for the announcements as we will be calling you down deck by deck

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

14:00 We invite the **Red group** to the zodiac boarding area on deck 3 for a zodiac landing at Ny-Ålesund. Followed straight after by the **Blue group** around 14.15 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.*

15:00 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.

15:30 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.

18.00 Last zodiac will leave the shore.

18:30 Please join the Expedition Team in the Bar for our daily recap.

19:15 Plated dinner will be served in the Dining Room



## Around Spitsbergen, In the realm of Polar Bear & Ice

Date: 14/07/2024

Day 3: Gravneset/Waggonwaybreen and Smeerenburg/Virgo hamna

**Times below are the best estimates we have, please listen to announcements!**

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 **Blue Group** to the zodiac boarding area on deck 3 for a landing at Gravneset.

08:45 We invite the **Red Group** to the zodiac boarding area on deck 3 for a zodiac cruise towards the Waggonwaybreen.

***During the morning the groups will swap.***

At the end of the morning, we hope to offer the opportunity for the brave ones to experience a polar plunge! Please wear your swim clothing under your normal clothes. We will have towels for you to dry off afterwards: do **NOT** bring towels from your room!

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

14:30 We invite the **Red Group** to the zodiac boarding area on deck 3 for a landing at Smeerenburg and a guided walk to the Walrus.

14:45 We invite the **Blue Group** to the zodiac boarding area on deck 3 for a Zodiac Cruise into Virgohamna.

***During the afternoon the groups will swap.***

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

19:00 Dinner will be served in the Dining Room.





## Around Spitsbergen, In the realm of Polar Bear & Ice

Date: 15/07/2024

Day 4: The Seven Islands, Phippsøya & Parryøya Island

*Today we hope to land and zodiac cruise the Seven Islands (Sjuøyane)  
the northernmost part of the Svalbard archipelago.*

*The islands are 1024.3 km (637 mi / 553 nm) south of the North Pole.*

**Times below are the best estimates we have, please listen to announcements.**

07:15 Wake-up call.

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

**Everybody please stay in your colour group to ensure smooth operation!!**

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

09:15 We invite the **Blue Group** to the zodiac boarding area on deck 3 for a zodiac cruise offshore of Phippsøya.

***During the morning the groups will swap***

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 Parryøya.

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

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

19:00 Dinner will be served in the Dining Room.



## Around Spitsbergen, In the realm of Polar Bear & Ice

Date: 16/07/2024

Day 5: Ice day

*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.

10:00 As we are spending the day in the natural habitat of the polar bear we would like to invite you to the observation lounge for a lecture by Kathlyn about Polar Bears. This lecture will be given in English and translated in mandarin.

11.30 We would like to invite you to the observation lounge for Aitana's lecture on sea ice. This lecture will be given in English and translated in mandarin.

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

15:00 Will invites you to the Lecture Room for a lecture exploring the epic history of Arctic expeditions in the late 19<sup>th</sup> century. This lecture will be given in English and translated in mandarin.

16.30 Please meet the expedition and hotel team at the bow to celebrate the most northern position of this trip.

18:30 Please join the Expedition Team in the Bar for recap.

19:00 Dinner will be served in the Dining Room.



## Around Spitsbergen, In the realm of Polar Bear & Ice

Date: 17/07/2024

Day 6: Alkefjellet & Shipscruise

This morning, we hope to offer a zodiac cruise at Alkefjellet which translates literally to “mountain of the guillemots,”. 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 kittiwake. It is also a good place to see Arctic Fox – if we are lucky!

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 zodiac cruise at Alkefjellet.

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

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

During the afternoon we will be ships cruising the islands in the Hinlopenstrete looking for wildlife.

In case we find good wildlife we hope be able to launch zodiacs to get a better look but that depends on the situation.

So please all help up find wildlife and listen carefully to announcements.

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

19:00 Dinner will be served in the Dining Room.



## Around Spitsbergen, In the realm of Polar Bear & Ice

Date: 19/07/2024

Day 7: Sundneset & Negribreen

06:45 Wake-up call.

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

**Times below are the best estimates we have, please listen to announcements!**

08:00 We invite the **Blue Group** to the zodiac boarding area on deck for a landing at Kapp Waldburg

08:30 Fran invites the **Red Group** in the lecture room for her lecture on plants of Svalbard.

**Both groups will swap during the morning**

10.00 We invite the **Red Group** to the zodiac boarding area on deck 3 for a landing at Kapp Waldburg

11.00 Fran invites the **Blue Group** in the lecture room for her lecture on Plants of Svalbard.

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

15.00 We invite the **Red Group** to the zodiac boarding area on deck 3 for a landing at Kapp Lee.

15.15 We invite the **Blue Group** to the zodiac boarding area on deck for a Zodiac cruise at Kapp Lee.

**Both groups will swap during the afternoon**

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

19:00 Please join us outside for a special Arctic dinner, and don't forget to put on your dancing shoes!



## Around Spitsbergen, In the realm of Polar Bear & Ice

Date: 19/07/2024

Day 8: Russebukta & Boltodden

07:15 Wake-up call.

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

**Times below are the best estimates we have, please listen to announcements**

09:00 We invite the long hikers to the zodiac boarding area on deck 3 for a long hike at Russebukta.

09:15 We invite the medium hikers to the zodiac boarding area on deck 3 for a medium hike at Russebukta.

09:30 We invite the short hikers to the zodiac boarding area on deck 3 for a short hike at Russebukta.

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

15:15 We invite the **Blue Group** to the zodiac boarding area on deck for a landing at Boltodden.

15:30 Grant invites the **Red Group** in the lecture room for his lecture on glaciers.

**Both groups will swap during the afternoon**

16.30 We invite the **Red Group** to the zodiac boarding area on deck 3 for a landing at Boltodden.

17.00 Grant invites the **Blue Group** in the lecture room for his lecture on glaciers.

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

19:00 Please join us outside for a special Arctic dinner, don't forget to put on your dancing shoes



## Around Spitsbergen, In the realm of Polar Bear & Ice

Date: 20/07/2024

Day 9: Gnalodden & Samarinbreen

07:45 Wake-up call.

08:00-09:00 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 Gnalodden.

09:30 Daniel invites the **Blue Group** in the lecture room for a lecture on climate change on Spitsbergen. This lecture will be given in English and translated into Mandarin.

### **Both groups will swap during the morning!**

11:00 We invite the **Blue Group** to the zodiac boarding area on deck for a landing at Gnalodden.

11:30 Daniel invites the **Red Group** in the lecture room for a lecture on climate change on Spitsbergen. This lecture will be given in English and translated into Mandarin.

13:00-14:00 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 for a zodiac cruise at the Samarinbreen.

14:45 We invite the **Red Group** to the zodiac boarding area on deck for a zodiac cruise at the Samarinbreen.

18:00 We will be collecting your muck boots at the shell doors on deck 3. Please wait for announcements as we will call you deck by deck.

18:30 Please join the Expedition Team and the captain in the bar for our final recap, the captains farewell cocktail, and the slideshow of this trip.

19:00 Farewell plated dinner will be served in the dining room on deck 4.



## Around Spitsbergen, In the realm of Polar Bear & Ice

Date: 21/07/2024

Day 10: Longyearbyen

- 04:45 Please make sure your luggage is put outside your room for the passengers on the early flight. There will **NOT** be a wake-up call. There will be pastries and juice available in the lounge, and the coffee machine will be working as always.
- 05.10 Please make your way to the Zodiac boarding area at deck 3, you do need to wear your lifejacket for the transfer. You will be departing to the airport by bus, please make sure you identify your luggage and take it with you on the bus to the airport. Please enjoy your last zodiac ride>
- 07:15 Wake-up call. Please ensure your luggage is outside your room before going to breakfast, latest 07.30!

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 around 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 with **flight SK4497** please use **Blue 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 11:45.*
- *For all those with **flight SK4425** 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 13:00.*

08:45+/- We invite all guests to disembark, please wait for announcement.

**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.*