



**Arctic Ocean: Vlissingen, Aberdeen, Fair Isle, Jan  
Mayen, Ice Edge, Spitsbergen**

Vlissingen – Longyearbyen

29 May – 9 June, 2025

On board *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 Jan Dobrogowski

and his international crew of 72 sailors

Chief Officer:	<b>Sven Holzhausen</b>	[Germany]
Second Officer:	<b>Nino Cizmic</b>	[Croatia]
Third Officer:	<b>Erik van de Reijden</b>	[Netherlands]
Hotel Manager:	<b>Albert Don</b>	[Netherlands]
Head Chef:	<b>Ralf Barthel</b>	[Germany]
Sous Chef:	<b>Norman Estrada</b>	[Philippines]
Ships doctor:	<b>Claudio D'Ambrosio</b>	[Italy]
Expedition Leader:	<b>Christan Long</b>	[New Zealand]
Ass. Expedition Leader:	<b>Chloe Maréchal</b>	[France]
Ass. Expedition Leader:	<b>Pierre Gallego</b>	[Luxembourg]
Expedition Guide:	<b>Jens Binderup</b>	[Denmark]
Expedition Guide:	<b>Jakub Malecki</b>	[Poland]
Expedition Guide:	<b>Alexander Romanovskiy</b>	[Russia]
Expedition Guide:	<b>Paolo Bellezze</b>	[Argentina]
Expedition Guide:	<b>Meike Sjoer</b>	[Netherlands]
Expedition Guide:	<b>Rose Li Hong</b>	[China]
Expedition Guide:	<b>Sven Joest</b>	[Germany]
Expedition Guide:	<b>Philipp Konietzko</b>	[Germany]
Expedition Guide:	<b>Rustyn Mesdag</b>	[USA]
Expedition Guide:	<b>Brenya Green</b>	[USA]
Expedition Guide:	<b>Andi Schwetz</b>	[Germany]
Expedition Guide:	<b>Tiphonie May</b>	[Falkland Islands]

**WE WELCOME YOU ON BOARD!**

## Day 1 – Thursday 29 May, Vlissingen, Embarkation day: Setting Sail for the Arctic

18h00 GPS Position: 51.4537° N, 3.5709° E

Wind: SW7 • Sea: Moderate • Weather: Overcast • Air temperature: +13°C

This afternoon marked the beginning of our grand adventure as we stepped aboard *Hondius*, our expedition vessel bound for the Arctic wilderness of Svalbard. Moored in the Dutch port of Vlissingen, the ship loomed large and ready—our floating home for the next twelve days. For some, the journey began with a small challenge: conquering the steep gangway, duffel bags in tow and excitement in the air. But one by one, we all made it aboard, eager and wide-eyed.



After settling into our cabins, we gathered in the ship's heart - the observation lounge - for our first official meeting: the safety briefing. There's something surreal about donning a bright orange life vest while imagining polar bears and glaciers, but the drill was a rite of passage, and by the end, we felt a little more like seasoned explorers.

With formalities complete, it was time for a toast. Glasses clinked and smiles widened during the Captain's Welcome Cocktail, held once again in the lounge, now buzzing with conversation and anticipation. Outside the windows, the coastline of Vlissingen slowly began to recede—we were finally underway, charting a course north toward Aberdeen, our next port of call.

Dinner was a lively affair, filled with laughter and introductions. As twilight set in, many of us were already out on deck, scanning the waves for the first glimpse of wildlife. The day closed with a stunning sunset painting the sky in shades of gold and lavender—a perfect curtain-raiser for the days of adventure ahead.

Our expedition has begun, and with it, the promise of icy landscapes, untamed nature, and memories waiting to be made.

## Day 2 – Friday 30 May, Day at sea

08h00 GPS Position: 53°14.1'N / 001°17.6'E

Wind: SW6-7 • Sea: Slight • Weather: Partly Cloudy • Air temperature: +13°C

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We were awoken this morning by our expedition leader Chris Long inviting us to enjoy the day over the PA system. The rock and roll of the ship we experienced last night had given way to a gentle swaying this morning and even some sunshine! As we started to prepare for the day, we soon heard hotel manager Albert over the PA inviting us to breakfast. We enjoyed a delicious buffet before it was time to start with our first activity of the day which was to collect our muck boots which would be needed for the wet landings ahead. After that it was time for our first lecture of the voyage presented by our expedition guide Meike called “An introduction to birds of the North Atlantic”. Many of us joined to see what we might find in these waters.



As the day progressed the weather improved even further to beautiful sunshine and a gentle, warm breeze encouraging most of us to head out onto the decks to watch for wildlife. The North Sea didn't disappoint with Northern gannets, Common Guillemots, Black-legged Kittiwakes and even a couple of puffins passing by the ship. A lucky few of us managed to spot a minke whale and an unidentified dolphin as well. It's just the beginning!

At 12:30 we attended a delicious buffet lunch before heading outside again to enjoy the sunshine, we can see the coast of England now and a place called Scarborough Rock. At 15:30 we were invited to the lounge for our final lecture of the day by our expedition guide Paolo entitled “Aberdeen Lighthouse” giving some insight before our arrival in Aberdeen tomorrow.

We spent the rest of the day wildlife watching outside or relaxing inside the ship until 18:30 when we were invited to our first daily recap. We were introduced to our Captain, Jan who welcomed us all aboard this wonderful journey, then our expedition leader Chris gave us the plan for tomorrow followed by a short presentation by our expedition leader Andi who gave us 10 wonderful facts about Aberdeen. At 19:00 it was time to head to the restaurant for a plated dinner prepared by the amazing Hondius galley team. Soon it was time to head to the cabins after a great first day at sea. Tomorrow we will start our first activity day in Aberdeen!



### Day 3 – Saturday 31 May, Aberdeen

08h00 GPS Position: 57.1499° N, 2.0938° W

Wind: Variable 1 • Sea: Calm • Weather: Overcast • Air temperature: +12°C

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This morning, we arrived in Aberdeen Harbour aboard Oceanwide's expedition cruise ship *Hondius*, en route to Svalbard in the Arctic. Aberdeen marked our first stop—nestled on Scotland's northeast coast, the "Granite City" welcomed us with its characteristic grey stone buildings and the unmistakable sound of bagpipes.

As we disembarked, we were greeted in true Scottish style: a bagpiper, drummer, and a highland dancer brought energy to the quayside, giving us a memorable and heartfelt welcome. One of Oceanwide's local guides, Bill Smith, met us at the harbour. Bill, a lively character full of wit and local tales, immediately set the tone for the day ahead.

Our first destination was the dramatic coastal cliffs at **Bullers of Buchan**, a natural amphitheatre teeming with birdlife. The hike around the cliffs was invigorating, with sea spray in the air and calls of seabirds echoing around us. Highlights included sightings of puffins, kittiwakes, northern fulmars, razorbills, common guillemots, shags, gannets, and even a few rock doves. For any birder, this was a true feast for the senses.





By midday, we continued to the **Sands of Forvie**, an expansive and wind-swept reserve of dunes and heathland. Here, we observed more seabirds and were lucky enough to see a grey seal colony basking along the shore—an unforgettable sight.

Our final stop was the charming village of **Fittie** (Footdee), a hidden gem tucked away at the edge of the city. This old fishing village, with its compact cottages and quirky touches, offered a glimpse into Aberdeen’s maritime heritage. A walking tour through its lanes gave us insight into the lives of the fishermen and their families who once lived here.



Returning to *Hondius*, we met new fellow travelers who would join us for the remainder of our Arctic journey. As we sailed out of the harbour, dolphins surfaced nearby—a fitting farewell from Aberdeen’s waters.

Next stop: Fair Isle.

#### Day 4 – Sunday 01 June, Fair Isle

08h00 GPS Position: 59.5339° N, 1.6333° W

Wind: SW4 • Sea: Slight • Weather: Partly cloudy • Air temperature: +10°C

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Our morning started with a sunny and beautiful approach to the southern coast of Fair Isle. We headed to our landing site on the Eastern side of the island where we knew the puffin colony was only a short walk away. The zodiac ride in was smooth and swarmed with puffins in flight.



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Upon landing we all started exploring the green rolling landscape. Some of us went directly to the nearest hilltop to watch the puffins in their burrows, others decided to walk, or catch a ride with the locals, down the scenic road to the community center where hot coffee and locally made handcrafts were being offered. Others explored the iconic lighthouse, the museum, and the bird observatory.



Late afternoon it was time to head back to Hondius, which was waiting for us directly outside the harbor. The weather was beautiful, but the swell on the water had picked up and made the ride and disembarkment of the zodiac a bit exciting, giving us a good taste of how quickly the conditions could change - great practice as we soon head further north. Our zodiac drives met the challenge with a smile and soon we were all on board for recap and a well deserved dinner.

After dinner we joined Brenya, Rustyn and the rest of the expedition staff in the lounge for a fun and enlightening icebreaker game that really made us aware of 'Who was who?' amongst us. It was a good day and we went to bed anticipating what the next days would bring.

### Day 5 – Monday 2 June, Day at sea

08h00 GPS Position: 61°20.1'N / 003° 03.4'W

Wind: WSW5 • Sea: Moderate • Weather: Overcast • Air temperature: +8°C

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Yesterday feels like a dream – Fair Isle was absolutely magical but the evening at sea was a bit rough. We all knew, however, that the northern seas are swelly and we accepted this part of the adventure. When we woke up in the morning the sea was already calmer, giving a sense of relief to many of us. Feeling the gentle sway of the ship we made our way north.

Today, we're all buzzing with anticipation as we head towards Jan Mayen, a place many of us have dreamt of visiting for ages.



The day started with a delicious buffet breakfast, fueling us up for what turned out to be a surprisingly engaging day at sea, even without a land excursion. The expedition team kicked things off with an invitation to the lounge for a lecture by one of our

guides, Andi, who taught us how to identify whales and dolphins we might encounter during our journey.

Later, Jakub captivated us with his "Amazing Water" lecture in the Observation Lounge. Who knew water could be so fascinating? He truly brought out the incredible physical properties of it. Then, Peter Prokosh, a renown bird expert among the birder's community, shared his insights on the East Atlantic Flyway of Coastal Birds, which really tied into our earlier bird sightings. Meanwhile the birders on board were patrolling the sky looking for birds and they noted different species of skuas, guillemots and gulls, among many others. It's amazing to see their passion!

The expedition team then held a recap in the bar, which was a great opportunity to chat and share our experiences. The day wrapped up with a lovely plated dinner, followed by daily wildlife listing with Meike and Paolo. Even though it was a day at sea with no landings, it was packed with learning opportunities and the sheer joy of being out at sea. As Columbus wisely said, "You can never cross the ocean until you have the courage to lose sight of the shore." And what an incredible ocean it is! We can't wait to see what tomorrow brings as we get closer to Jan Mayen!

## Day 6 – Tuesday 3 June, Day at sea

08h00 GPS Position: 67°00.4'N / 005°58.9'W

Wind: SE4 • Sea: Slight • Weather: Overcast • Air temperature: +6°C

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As a rule, days spent at sea rarely leave vivid memories — neither in the hearts of cruise ship passengers, nor, once upon a time, in the hearts of brave seafarers who risked their lives setting out on wind-driven wooden sailboats to explore the distant corners of our planet. On such days, the ship simply follows its set course, swaying on the waves and resisting gusts of wind that try either to slow it down or hasten its journey.

Nevertheless, early in the morning, while everyone was still asleep, an event occurred that divided the lives of some passengers into a “before” and “after”: unnoticed by all, the *Hondius* crossed the Arctic Circle — an imaginary line of great astronomical significance. From this point northward, one can observe phenomena such as the Midnight Sun in summer and Polar Night in winter. Not all of us had previously been beyond the Arctic Circle. But as of today, we can all be proud of this achievement and casually drop this fun fact into a conversation:

- You know, when I was beyond the Arctic Circle...
- You were where? Wow! Can you tell us more? That sounds amazing!

After breakfast, Chris, our expedition leader, gathered us in the observation lounge for a mandatory briefing on polar bear safety. After all, we were officially in the Arctic now, and exciting landings awaited us. It was important to review the safety guidelines — so as not to get eaten by accident.

That wasn't the end of the morning program. Sven, one of our geographers, invited us to his lecture on the geology and tectonics of Jan Mayen Island, which we were heading towards and hoped to reach the following day.

Before we knew it, it was lunchtime, and we, feeling like true polar explorers, gathered in the restaurant to refuel.

At 3:00 PM, we were asked to set our clocks one hour forward. Scotland — and its time zone — was behind us, and ahead lay Spitsbergen, which runs on time aligned with its longitude. For us, this primarily meant one less hour of sleep that night. No big deal — we'll sleep when we're dead!

The *Hondius* continued its journey northward through the whimsical waters of the Atlantic Ocean. The swell was picking up. Some of us even started to feel the early signs of seasickness. Still, at 4:15 PM we all gathered again in the observation lounge for Meike's lecture on the history of Jan Mayen's discovery. Shortly before the lecture began, Ralf, our head chef, surprised us with a cake — made in collaboration with our pastry chef — to celebrate our crossing of the Arctic Circle.



Before dinner, we had our daily recap, during which Chris explained the details of our upcoming landing on Jan Mayen Island. After dinner, we all headed back to our cabins to prepare for the next day and rest.



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## Day 7 – Wednesday 4 June, Jan Mayen

08h00 GPS Position: 71.0318° N, 8.2920° W

Wind: NNE4 • Sea: Very slight • Weather: Overcast • Air temperature: +2°C

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This morning brought an air of excitement as Hondius sailed towards the mysterious island of Jan Mayen. Low clouds hung over the sea, limiting our view of the Beerenberg — the world’s northernmost active volcano. Still, the island gradually emerged through the mist, and with it came signs of life. Little Auks made their first appearance of the trip, small flocks flying past the bow, along with an Arctic Skua and the occasional dark-morph Northern Fulmar among the usual pale ones. Several Brünnich’s Guillemots were also seen, getting closer to the Arctic Circle.

As the coastline drew closer, the sea conditions looked better than expected, once the gangway was opened the waves flowed right into the ship, so we had to wait a little while to try again. Sure enough, the good news came during breakfast, the Bridgeteam and Chris out EL gave green light. Zodiac operations went smoothly, and not long after, we stepped ashore onto the black volcanic sands of Jan Mayen.



We hiked inland toward one of the island’s great wildlife spectacles — a colony of Little Auks. After a short walk along a ridge and down toward the colony, we settled in and simply sat. In silence, we listened to the birds. Groups of up to 50 little auks flew by overhead, landing on nearby rocks with their characteristic trills and chatters filling the air. Sitting quietly also brought a new awareness of the ground beneath us — the rocks were

dotted with tiny, intricate lichens and soft mosses, a surprising abundance of life in such a stark place.

On a hill facing the beach where we landed this morning a memorial stone stood quietly in remembrance of the seven Dutchmen who attempted to overwinter here in 1634 but didn't survive. This island carries over 400 years of Dutch history, discovered and mapped by Dutch sailors in 1614 during their search for new whaling grounds. The landscape was striking with dark rocky soil, sparse vegetation, and dramatic ridgelines. Scattered driftwood and weathered whale bones gave the beach a wild, historic feel.

Our return walk took us along the black-sand beach with over 2000 Northern Fulmars sitting on the waters close to the beach.





© Meike Sjoer

Back on board, we were greeted as always by a delicious lunch prepared by chef Ralf and his galley team, a welcome comfort after a morning in the raw Arctic air.

In the afternoon, we sailed northwest through thick fog. Onboard, Tiffany gave an informative and engaging lecture on the Pinnipeds of the North, introducing us to the seals we might encounter during the rest of our voyage.

As the day came to a close, the daily recap brought everyone back together to reflect on our Jan Mayen experience. Later in the evening, Meike hosted her popular wildlife listing session in the lecture room, where we shared photos, sightings, and stories from recent

days. A highlight was the news about the ringed Great Auk on Fair Isle — confirmed to be five years old.

It was a full day, rich with history, nature, and shared moments. Our landing on Jan Mayen — remote, stark, and beautiful — will be one to remember.

### Day 8 – Thursday 5 June, In the pack ice

08h00 GPS Position: 73°16.5' N, 009°30.4'W

Wind: NNE6-7 • Sea: Slight • Weather: Overcast • Air temperature: -1°C

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What an incredible day we had today, Day 8 of our Arctic adventure! We woke up around 07:30, and the ship was already surrounded by the most breathtaking sea ice, having entered it early in the morning, north of Jan Mayen. The sheer scale and beauty of it were just mesmerizing!

We enjoyed a hearty buffet breakfast before eagerly heading out onto the decks, the bridge, and the bow, binoculars in hand, ready to spot some Arctic wildlife. The expedition team encouraged us to keep a keen eye out, promising announcements for any close sightings. It was a truly unique experience, gliding through the icy landscape, everyone bundled up and scanning the horizon. We were thrilled to catch glimpses of some birds, a real highlight for many of us, especially the keen birders on board!



Later in the day, we gathered for insightful lectures. Jakub broadened our understanding of the fascinating world of Arctic sea ice, which was particularly relevant given our current surroundings. It was great to learn more about the environment we were exploring.

For lunch, we indulged in another delicious buffet in the Dining Room, recharging after our morning's wildlife vigil.

As the day drew to a close, we joined the Expedition Team in the Observation Lounge for our daily recap, sharing stories and reflecting on the day's incredible sights.

The grand finale was a fantastic BBQ dinner served right on the back of Deck 5! It was such a memorable way to end a day spent immersed in the stunning frozen wilderness.



We certainly felt like true explorers today, constantly learning and marveling at the wonders of the Arctic sea ice! What an unforgettable experience!

### Day 9 – Friday 6 June, In the pack ice

08h00 GPS Position: 74°26.3' N, 009°45.0'W

Wind: NW6 • Sea: Slight • Weather: Overcast • Air temperature: -2°C

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We were gently woken up at 07:45 by our Expedition leader Chris' voice over the ship's intercom, reminding us that we had another full day to explore the Arctic pack ice. Spirits were high—this was prime polar bear territory, and anticipation was thick in the air. The ice had drifted further west overnight, so Hondius adjusted course, slicing gracefully through the frozen expanse to reach the shifting edge.

Binoculars became extensions of our faces as we scanned the infinite, undulating whiteness. Every shadow, every mound of snow could be *something*. And then—it happened. A flicker of movement against the sky. Not the bear we had all been hoping for, but a different kind of Arctic treasure: the elusive ivory gull.

First one, then another, and another. They circled and swooped with ghostly elegance, pristine white birds against a backdrop of endless white and pale blue. Their black legs and dark eyes stood out starkly against their snowy plumage, and their sharp beaks hinted at their opportunistic, scavenging nature. For some of us, seasoned birders and first-timers alike, this moment alone made the day unforgettable.



After a warm lunch, we returned to the decks, scanning with renewed purpose. The bear remained elusive, but a brief thrill came when someone shouted, “Whale fluke!” We rushed to the railings, hearts pounding, but the creature had vanished beneath the ice. Still, we clung to the excitement.

As a perfect pick-me-up, the hotel team served steaming hot chocolate at the aft of the ship. With mittens wrapped around mugs and smiles shared between sips, we soaked in the Arctic stillness. Later, another whale surfaced briefly, but it too slipped away quickly—skittish, shy, or perhaps just indifferent to our awe.

In the quiet of the afternoon, some of us attended Paolo’s fascinating lecture on the history of North Pole expeditions—tales of courage and frostbite—and later we were drawn to Tiphanie’s talk on whale adaptations, learning how blubber, echolocation, and migration patterns all come into play in these extreme latitudes.

By evening, as Hondius gently eased out of the ice and back into open waters, we gathered in the lounge for a light-hearted trivia quiz with Brenya. Laughter and friendly competition filled the room, a perfect close to a day of searching, learning, and Arctic wonder.

No polar bear today—but the ice had still given us magic.



## Day 10 – Saturday 7 June, Day at sea

08h00 GPS Position: 76°07.7' N, 002°51.9'W

Wind: NNE • Sea: Slight • Weather: Overcast • Air temperature: -1°C

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What a nice morning to wake up to – out of the weather system with all its rain, snow, strong winds and variable visibility! Definitely a perfect day for spotting wildlife, whether it was the feathered ones or the bigger ones living in the ocean. It didn't last that long before the first calls came on the PA-system, that whale blows were spotted on the horizon, and people gathered at the bridge and outside decks, carrying binoculars and cameras to see and capture the moment when Hondius passed the whales. At least two groups of Northern Bottlenose Whales were spotted – one of them passing so close to the ship, that a slight turn was made to ensure that we didn't get too close to them. What a start of the day!

This morning also brought two interesting lectures. Our “guest lecturer”, Peter Prokosch brought the lecture of his vision of the Arctic 2052 – a vision of the Arctic, where science can be made peacefully among the Arctic countries, the pristinity of Arctic preserved with a minimum of pollution and human influence in mining for minerals or oil. A vision that we can all hope for will come true!

Then Jakub and Rose shared the lecture about the geology of Svalbard – the many different types of rocks seen in the archipelago, the glaciers and their “life”, and how the permafrost can create interesting structures in the gravel. Was it pancake or pizza-shaped?!

During lunch, more whales were spotted – and a couple of rare, flying visitors were also seen – the whimbrel and the long tailed skua – there was something for everyone to see.



In the afternoon the visibility dropped as we entered some quite dense snow showers, but it gave a perfect opportunity to attend Sasha’s lecture about his younger years and his 5 years as guide in the Russian ghost mining town, Pyramiden.

An interesting trip through the history of the town, and all the wildlife that could be seen there.

After our dinner it was time to do the last wildlife list with some of the animals – swimming and flying – we saw today.

Tomorrow we set foot on Svalbard!

## Day 11 – Sunday 8 June, Poolepynten and St. Jonsfjorden

08h00 GPS Position: 78°26.0' N, 011°55.6'W

Wind: S4 • Sea: Slight • Weather: Overcast • Air temperature: +5°C

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Early in the morning, we arrive in Spitsbergen, reaching the final destination of our journey. The sea is calm, and visibility is excellent. Many of us have been up since dawn, hoping to spot polar bears along the coast or simply enjoying the stunning view of the snow-covered mountains of Prins Karls Forland, stretching out along the west coast of Spitsbergen. However, we don't spot any polar bears—those many white dots all turn out to be reindeer.

As planned, we make a landing at Poolepynten. Named after the English whaling pioneer Jonas Poole, who visited Spitsbergen several times in the early 17th century, Poolepynten is well known as a haul-out site for walruses.

While we are still having breakfast, *Hondius* drops anchor and our guides head ashore to scout and secure the landing site. Shortly after, we follow them ashore in small groups and slowly approach the walruses. Walking in a line, we advance carefully so that the animals notice us without being startled. We get as close as 60 meters to a group of around 20 walruses and are able to observe them in peace and quiet.

On our way back to the Zodiacs, our guides share more fascinating facts about the walruses. They explain how the large amounts of driftwood made their way from the Russian Arctic, across the polar sea, to Svalbard, and provide further insights into the region's natural history. Back on board, we listen to a lecture by Meike—the same one already attended by the second group that went ashore.

During lunch, *Hondius* crosses the Forlandsundet and enters St. Jonsfjorden. Spring has only just begun in Svalbard, and the end of the fjord is still covered in sea ice. *Hondius* anchors off Gjertsenodden.

Here, we all go ashore together and divide into four groups. At the shore stands a small cabin built by one of Spitsbergen's last polar bear hunters, Per Johansson—though it was never used for hunting, only for recreation.

The fast and medium hiking groups climb the lateral moraine of Gaffelbreen and are rewarded with a spectacular view of the glacier and the bay in front of it, which is still covered in ice. The Norwegian name "Gaffelbreen" translates to "Fork Glacier."

The return route leads us through gentle tundra, where we are amazed by the variety of wildlife we encounter. We spot Svalbard Rock Ptarmigans still in their winter plumage, Arctic Skuas, Snow Buntings, a few Ringed Seals in the distance, and several reindeer up close. Some of us even witness the birth of a reindeer calf.



Back on board, we raise a glass with the captain to celebrate a wonderful and successful journey. What a time it has been—what an experience! An adventure we will never forget. After a delicious dinner from Ralph’s galley, it’s time to pack our bags, download our photos and the slideshow, and gather for one final toast to this unforgettable trip in the bar.

## Day 12 – Monday 9 June, Disembarkation in Longyearbyen

08h00 GPS Position: 78°14.5' N, 015°32.6'E

Wind: S4 • Sea: Slight • Weather: Overcast • Air temperature: +5°C

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As the first light of dawn breaks over the Arctic, we arrive in Longyearbyen. While we savor a final breakfast aboard the Hondius, our suitcases quietly make their way ashore. The moment of disembarkation is bittersweet—saying goodbye to this ship, our floating sanctuary, feels like parting with an old friend. For days, the Hondius has been our warm and welcoming haven in the vast, wild expanse of the polar world.

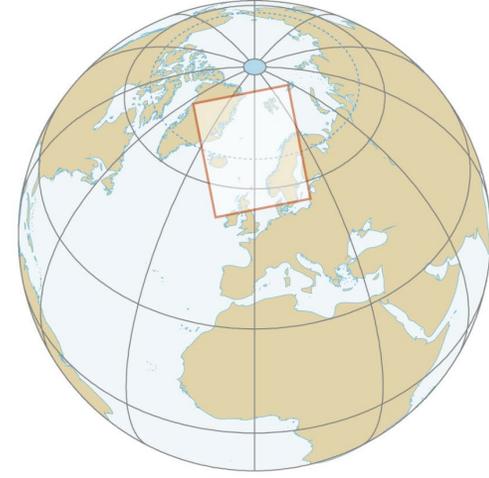
Together, we've witnessed wonders few ever glimpse—rare wildlife, pristine landscapes, and moments so breathtaking they will forever live in our hearts. We've forged bonds, shared laughter, awe, and discovery. Now, we carry those memories with us as we return home, changed by the magic of this extraordinary voyage.

Thank you for joining us on this incredible journey—for your curiosity, your camaraderie, and your spirit of adventure. We part ways for now, but we sincerely hope our paths cross again, somewhere out there in the great, wide world.



**Total distance sailed on our voyage: 2164 nm**

On behalf of Oceanwide Expeditions, Captain Jan Dobrogowski, Expedition Leader Chris Long, Hotel Manager Albert Don and all the crew and staff of M/V Hondius, it has been a pleasure travelling with you.





Bar-headed Goose	<i>Anser indicus</i>													
Eurasian Wigeon	<i>Anas penelope</i>													
Eurasian Teal	<i>Anas crecca</i>													
Mallard	<i>Anas platyrhynchos</i>					X	X							
Northern Pintail	<i>Anas acuta</i>													
Tufted Duck	<i>Aythya fuligula</i>													
Common Eider	<i>Somateria mollissima</i>					X	X			X				X
King Eider	<i>Somateria spectabilis</i>													X
Steller's Eider	<i>Polysticta stelleri</i>													
Long-tailed Duck	<i>Clangula hyemalis</i>													
Black Scoter	<i>Melanitta nigra</i>					X								
Common Goldeneye	<i>Bucephala clangula</i>													
Gyr Falcon	<i>Falco rusticolus</i>													
Common Kestrel	<i>Falco tinnunculus</i>													
Eurasian Hobby	<i>Falco subbuteo</i>													
Peregrine Falcon	<i>Falco peregrinus</i>													
Common Merganser	<i>Mergus merganser</i>					X								
Rock Ptarmigan	<i>Lagopus mutus hyperboreus</i>													X
Common Buzzard	<i>Buteo buteo</i>					X								
Eurasian Coot	<i>Fulica atra</i>													
Eurasian Oystercatcher	<i>Haematopus ostralegus</i>			X		X	X							
Northern Lapwing	<i>Vanellus vanellus</i>					X	X							
European Golden Plover	<i>Pluvialis apricaria</i>						X							

Ringed Plover	<i>Charadrius hiaticula</i>						X	X	X	X	X			
European Golden Plover	<i>Pluvialis apricaria</i>													
Sanderling	<i>Calidris alba</i>						X							
Pectoral Sandpiper	<i>Calidris melanotos</i>													
Purple Sandpiper	<i>Calidris maritima</i>													X
Red Knot	<i>Calidris canutus</i>													X
Dunlin	<i>Calidris alpina</i>				X	X								
Whimbrel	<i>Numenius phaeopus</i>					X							X	
Common Redshank	<i>Tringa totanus</i>													
Ruddy Turnstone	<i>Arenaria interpres</i>													
Common snipe	<i>Gallinago gallinago</i>						X							
Whimbrel	<i>Numenius phaeopus</i>						X						X	
Eurasian Curlew	<i>Numenius arquata</i>		X				X							
Grey Phalarope	<i>Phalaropus fulicarius</i>													
Red-necked Phalarope	<i>Phalaropus lobatus</i>													
Pomarine Skua	<i>Stercorarius pomarinus</i>						X	X						
Arctic Skua	<i>Stercorarius parasiticus</i>			X	X	X			X	X				
Long-tailed Skua	<i>Stercorarius longicaudus</i>							X	X		X	X	X	X
Great Skua	<i>Stercorarius skua</i>						X	X		X				X
Sabine's Gull	<i>Xema sabini</i>											(X)		
Black-headed Gull	<i>Larus ridibundus</i>		X	X	X									
Common/Mew Gull	<i>Larus canus</i>		X	X	X	X					X			
Glaucous Gull	<i>Larus hyperboreus</i>										X	X	X	X
<b>English Name</b>	<b>Latin</b>													
			<b>29-mei</b>	<b>30-mei</b>	<b>31-mei</b>	<b>1-jun</b>	<b>2-jun</b>	<b>3 juni</b>	<b>4 juni</b>	<b>5 juni</b>	<b>6 juni</b>	<b>7 juni</b>	<b>8 juni</b>	





Western Jackdaw	<i>Coloeus monedula</i>			X		X								
Hooded Crow	<i>Corvus cornix</i>					X	X							
Carrion Crow	<i>Corvus corone</i>					X	X							
Magpie	<i>Pica pica</i>					X								
Raven	<i>Corvus corax</i>						X							
Twite	<i>Carduelis flavirostris</i>						X							
Linnet	<i>Carduelis cannabina</i>													
Yellowhammer	<i>Emberiza citrinella</i>					X								
Brambling	<i>Fringilla montifringilla</i>													
Sedge Warbler	<i>Acrocephalus schoenobaenus</i>					X								
Eurasian Blackcap	<i>Sylvia atricapilla</i>													
Garden Warbler	<i>Sylvia borin</i>													
Lesser Whitethroat	<i>Sylvia curruca</i>													
Common Whitethroat	<i>Sylvia communis</i>													
Common Starling	<i>Sturnus vulgaris</i>					X								
Song Thrush	<i>Turdus philomelos</i>					X								
Spotted Flycatcher	<i>Muscicapa striata</i>						X							
House Sparrow	<i>Passer domesticus</i>					X								
Grey Wagtail	<i>Motacilla cinerea</i>													
Meadow Pipit	<i>Anthus pratensis</i>					X	X							
Eurasian Rock Pipit	<i>Anthus petrosus</i>					X	X							
Common Chaffinch	<i>Fringilla coelebs</i>					X								
European Greenfinch	<i>Chloris chloris</i>					X								

Twite	<i>Linaria flavirostris</i>						X								
European Goldfinch	<i>Carduelis carduelis</i>					X									
Eurasian Siskin	<i>Spinus spinus</i>														
Common Reed Bunting	<i>Emberiza schoeniclus</i>														
Nightjar							X								
Merlin							X								
Moorhen						X	X								
Icterine warbler	<i>Hippolais icterina</i>						X								
Rook						X									
Tree sparrow						X									
Ring sparrow															
<b>MAMMALS</b>						X									
<b>English</b>	<b>Latin</b>				<b>29-mei</b>	<b>30-mei</b>	<b>31-mei</b>	<b>1-jun</b>	<b>2-jun</b>	<b>3 juni</b>	<b>4 juni</b>	<b>5 juni</b>	<b>6 juni</b>	<b>7 juni</b>	<b>8 juni</b>
Walrus	<i>Odobenus rosmarus</i>														X
Bearded seal	<i>Erignathus barbatus</i>														
Ringed seal	<i>Phoca hispida</i>											X			
Harp seal	<i>Pagophilus groenlandicus</i>											X			
Hooded seal	<i>Cystophora cristata</i>														
Common /Harbour seal	<i>Phoca vitulina</i>					X									X
Grey seal	<i>Halichoerus grypus</i>					X	X	X							
Minke Whale	<i>Balaenoptera acutorostrata</i>					X			X						
Sei Whale	<i>Balaenoptera borealis</i>														
Blue Whale	<i>Balaenoptera musculus</i>														
Fin Whale	<i>Balaenoptera physalus</i>														
Humpback Whale	<i>Megaptera novaeangliae</i>														
Bowhead whale	<i>Balaena mysticetus</i>											X			



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# Chris Long – Expedition Leader

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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 emerald green river. Most of their food came from a huge vegetable garden or was 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 out 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 60 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 and East Antarctica.

Chris is also no stranger to the arctic. He once sailed the notorious northwest passage across the top of Greenland, Canada, and Alaska and spent much of the covid pandemic living with 150 husky dogs in Tromso, northern Norway, enduring two long cold dark arctic winters training for long distance dog races.

Since recently returning to New Zealand, he has published an autobiography and is training for his commercial fixed-wing pilot's license.

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## Chloé Maréchal – Asst.Exp. Leader

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Chloé is a dedicated diver with an insatiable passion for marine life and exploration. Armed with a European master's degree in Marine Biodiversity and Conservation, she's on a mission to share her expertise and promote the conservation of the marine environment. But here's the twist—while everyone else is busy oohing and aahing over flashy dolphins and majestic whales, Chloé's heart belongs to the unsung heroes of the ocean—the often underrated world of plankton and the mysteries of unseen microbes. She's here to show that even the tiniest organisms can have big personalities!

In April 2013, Chloé's dedication and skills were recognized when she was chosen as the prestigious 2013-14 European Rolex Our World Underwater Scholar. This remarkable opportunity allowed her to work alongside renowned leaders in the fields of marine science and diving industry, providing her with diverse experiences and invaluable insights. During this transformative year, her first encounter with Antarctica left an indelible mark, igniting a lifelong passion for polar exploration.

Chloé isn't just a science nerd with a thing for plankton. She's an adventurous soul with an insatiable curiosity. She's dived across all continents, lived in 20 countries, and now sails on her 12-meter aluminum boat. Together with her partner she has recently crossed the challenging waters of the North Sea.

Currently, Chloé calls northern Norway her home, residing just above the polar circle. When not guiding, she explores underwater wonders, uncovers forgotten wrecks, and maps uncharted underwater caves. Her passion for the ocean, sailing, and work with Oceanwide Expeditions fuel her relentless pursuit of adventure.

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## Pierre Gallego – Asst. Exp. Leader

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Pierre is a veterinarian specialized in marine mammal medicine. He has been working in the field of marine biology for 18 years, and has been organizing marine mammal research internships around the world since 2004. He represents the Government of Luxembourg at the International Whaling Commission and CCAMLR, and works with numerous international NGOs to promote marine mammal conservation and to fight cetacean captivity.

He is currently carrying out his PhD with the Oceanology Lab of the University of Liege, Belgium. His PhD thesis deals with

pollutants and stable isotopes in humpback whales off Ecuador and Mozambique.

He is a keen birdwatcher and enjoys photography. The ocean is his passion, and water is his element!

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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 another season in the Antarctic with passion and enthusiasm, sharing the magnificent experiences that await all on an expedition cruise.

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# Jakub Małecki - Expedition Guide

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Jakub was born in Poland in 1985. As a kid, he dreamed of becoming an astronaut, but later his focus shifted towards astronomy. Eventually, he obtained a masters and doctoral degree in Earth Sciences and became a glaciologist. As he puts it, researching remote, glacier-covered regions is almost like landing on another planet, so the childhood dream has partly come true.

Since 2007 Jakub has been studying glaciers across the world, either directly or remotely, i.e., using satellite or aerial images. His main interest is

how glaciers respond to changing climate in different environmental settings. Most of his glaciology work Jakub carries out on Svalbard, the arctic archipelago located midway between Norway and the north pole, where he fell in love with ice. Since then, Jakub joins expeditions to remote regions on an every-year basis.

Jakub considers public education by the science community at least as important as delivering new knowledge, so he is a keen glaciology communicator, book author and a frequent guest to the Polish media outlets and science festivals where he comments on polar and mountain affairs. Apart from glaciology, Jakub is a huge enthusiast of planetary sciences and space exploration and tries to play the ukulele.

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# Alexander Romanovskiy – Exp. Guide

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

In the year of 2011 however, Alexander decided to pause his scientific career and start doing something completely

different, which means working in tourism and traveling the world. He spent 2 seasons working as a trekking guide in Fann mountains (Tajikistan), 1 season on Novolazarevskaya Antarctic scientific station (Queen Maud Land, Antarctica) working as a member of a guesthouse crew.

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

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

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# Paolo Bellezze – Expedition Guide

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Born in Argentina (Dec 80') and raised in Italy, Paolo finally moved to Scotland where he settled in 2006. Nowadays, when not at sea, he splits his time between Argentina and Scotland.

Before expedition cruises Paolo spent 12 years working shoreside in merchant shipping. He was a Product Manager for a Norwegian company developing Voyage Planning and Marine Weather Forecasting Systems for merchant ships.

He also started Paragliding at the age of 14 and has been very involved in the sport as a school owner instructing both beginners and advanced courses for over 20 years. When not paragliding, Paolo likes to sea kayak and he mixes Field Guide with Kayak Guide roles onboard.

In 2021 he started working full time in expedition cruises, since then he has guide in several expeditions such as Antarctica, South Georgia, Falklands, Greenland West coast, Greenland East coast, Iceland, Faroes Islands and British Isles.

Aside from sea kayaking and flying he is into hiking, motorbikes and spending time with friends. He is passionate about polar regions and sharing the experience with our guests.

“Happiness is only real when shared” (Chris McCandless)

Languages: English, Spanish, Italian.

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# Meike Sjoer - Expedition Guide

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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.

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# Rose Li Hong - Expedition Guide

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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.

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# Sven Joest – Expedition Guide

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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.

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# Philipp Konietzko - Expedition Guide

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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.

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## Rustyn Mesdag – Expedition Guide

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Rustyn Mesdag was born in Seattle, Washington. He was working as an alpine guide, when in 2004 he relocated to Chilean Patagonia where he started a guide service outside of Torres del Paine National Park, specializing in long distance treks and big wall climbing.

For 25 years he has been leading climbers, travelers and trekkers through the most extreme terrains around the world. Aside from the guide service, he moonlighted as a travel writer, published an English speaking travelers newspaper in Patagonia, operated equipment centers & immigrated between four countries.

Always looking for the next adventure, Rustyn still finds himself working around the world, in such places as South America, Antarctica, Canada, Greenland, Svalbard, Iceland, the Amazon and East Africa - helping others explore. Rustyn speaks English, Dutch and Spanish and is more than happy to sit and spend time discussing world travels, off-grid living, alpine climbing and the in's & out's of cold weather equipment management.

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# Brenya Green – Expedition Guide

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Brenya grew up in a small town along the Grand River in Southern Ontario, Canada. After relocating to Toronto to pursue a career in Social Work, her journey took an unexpected turn into the world of expedition ships and has been in the industry since 2016.

Her primary focus over the years has been the polar regions, Canadian Arctic, Greenland, and Antarctica, but she has also worked in Scotland, Iceland, Seychelles, and Madagascar and has often found herself spending more time at sea than on land. Through the years, she has filled many different roles from

office leadership to field guide.

When she's not on board, Brenya is focused on building her off-grid cabin located in Washington State.

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# Andi Schwertz – Expedition Guide

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Andi was born in Budapest and grew up in Germany. Andi has always been fascinated by animals and nature, especially marine mammals ever since she was a child. She wanted to be a whale researcher, became a whale expert, without studying at a university, but through passion. She initially graduated in sociology, but then ran her own cocktail bar for 10 years. However, her enthusiasm for sea creatures never left her and she began to travel the world to be close to these fascinating animals and to observe them.

As a scuba and freediver, she was able to get particularly close to many whale species and experience adventures. For example, she has already swum with orcas three times in arctic Norway. She came to Oceanwide because she wanted to share her passion with heart and enthusiasm. She was already able to gain experience as a trainee in Antarctica in the spring of 2023. The polar regions with their special fauna exert a very special attraction on her. She is also interested in landscape photography and has great tips for successful mobile phone photography. Another passion of hers is yoga, which she also practices as a yoga instructor. She speaks English, German, Hungarian, and a little bit of Spanish and French. Andi is looking forward to more great adventures as a team member of Oceanwide!

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# Tiphanie May - Expedition Guide

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Tiphanie is an 8<sup>th</sup> generation Falkland Islander living in Stanley. She was raised on a small group of islands called Speedwell Island Group, owned and worked by her parents as a sheep farm and family crab business.

Tiph was raised surrounded by Falkland's wildlife with her family island boasting rookeries of Magellanic penguins, Gentoo penguins as well as several other breeding birds. The islands also include haul outs of South American sealions and elephant seals. Surrounded by all this wildlife it was of no surprise that she found nature

fascinating. From the penguin couple that lived under her house to the wonderful variety of creatures found in the crab pots, marine life was a theme. This led to her to travel to the UK at 16 to study to be a marine biologist.

Tiph spent 6 years in the UK studying to get her BSc (HONS) Marine Biology and MSc in Marine Biology. Using her holidays to volunteer in the Falklands for various conservation projects to gain experience. Upon completing her studies, she joined the Government Fisheries Department, spending 200 days per year at sea monitoring seabird activity and collecting research material. The sea has been a big part of her life, from a young age she worked to haul crab pots with her father's boat. Later she went on to work for an experimental sustainable fish farm which allowed her to get her RYA qualifications in Power Boat. Tiph currently works full time operating a small boat in the Falklands.

Tiphanie started working in the tourist industry at the age of 23. Having grown up with no roads her whole life, 4X4 tour driving just made sense. Tiph has worked to provide a variety of tours such as hiking, 4X4 and penguin colony visits. In 2018, Tiphanie was offered the amazing opportunity to go to Antarctica and South Georgia with Oceanwide as guide. She fell in love with the scale of the landscape and has never looked back.

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## Claudio D'Ambrosio – Ships Doctor

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Claudio was born in a small farming village in Southern Italy and moved to Rome for his medical studies. He completed his medical degree in Rome, Italy where he also earned his postgraduate specialty in Internal Medicine. He later earned also postgraduate specialty in Respiratory Medicine, and completed a PhD Program in Immunology and Medical Microbiology. Claudio loved bench research in his Medical School years and was a Visiting Fellow at the National Institutes of Health in Bethesda, MD – USA for 4 years from 1998 to 2002. He also worked for brief periods in Australia

and Spain for research projects in Drug Allergy.

He worked almost his entire career in University and Hospital settings until 2013. A 2 month “once in a lifetime cruise ship Doctor contract” in September 2013 was the beginning a major turn into his life and career. Claudio has now found his passion working as Shipboard Physician worldwide in the cruise ship industry, sailing across North America, the Caribbean, Alaska, Asia, New Zealand, and the South Pacific.

In his free time Claudio enjoys outdoor activities such as hiking, kayaking and cycling.

He is very fond of nature excursions with great interest in marine mammals, particularly in comparative anatomy and physiology of the respiratory system. The Arctic and Antarctica were always his bucket list, as Captain Ernest Shackleton was one of his favorite childhood heroes!



## Arctic Ocean - Aberdeen, Fair Isle, Jan Mayen, Ice Edge, Spitsbergen, Birding

Date: 29/05/2025

Day: 1: Vlissingen - Embarkation

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

17:00+/- 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**.

18:15+/- We would like to invite you to **Captains Cocktails** in the **Observation Lounge on Deck 5**. You will meet the Captain, and 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. You will also meet your Expedition Team.

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

21:00 **Agents only** – Introduction to OEX with Helen and Andreas in the **Lecture Room** on deck 5.

Please note that tonight we will be sailing into the open sea. Take your seasickness medication before you really feel the movements of the vessel. 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 programs will be displayed around the ship and on TV screens.

*Let us probe the silent places, let us seek what luck betide us.  
Let us journey to a lonely land I know.  
There's a whisper on the night-wind, there's a star a gleam to guide us,  
And the Wild is calling, calling . . . let us go.*

*Robert Service, The Call of The Wild.*



## Arctic Ocean - Aberdeen, Fair Isle, Jan Mayen, Ice Edge, Spitsbergen, Birding

Date: 30/05/2025

Day 2: At sea

- 07:45 Wake-up call. Good morning!
- 08:00 Buffet breakfast will be served in the Dining Room on Deck 4.
- 09:15 For those guests staying with us to Longyearbyen, we will issue you with your **muck boots on deck 3**. We will call you Deck by Deck so please listen to announcements and remember to bring your thick socks.
- 09:15 **Agents only** – Q&A Session with Helen and Andreas in the Lecture Room.
- 10:15 Please join Meike in the Observation Lounge on deck 5 for her lecture, An introduction to Birds of the North Atlantic that we could encounter.
- 11:30 **Agents only** – Introduction to the OEX Arctic product in the Lecture Room with Pierre.
- 12:30-13:30 Buffet lunch will be served in the Dining Room on Deck 4.
- 14:00 **Agents only** – Introduction to the OEX Antarctic product in the Lecture Room with Chloe
- 15:30 Please join Paolo in the Observation Lounge for his lecture, Aberdeen Lighthouse.
- 17:00 **Agents only** - Bridge Tour with Captain Jan, Helen and Andreas, please meet in the Lecture Room.
- 18:15 Please join the Expedition Team in the Bar for recap.
- 19:00 Plated dinner will be served in the Dining Room.
- 20:45 Meike welcome you to the Lecture Room on Deck 5 for the first of the birding and wildlife recaps, where we will review as a group what has been seen during the day.

*“For speed and efficiency of travel, give me Amundsen, for scientific discovery, give me Scott, but when all hope is lost get down on your knees and pray for Shackleton.” – Raymond Priestley*



## Arctic Ocean - Aberdeen, Fair Isle, Jan Mayen, Ice Edge, Spitsbergen, Birding

Date: 31/05/2025

Day 3: Aberdeen

**Please note the clocks will have gone back 1 hour over night. (Midnight becomes 11pm again.)**

- 07:15 Wake up call.
- 07:30-08:30 Buffet breakfast will be served in the Dining Room on Deck 4. During breakfast there will be a table where you can pack your own lunch. Please make your lunch and take it with you to eat on land as there won't be any lunch available on the ship this day.
- 08:30+/- For those continuing to Longyearbyen with us, we hope to disembark you for your day's excursions in Aberdeen. The exact time will be dependent on when we receive customs clearance, please listen to announcements, and please do not approach the gangway before you are called. Please take your packed lunch with you.

*The bus tour will visit Scotland's North East sea cliffs and sand banks. This area is rich with seabird nesting grounds, seal haul outs and the stunning yet stereotypical Scottish landscapes. To wrap the tour off we shall stop at a 19<sup>th</sup> century fishing village.*

**For those leaving us in Aberdeen,** If you have any **large luggage** items that you would like assistance moving, please place it **outside your cabin before 07:30am**. Please ensure you have vacated your cabin and disembarked no later than 10:00. We would like to take this opportunity to thank you for travelling with Oceanwide Expeditions and look forward to welcoming you back onboard in the near future.

**Agents only,** for those who confirmed their participation in the program prior to the voyage, around 09:30 am there will be an organised tour. Please identify your luggage on the pier and take it with you on the bus that will be waiting for you.

**16:00** Embarkation of new guests.

**All continuing guests must be onboard by 17:00, please DO NOT BE LATE!**

*"All things considered there are only two kinds of men in the world; those that stay at home and those that do not, the latter are more interesting." - Rudyard Kipling*



## DAILY PROGRAM

# Arctic Ocean - Aberdeen, Fair Isle, Jan Mayen, Ice Edge, Spitsbergen, Birding

Date: 31/05/2025

Day 3: Aberdeen

**16:00** Embarkation of new guests.

**All guests must be onboard by 17:00, please DO NOT BE LATE! Returning passengers must check in at reception to receive a new key card and wifi voucher.**

**For those guests embarking in Aberdeen**, please make yourselves at home in your cabins and check you have received all your luggage! Please also go to **deck 3 to receive your waterproof muck boots.**

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

**PLEASE LISTEN FOR ANNOUNCEMENTS**

**17:15+/-** **For new guests**, Ship safety briefing, in the **Lecture Room 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.

**17:45+/-** **All guests are required to attend the muster.** Those 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+/-** **New Guests:** We would like to invite you to **Captains Cocktails** in the **Lecture Room on Deck 5**. You will meet the Captain, and 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, **including the plan for Fair Isle tomorrow**. You will also meet your Expedition Team.

**18:30+/-** For all guests coming from Vlissingen. Please join Chloe in the Observation Lounge for plans for Fair Isle tomorrow.

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

**20:30+/-** **For ALL guests.** Please join Chris in the Observation Lounge on deck 5 for a **Mandatory** zodiac safety lecture. Your attendance will be checked so please be on time.

*"All things considered there are only two kinds of men in the world; those that stay at home and those that do not, the latter are more interesting." - Rudyard Kipling*



## Arctic Ocean - Aberdeen, Fair Isle, Jan Mayen, Ice Edge, Spitsbergen, Birding

Date: 01/06/2025

Day 4: Fair Isle

*During the day we plan to visit Fair Isle, the southern most island of the Shetland Islands. Here we will explore the island searching for birds, wildlife, and experiencing some local culture.*

06:45 Wake-up call.

07:00-08:00 Buffet breakfast will be served in the Dining Room on Deck 4. During breakfast there will be a table where you can pack your own lunch. Please make your lunch and take it with you to eat on land as there won't be any lunch available on the ship this day.

08:00+/- We invite guests on decks 4-6-7 to the **Zodiac loading area on Deck 3** for a Zodiac shuttle to Fair Isle. Please be dressed in waterproof clothing with your muck boots on.

08:30+/- We invite guests on deck 3 to the **Zodiac loading area on Deck 3** for a Zodiac shuttle to Fair Isle. Please be dressed in waterproof clothing with your muck boots on.

*First shuttles back to the ship will begin at 12:00. And last zodiac to Honningsvåg will be at 14:45.  
Please don't be late!*

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

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

20:45 Meike welcome you to the Lecture Room on Deck 5 for the first of the birding and wildlife recaps, where we will review as a group what has been seen during the day.

*"When your feet are cold, cover your head." - Inuit proverb*



## DAILY PROGRAM

# Arctic Ocean - Aberdeen, Fair Isle, Jan Mayen, Ice Edge, Spitsbergen, Birding

Date: 02/06/2025

Day 5: At sea headed north

- 07:45 Wake-up call.
- 08:00-09:00 Buffet breakfast will be served in the Dining Room on Deck 4.
- 09:15 Andi invites you to the lounge for a lecture on identifying the whales and dolphins we might encounter during our journey.
- 11:15 Jakub invites you to the Observation Lounge for his lecture: Amazing Water, about the incredible physical properties of water.
- 12:00-13:00 Buffet lunch will be served in the Dining Room on Deck 4.
- 16:15 Please join Peter Prokosch in the Observation Lounge for a lecture about the Est Atlantic Flyway of Coastal Birds.
- 18:15 Please join the Expedition Team in the Bar for recap.
- 19:00 Plated dinner will be served in the Dining Room.
- 20:45 Please join Meike and Paolo for the day's wildlife listing in the lecture room straight after dinner.

*"You can never cross the ocean until you have the courage to lose sight of the shore"- Christoph Columbus*



## Arctic Ocean - Aberdeen, Fair Isle, Jan Mayen, Ice Edge, Spitsbergen, Birding

Date: 03/06/2025

Day 6: At sea crossing the Arctic Circle!

05:30-06:30 We expect to cross the arctic circle

07:45 Wake-up call.

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

09:15 Please join the expedition team for our **Mandatory**, AECO and Polar Bear Safety presentation in the observation lounge. This is **mandatory** for all passengers who want to leave the ship in the Arctic.

11:15 Come and join Sven in the observation lounge for an exciting talk on plate tectonics and volcanic activity on the fascinating island of Jan Mayen.

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

**It is time to change our clocks back Central European Standard Time which Svalbard runs on. 15:00 will become 16:00**

16:15 Meike invites you to the Observation Lounge for her lecture; The discovery of Jan Mayen.

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

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

*"It is of no purpose to discuss the use of knowledge. Man wants to know, and when he ceases to do so he is no longer man". - Fridtjof Nansen*



## Arctic Ocean - Aberdeen, Fair Isle, Jan Mayen, Ice Edge, Spitsbergen, Birding

Date: 04/06/2025

Day 7: Jan Mayen Island

*Today we hope to do a landing on Jan Mayen, an exposed active volcano in the middle of the northern Atlantic ocean. If we get ashore we can hike and explore the area around Walrusbukta, our permitted landing site for the day. Jan Mayen is an extremely exposed place to attempt any form of landing and a landing can never be guaranteed. So we will be assessing conditions on the day and will keep you updated.*

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 guests on deck 3 to the Zodiac loading area on Deck 3 for a Zodiac shuttle to Jan Mayen Island. Please be dressed in waterproof clothing with your muck boots on.

09:00+/- We invite guests on decks 4-6-7 to the Zodiac loading area on Deck 3 for a Zodiac shuttle to Jan Mayen Island. Please be dressed in waterproof clothing with your muck boots on.

13:30-14:30 Buffet lunch will be served in the Dining Room on Deck 4.

16:15 Please join Tiffanie for her lecture about: Pinnipeds of the north, Seals, that we may encounter during our voyage.

18:15 Please join the Expedition Team for daily recap

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

20:45 Please join Meike and Paolo for the day's wildlife listing in the lecture room straight after dinner.

*"One must never be in haste to end a day; there are too few of them in a lifetime". - Sir Francis Drake.*



## Arctic Ocean - Aberdeen, Fair Isle, Jan Mayen, Ice Edge, Spitsbergen, Birding

Date: 5<sup>th</sup> June 2025

Day 8: Exploring the sea ice spotting wildlife.

07:30 Wake up Call, however we expect to be in some sea ice around 6am.

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

*During the day we plan to be exploring the sea ice to the north of Jan Mayen 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 wildlife spotting's. If we have wildlife close by the announcements will only be made inside the ship to avoid disturbing the wildlife.*

*If we have some time in the open ocean, or encounter adverse weather conditions, then we will have some lectures. Most likely **Jakub will talk about arctic sea ice**, and **Chloe will talk about Plankton!** Times to be decided during the day.*

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

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

19:00 BBQ dinner will be served on the back of deck 5!

*"It is of no purpose to discuss the use of knowledge. Man wants to know, and when he ceases to do so he is no longer man". - Fridtjof Nansen*



## DAILY PROGRAM

# Arctic Ocean - Aberdeen, Fair Isle, Jan Mayen, Ice Edge, Spitsbergen, Birding

Date: 6<sup>th</sup> June 2025

Day 9: Exploring further into the sea ice.

07:45 Wakeup Call.

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

*During the day we plan to continue exploring the sea ice east of Greenland in search of wildlife. We encourage you to be on the outside decks, the bridge, and the bow to give the best chance of wildlife encounters. Again we will assess conditions as the day goes by, and we will likely put on some lectures around wildlife sightings.*

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

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

19:00 Plated dinner will be served in the Dining Room on Deck 4.

*Bill the Krill: I fear the worst!*

*Will the Krill: I fear the worst too, Bill, because fearing the best is a complete waste of time.  
Happy feet 2.*



## Arctic Ocean - Aberdeen, Fair Isle, Jan Mayen, Ice Edge, Spitsbergen, Birding

Date: 7<sup>th</sup> June 2025

Day 10: Headed east towards Svalbard waters.

- 07:45          Wakeup Call.
- 08:00-09:00 Buffet breakfast will be served in the Dining Room on Deck 4.
- 09:15          Peter Prokosch welcomes you to the lounge for a lecture: A vision for the Arctic
- 11:15          We would like to invite you to the lounge for a presentation from Rose and Jakub on Svalbard Geology
- 12:30- 13:30 Buffet lunch will be served in the Dining Room on Deck 4.
- 16:15          Please join Sasha in the lounge for a lecture about his time living in Pyramiden!
- 18:15          Please join the Expedition Team in the Observation Lounge for daily recap.
- 19:00          Plated dinner will be served in the Dining Room on Deck 4.

*"It is of no purpose to discuss the use of knowledge. Man wants to know, and when he ceases to do so he is no longer man". - Fridtjof Nansen*



## Arctic Ocean - Aberdeen, Fair Isle, Jan Mayen, Ice Edge, Spitsbergen, Birding

Date: 8<sup>th</sup> June 2025

Day 11: Poolepynten and Alkhornet.

06:45 Wakeup Call.

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

*Today we plan to make our first landing in Svalbard on Prins Karls Forland at a place called Poolepynten at a walrus haul out. We then plan to land at the bird cliffs of Alkhornet in the afternoon where we will go for a hike under the bird cliffs.*

08:15+/- We invite passengers from deck 4-6-7 to the Zodiac loading area on Deck 3 for landing at Poolepynten with walrus.

08:15 Meike invites those passengers from deck 3 to the lounge for her lecture about Fulmars and plastic pollution

09:15+/- We invite passengers from deck 3 to the Zodiac loading area on Deck 3 for landing at Poolepynten with walrus.

10:30 Meike invites those passengers from deck 4-6-7 to the lounge for her lecture about Fulmars and plastic pollution

12:00- 13:00 Buffet lunch will be served in the Dining Room on Deck 4.

15:00+/- We invite passengers from deck 3 to the Zodiac loading area on Deck 3 for a landing at Alkhornet

15:15+/- We invite passengers from deck 4-6-7 to the Zodiac loading area on Deck 3 for a zodiac cruise at Alkhornet

*Please note that groups will change halfway through the afternoon, so everyone will get to do a zodiac cruise and landing.*

18:45 Join the Expedition Team and Captain in the Lounge for Captain's Farewell Cocktails and a viewing of the voyage slideshow.

A copy of the voyage slideshow will be available for collection from the Bar after dinner, please bring a USB, SD Card or similar, or we can help airdrop it to Apple devices.

19:30 A final gala dinner will be served in the Dining Room on Deck 4.

20:45 As soon as dinner is finished please bring your muck boots down to deck 3 for collection. (Those continuing on next voyage please keep your boots)

*"One must never be in haste to end a day; there are too few of them in a lifetime". - Sir Francis Drake.*



# Arctic Ocean - Aberdeen, Fair Isle, Jan Mayen, Ice Edge, Spitsbergen, Birding

Date: 8<sup>th</sup> June 2025

Day 11: Poolepynten and Alkhornet.

## EXPEDITION UPDATE – CHANGE OF LANDING SITE

This afternoon, we will be landing in **St. Jonsfjorden** instead of **Alkhornet**. This change has been made to ensure better shelter and a more comfortable experience.

We'll be offering **three hiking options** to suit different interests and fitness levels:

1. **Long Hike**

A fast-paced hike with potential elevation. This option is for those who want a more strenuous, continuous walk with minimal stops.

2. **Medium Hike**

A moderately paced walk with some elevation and regular breaks for photos and interpretation. Great for those who want a balanced experience.

3. **Short Hike**

A relaxed and gentle walk along the shoreline with no elevation.

12:00- 13:00 Buffet lunch will be served in the Dining Room on Deck 4.

1415 Long hike, please come to the shell doors.

1430 Medium hike, please come to the shell doors.

1500 Short hike, please come to the shell door.

1800 Please bring your muck boots down to deck 3 for collection.

18:45 Join the Expedition Team and Captain in the Lounge for Captain's Farewell Cocktails and a viewing of the voyage slideshow.

A copy of the voyage slideshow will be available for collection from the Bar after dinner, please bring a USB, SD Card or similar, or we can help airdrop it to Apple devices.

19:30 A final gala dinner will be served in the Dining Room on Deck 4.



## Arctic Ocean - Aberdeen, Fair Isle, Jan Mayen, Ice Edge, Spitsbergen, Birding

Date: 09/06/2025

Day 12: 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 free busses to town and the airport. All luggage must be left outside your cabins by 7:30am and we will move it onto the pier.

For all those with flights DY397 at 12:15; use a **yellow** luggage tag.  
For passengers on flight SK4491 at 14:45; please use a **Red** luggage tag.  
For passengers on flight SK4493 at 19:40; please use a **Blue** luggage tag.

For all those with any flights not listed please take your luggage and load it on the bus provided to town. At around 08:45 all passengers will go on the busses to town center. You will be dropped at Svalbard Buttikken.

For passengers on flight DY397; There will be a bus to take you to the airport from Svalbard Buttikken at 10:30.  
For passengers on flight SK4491; There will be a bus to take you to the airport from Svalbard Buttikken at 13:00.  
For passengers on flight SK4493; There will be a bus to take you to the airport from Svalbard Buttikken at 17:45.

08:45+/- We invite all guests to disembark. Please identify your luggage on the pier and ensure it is placed in the right transport before boarding your bus.

**Anyone continuing with us** on the next voyage may take the bus to town, or walk, and enjoy the day. Please be back on the ship by 17:00 at the very latest as the ship will be departing.

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.

*"It's when you are safe at home that you're having an adventure. When you're having an adventure, you wish you were safe at home." - Thorton Wilder*