



North Spitsbergen Explorer - Versatile Landscapes, Sea Ice and Wildlife

16 June – 23 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 78 sailors

| | | |
|-------------------------|------------------------------|-------------------|
| Chief Officer: | Sven Holzhausen | [Germany] |
| Second Officer: | Nino Cizmic | [Croatia] |
| Third Officer: | Erik van de Reijden | [Netherlands] |
| Hotel Manager: | Albert Don | [Netherlands] |
| Head Chef: | Ralf Barthel | [Germany] |
| Sous Chef: | Norman Estrada | [Philippines] |
| Ships doctor: | Martin Kriz | [Sweden] |
| Expedition Leader: | Marcel Paul | [Netherlands] |
| Ass. Expedition Leader: | Charlotte Taplin | [UK] |
| Ass. Expedition Leader: | Jerry Zhao | [China] |
| Expedition Guide: | Jens Binderup | [Denmark] |
| Expedition Guide: | Jakub Malecki | [Poland] |
| Expedition Guide: | Alexander Romanovskiy | [Russia] |
| Expedition Guide: | Meike Sjoer | [Netherlands] |
| Expedition Guide: | Rose Li Hong | [China] |
| Expedition Guide: | Pierre Gallego | [Luxembourg] |
| Expedition Guide: | Philipp Konietzko | [Germany] |
| Expedition Guide: | Rustyn Mesdag | [USA] |
| Expedition Guide: | Brenya Green | [USA] |
| Expedition Guide: | Andi Schwetz | [Germany] |
| Expedition Guide: | Tiphane May | [FalklandIslands] |
| Expedition Guide: | Tanja Bayer | [Germany] |
| Kayak Leader: | Alexis Bellezze | [Argentina] |
| Kayak Leader: | Julien Burelier | [France] |
| Kayak Guide: | Kelly Pearson | [UK] |
| Kayak Guide: | Loel Collins | [UK] |
| Kayak Safety Driver: | Paolo Bellezze | [Argentina] |

WE WELCOME YOU ON BOARD!

Day 1 – Monday 16 June, Longyearbyen: Setting Sail into the Arctic wilds

16h00 GPS Position: 78°14.5' N, 015°32.6'E

Wind: E1 • Sea: Ripple • Weather: Overcast • Air temperature: +3°C

The remote frontier of Longyearbyen stirred with quiet anticipation as many of us arrived on the very day our adventure was set to begin. By afternoon, the stillness of the bay was punctuated by the hum of activity—luggage was whisked from the quay to the *Hondius*, anchored at the pier of Longyearbyen, waiting like a steel sentinel in the icy waters.



By 4PM, excitement buzzed through the brisk Arctic air. A line of eager guests had gathered, eyes bright with the promise of wilder rides lay ahead.

Once aboard the *Hondius*, time seemed to slip by unnoticed. Between orientation briefings, safety drills, receiving our Muck boots, welcome cocktails with our charismatic Captain Jan, and a beautifully prepared first dinner, the hours melted away. Yet as we cast off and the vessel carved a path out of Isfjord, the true wonder began to unfold.

Bathed in the soft glow of the Arctic evening, Spitsbergen's flat-topped mountains stood like ancient fortresses along the fjord. We were finally on our way—northward into the raw heart of the wilderness, where ice met sky and the silence held secrets millions of years old.

Late in the evening suddenly a towering mist spout appeared—a blue whale. We rushed to the deck, barely believing our eyes.

The whale surfaced again, its massive back gliding through the light. At up to 30 meters long and weighing around 200 tons, it's the largest animal ever to have lived. We watched in awe as it exhaled with a deep, resonant blow before arching its body and raising its enormous tail high above the sea. It dove, then surfaced again a few more times, always leaving us breathless. The stillness of the Arctic made each encounter feel otherworldly. That evening, beneath the endless sun, we met a true giant—and the memory stayed with us long after the ripples had faded.

Our voyage had truly begun.



Day 2 – Tuesday 17 June, Tinayrebukta & Camp Zoe

08h00 GPS Position: 78°29.2 'N, 010°23.2'E

Wind: N4 • Sea: Slight • Weather: Partly cloudy • Air temperature: +4°C

After a good big breakfast we boarded the zodiacs for what can only be described as a perfectly sunny, blue and windless day. The morning light on the glacier shown its true colors and it was obvious that this was a special morning. As we cruised away from the ship we noticed that the hillside in front of us was dotted with no less than 20 reindeer grazing on the slopes. We could see their movements with the naked eye, not needing binoculars to witness these animals in their natural habitat. Puffins accompanied us, not on in the air, but on the water as we slowly cruised the fjord. Their colors in this sunny environment showed us the magnificent details and colors they adorned. If that wasn't enough a bearded seal was sunning itself on an ice flow in front of the glacier with the same contentment as we had on this fine morning. The time flew by, and too soon it was time to head back to the ship for lunch. We didn't want the morning to end.



Everyone was excited about the afternoon landing after hearing about all the hiking possibilities from our Expedition Leader. The weather was so warm and sunny, jackets and layers needed to be stripped, sunscreen applied generously and sunglasses were a must. Some of us headed off on an extended hike, while some of chose to beach-comb and take a slower paced walk to the historical hut and take in the views. A group of enthusiastic birders set off with our resident bird expert - they returned with incredible photos and ear-to-ear smiles on their faces. A group of us wanted the best of both worlds and set up the snowy sloped for what turned out to be a grand view of Mollerfjord, but with time to take a breathe and reflect. It was an incredible day all in all. We returned to the ship for a short briefing for the next day by the Expedition Leader, recaps from the guides and a well deserved dinner.



Day 3 – Wednesday 18 June, Texas Bar & Monacobreen

08h00 GPS Position: 79.55.8°N, 011°07.9'E

Wind: E2 • Sea: Rippled • Weather: Overcast • Air temperature: +1°C

This morning's weather made it hard to believe we were in the Arctic at all. Sunscreen and sun hats were advised for those joining the hikes at Texas Bar. It was a bomb 8 degrees or so, some sparse clouds, and a light wind blowing off the nearby glacier – perfect weather for a hike. Guests were given the option of long, medium, and short hikes with the potential use of snowshoes, should they need. On the medium birding hike with Meike, we saw barnacle and pink footed geese, a male ptarmigan, fulmar, arctic skua, snow bunting, arctic tern, a purple sandpiper, and hundreds of nesting kittiwakes high in the mountain. In addition to the birds, we found an old-style fox trap, learned about the geology from a fellow guest geologist, Chris, and saw much evidence of the reindeer that frequent the area. When all hikers returned to the beach, it was time to cool off and what better way than to plunge into the frigid arctic waters! Approximately 30 guests went in for a dip.



The blue skies and sunshine continued for us into the afternoon as we cruised along stunning Monacobreen and nearby Seligerbreen. The water was like glass as the Zodiacs danced their

way through the bergy bits in front of the glacier and navigated their way through the brash ice that glittered like diamonds in the water. Aside from the popping of ice, all that could be heard were the plentiful kittiwakes and arctic terns calling out to each other among the ice. A visit from two bearded seals, one on ice and one swimming, was nice – but another visitor was even more welcome... The floating bar serving hot apple cider and rum! A calving of the Monaco glacier and a glimpse of a minke whale made the excursion complete as we made our way back to M/V Hondius.



Day 4 – Thursday 19 June, Alkjefellet & Faksevagen

08h00 GPS Position: 80°05.8 N, 016°19.3' E

Wind: N3 • Sea: Rippled • Weather: Overcast • Air temperature: ±0°C

What an incredible and eventful day we had today, our fourth day truly immersed in the Arctic. Our morning began with eager anticipation, as we planned to Zodiac cruise along Alkefjellet, one of the Arctic's most dramatic seabird cliffs, famed for its towering basalt walls and a staggering 60,000 breeding pairs of Brünnich's guillemots.

After a buffet breakfast, we were ready to head to the Zodiac loading area. However, the Arctic had other plans for us. Unfortunately, due to sea ice that had drifted right to the site, the bird cliff became unreachable for our Zodiacs. It was certainly a pity, especially for the

many keen birders onboard, as this colony is a true spectacle. But even from a distance, the scenery was still absolutely magnificent, proving that the Arctic always delivers stunning views, even when plans change.



Undeterred, we then sailed to Faksevangen for our much-anticipated afternoon of exploration on land! The weather was great – overcast but not a breath of wind, making for ideal hiking conditions. Everyone had a choice, and the groups fanned out to explore this beautiful side bay in Lomfjord. The short hikers enjoyed leisurely strolls along the beach, taking in the serene coastal views. The medium hikers ventured up into the rolling hills, discovering the fine tundra, bird life and interesting geology. And for those seeking a challenge, the long hikers pushed high up to a mountain ridge, even encountering some deep snow higher up!

As the afternoon transitioned into evening, and we began sailing north again, the Arctic delivered an unexpected thrill! A collective gasp went through the ship as we spotted a sleeping polar bear in the distance! Even though it was quite far away, the sheer excitement of seeing this magnificent creature in its natural habitat was palpable. It was a truly exhilarating moment for everyone on board.

We rounded off this fantastic day with a lively recap in the bar, sharing stories of our hikes and the polar bear sighting. A delightful plated dinner was then served, followed by our nightly wildlife list with Meike, recounting all the incredible sightings from our day.

Today was a perfect example of Arctic exploration – full of unexpected turns, slight disappointments, but ultimately overwhelming beauty and unforgettable wildlife encounters.

We certainly kept our spirits warm today, embracing every moment of this remarkable journey!



Day 5 – Friday 20 June, A day in the pack ice

08h00 GPS Position: 81°32.2'N / 016°32.4'E

Wind: N3 • Sea: Rippled • Weather: Overcast • Air temperature: 0°C

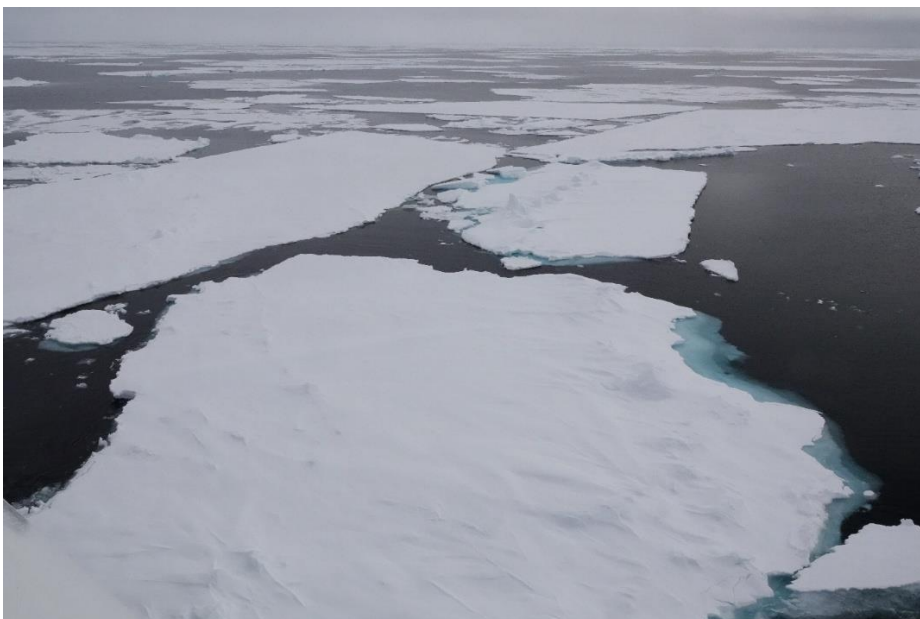
After breakfast, excitement filled the air as the expedition staff informed us of a landing on a vast, solid sheet of sea ice. The crew quickly sprang into action, setting up a secure perimeter to ensure our safety. With the Hondius gently nestled beside the ice, the gangway was lowered, and we stepped down—one by one—onto the frozen world below.

It was surreal to stand on the very surface of the Arctic Ocean. Soon, we took turns in small groups, exploring the icy expanse, snapping photos, and soaking in the surreal landscape. Many of us couldn't resist reverting to childhood—making snow angels, staging snowball fights, and laughing like kids again in this pristine, frozen playground.



Once everyone had their moment on the ice, we returned to the ship for a well-earned lunch. As we resumed our journey through the maze of ice floes, the bridge became a popular spot. We kept our eyes peeled for wildlife, hoping for a glimpse of the elusive polar bear. Tracks teased us now and then—ghostly prints on the ice hinting at nearby presence—but no bear revealed itself.

In the afternoon, we gathered for a fascinating lecture by our onboard ice expert, Jakub. He spoke passionately about the ice around Svalbard—its structure, importance, and alarming rate of melting. The presentation took a sobering turn as Jakub highlighted the broader implications of climate change, urging us to reflect on what we had witnessed with our own eyes.



Later, the day took a festive turn as the crew prepared a special Arctic barbecue on the outer decks. With music playing, free drinks flowing, and the frozen seascape around us, the atmosphere was unforgettable. Laughter echoed across the ship as we enjoyed delicious food under the open sky. The livelier among us danced well into the evening, swaying to classic tunes from ABBA and Whitney Houston, the icy backdrop glowing in the soft Arctic light.

What a unique and magical day—an experience none of us will ever forget.

Day 6 – Saturday 21 June, A day in the ice, A visit from the Ice King

08h00 GPS Position: 81°50.5'N / 013°57.2'E

Wind: SE2 • Sea: Calm • Weather: Overcast • Air temperature: -1°C

We awoke to the gentle hum of the engines beneath us and the endless white stretching out beyond our windows. Not long after, Captain Jan took the helm and carefully maneuvered Hondius back into the heart of the pack ice. The sea had frozen into a vast, silent desert—flat floes of ice broken by ridges and pressure lines, disappearing into a silver-blue horizon. The stillness was broken only by the distant call of ivory kittiwakes and the occasional crack of shifting ice.

After breakfast, we gathered in the lecture room where Charlotte transported us deeper into the world of the polar bear—*Ursus maritimus*, the apex predator of the Arctic. We learned about their incredible adaptations: a thick layer of blubber for insulation, black skin beneath transparent fur to absorb sunlight, and an acute sense of smell—capable of detecting seals from over a kilometer away. Though we hadn't seen one yet, we felt as if we knew the bear personally.

Then, just after lunch, came the moment we'd been waiting for. An announcement crackled over the PA: the expedition team had spotted a polar bear—700 meters away on solid ice, partially veiled in the Arctic fog. Excitement surged through the ship. The ice edge was nearby, and Captain Jan expertly navigated Hondius alongside it, stopping the vessel when we were closest to the bear.

And then, the magic unfolded.



Out of the mist, the bear came forward—a young male, perhaps four or five years old. He moved with cautious curiosity, large paws silently padding across the ice. His creamy fur glowed against the pale blue ice, and he paused often, raising his head, sniffing the air, eyes locked on us. For over thirty minutes, he watched us—and we watched him. Time felt suspended. Cameras clicked softly, but mostly we stood in reverent silence, hearts thudding.



Philipp Konietzko

Eventually, he turned and wandered off, choosing a quiet patch of ice to rest. The awe lingered in the air long after we left him alone.

We celebrated that afternoon with a cheerful happy hour and a summer solstice quiz hosted by Brenya. The dining room buzzed with laughter and stories, and after dinner, a calm settled over the ship. Photos of *our* polar bear were passed around, each frame a precious memory from a day when the wild Arctic gave us its most iconic gift.

Day 7 – Sunday 22 June, Gravsneset & Gullybukta, A Grand Finale

08h00 GPS Position: 78°22.7' N, 010°24.7'E

Wind: NW2 • Sea: Rippled • Weather: Overcast • Air temperature: +2°C

Our final full day in the Arctic greeted us with calm seas and majestic peaks as we sailed into Magdalenen fjord—one of Svalbard's most picturesque and storied inlets. Steep mountain ridges framed the fjord, while shimmering glaciers cascaded down to the sea. The early light gave the landscape a quiet glow, and anticipation was high as we prepared for our landing.

We stepped ashore at Gravsneset, a site steeped in Arctic history. Here lie the weathered remains of 17th-century whaling graves—silent reminders of the era when European whalers hunted bowhead whales in these icy waters. Over 130 graves are scattered here, protected

today as a cultural heritage site. As we stood among them, we reflected on the harsh lives and uncertain fates of those early explorers.



After our walk, we boarded the zodiacs and glided through the still waters of the fjord. Near rocky outcrops, common seals basked in the sun, their heads popping up with cautious curiosity as we passed. The cruise led us all the way to Waggonwaybreen glacier, whose icy front loomed quietly before us. Though it wasn't calving today, the waters around it were filled with ancient ice—sculpted chunks that had broken off long ago. Some were crystal-clear, others shimmering deep blue, shaped into surreal, jagged forms. These floating ice sculptures, centuries old, told their own frozen stories and added an otherworldly atmosphere to our cruise.

In the afternoon, we set out again, this time to Gullybukta, a sheltered bay where a haul-out of walrus awaited. The massive marine mammals were lolling on the beach in true walrus fashion—grunting, jostling, and occasionally dozing in ungainly piles. We learned that male walrus can weigh up to 1,500 kilograms and use their tusks not only for defense but to haul their bulk onto ice. Their social antics and sheer size were a joy to witness up close, a perfect blend of comedy and awe. We continued the cruise and were lucky enough to find some King Eider ducks and an Arctic Fox. What a grand finale!



As the day drew to a close, we gathered in the lounge for the Captain's Cocktail. The slideshow of our journey played across the screen—polar bears on the ice, seabirds in flight, glaciers, sunsets, and laughter shared. Chef Ralph treated us to a final plated dinner, a culinary tribute to a voyage none of us would soon forget.

What a perfect end to our Arctic adventure. Magdalenenfjord gave us beauty, history, wildlife—and the memories to carry home.

Kayaking Triplog

As the days unfold along the northwest coast of Spitzbergen, the landscape continues to astonish -both in its stark beauty and in its raw, unpredictable power. This week, we threaded our kayak through narrow sea passages and beneath natural rock arches, the stone curving above us like ancient cathedrals sculpted by wind and tide. Shallow waters glittered beneath our hull, revealing volcanic beds of black rock and patches of orange and brown kelp that moved like breath under the sea.

We paddled through confined spaces, the kayak gliding between spires and jagged walls where puffins and guillemots nest in impossible ledges. There's something primal about moving through a landscape that feels so newly born and yet eternally old -where fire once forged the cliffs and ice still shapes the shore.

Wildlife has met us every turn.

Harbour seals tracked us with curious eyes, bobbing near our bow and following silently as we made our way through the waters of Magdalena fjord. Their presence felt almost companionable- inquisitive, but gentle – a kind of quiet communion between species.

More than anything, this journey has created a bond among us. Paddling through this landscape -exposed, cold, sometimes tired, but always moved- brings people together in a way few other experiences can.

We have become a small team bound by effort, shared awe, and the rhythm of paddles slicing through polar waters.





Day 8 – Monday 23 June, Farewell from the Arctic: Disembarkation in Longyearbyen

08h00 GPS Position: 78°15.8' N, 015°25.0'E

Wind: NNW3 • Sea: Smooth • Weather: Overcast • Air temperature: +5°C

In the soft light of early morning, we arrived in Longyearbyen. As we gathered for one final breakfast on board, there was a quiet sense of reflection in the air. Outside, the crew gently unloaded our suitcases, a silent reminder that our Arctic adventure was drawing to a close.

Disembarking from *Hondius* was not easy. Over these past days, she has been far more than a ship—she's been our shelter, our launchpad into the wild, and our floating home. Within her walls we've shared laughter, awe, and moments that will stay with us for a lifetime.

Together, we ventured deep into the high latitudes, witnessed landscapes sculpted by ice and time, and encountered wildlife most only dream of—polar bears, walrus, whales, and the mesmerizing dance of seabirds in the Arctic skies. Along the way, strangers became companions, and companions became friends.

Now, with hearts full and cameras brimming, we begin the journey home. Though we leave the ice behind, its spirit travels with us—etched into memory, carried in stories, and felt in quiet, unforgettable moments.

Thank you for joining us on this remarkable voyage. Your curiosity, warmth, and camaraderie made this journey truly special. Wherever your path leads next, we hope it brings you back to these wild places—and perhaps, one day, back to us.

Until we meet again—safe travels, and fair winds.



Total distance sailed on our voyage: 899.0 NM

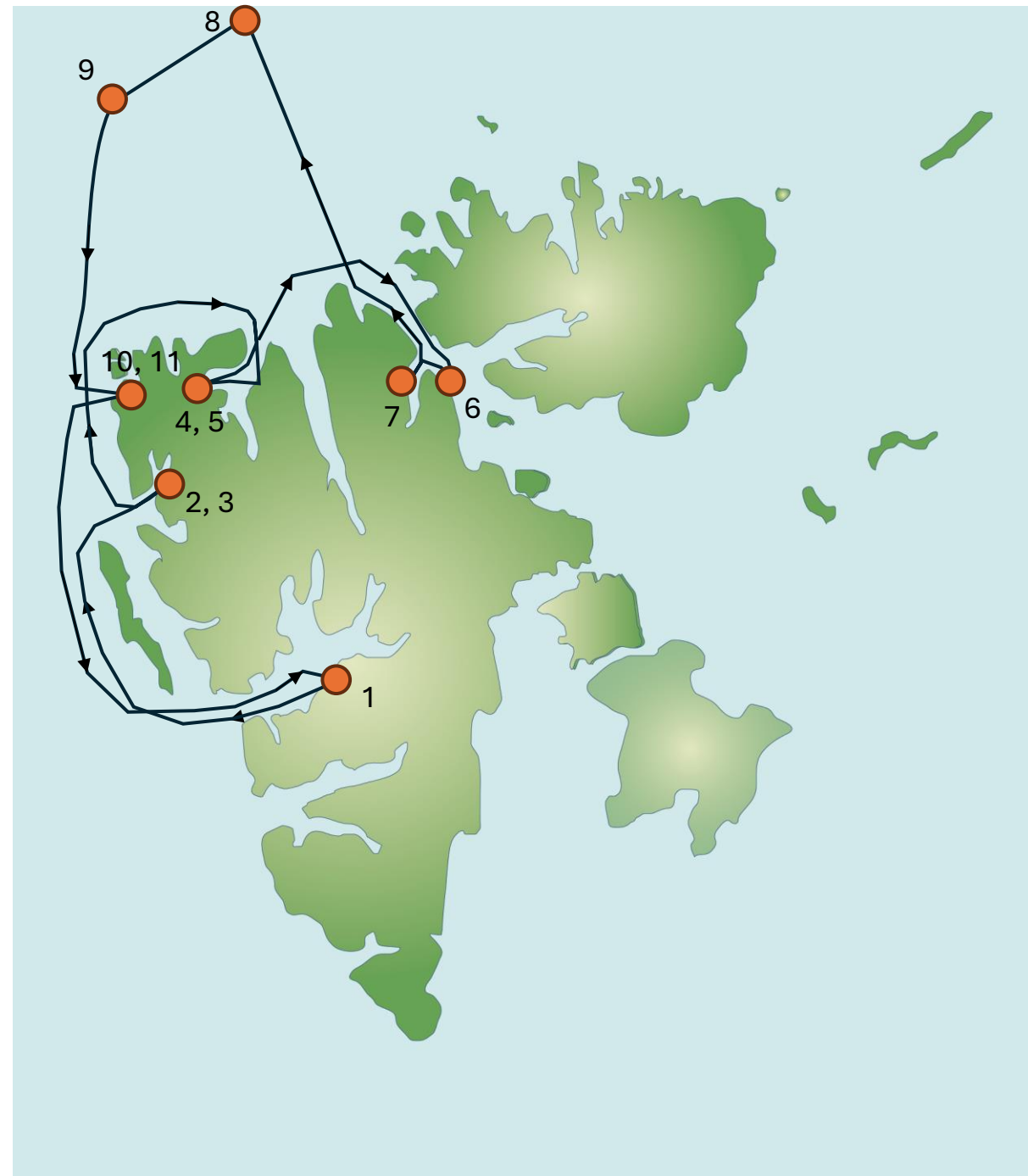
Northernmost point: 80°54.891'N, 011°31.3'E

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.

North Spitsbergen Explorer – Versatile Landscapes, Sea ice and Wildlife

M/V Hondius, 16-23 June 2025

1. Longyearbyen – embarkation – 16 June
2. Tinayrebukta – zodiac cruise – 17 June
3. Camp Zoe – landing – 17 June
4. Texas Bar – landing – 18 June
5. Monaco Glacier – zodiac cruise – 18 June
6. Alkefjellet – cancelled zodiac cruise – 19 June
7. Faksevangen – landing – 19 June
8. Sea ice landing at 81.59°N, 16.70°E – 20 June
9. Polar bear – 21 June
10. Graveneset – 22 June – landing & zodiac cruise
11. Gullybukta – 22 June – zodiac cruise
1. Longyearbyen – disembarkation – 23 June



Birds and Mammals of Svalbard

| English Name | Latin | German | / Transient / Vagrant | 16-jun | 17-jun | 18-jun | 19-jun | 20-jun | 21-jun | 22-jun | 23-jun |
|----------------------|----------------------------------|----------------------|-----------------------------|--------|--------|--------|--------|--------|--------|--------|--------|
| Red-throated diver | <i>Gavia stellata</i> | Sterntaucher | B | | | x | | | | x | |
| Northern Fulmar | <i>Fulmarus glacialis</i> | Eissturmvogel | B | x | x | x | x | x | x | x | |
| Pink-footed Goose | <i>Anser brachyrhynchus</i> | Kurzschnabelgans | B | | x | x | x | | | | |
| Barnacle Goose | <i>Branta leucopsis</i> | Weisswangengans | B | | x | x | x | | | x | |
| Greylag Goose | <i>Anser anser</i> | Graugans | V | | x | | | | | | |
| Brent Goose | <i>Branta bernicla</i> | Ringelgans | B | | x | | | | | | |
| Common Eider | <i>Somateria mollissima</i> | Eiderente | B | x | x | x | x | | | x | x |
| King Eider | <i>Somateria spectabilis</i> | Prachteiderente | B | x | | x | x | | | x | |
| Long-tailed Duck | <i>Clangula hyemalis</i> | Eisente | B | | | x | x | | | | |
| Black Scoter | <i>Melanitta nigra</i> | Trauerente | B/T | | | | | | | x | |
| Rock Ptarmigan | <i>Lagopus mutus hyperboreus</i> | Alpenschneehuhn | B | | x | x | x | | | | |
| Ringed Plover | <i>Charadrius hiaticula</i> | Sandregenpfeifer | B | | | x | | | | | |
| Sanderling | <i>Calidris alba</i> | Sanderling | B | | | x | x | | | | |
| Purple Sandpiper | <i>Calidris maritima</i> | Meerstrandläufer | B | | x | x | x | | | | |
| Dunlin | <i>Calidris alpina</i> | Alpenstrandläufer | B | | | | x | | | | |
| Red-necked Phalarope | <i>Phalaropus lobatus</i> | Odinshühnchen | B | | | | | x | | | |
| Pomarine Skua | <i>Stercorarius pomarinus</i> | Spatelraubmöwe | T | | | | | x | | | |
| Arctic Skua | <i>Stercorarius parasiticus</i> | Schmarotzerraub-möwe | B | | x | x | x | x | x | x | |
| Long-tailed Skua | <i>Stercorarius longicaudus</i> | Falkenraubmöwe | B | | | | | | | | |
| Great Skua | <i>Stercorarius skua</i> | Skua | B | | | | x | | | | |
| Glaucous Gull | <i>Larus hyperboreus</i> | Eismöwe | B | | x | x | x | x | x | x | |
| Kittiwake | <i>Rissa tridactyla</i> | Dreizehenmöwe | B | x | x | x | x | x | x | x | |
| Ross' Gull | <i>Rhodostethia rosea</i> | Rosenmöwe | T | | | | | | x | | |
| Ivory Gull | <i>Pagophila eburnea</i> | Elfenbeinmöwe | B | | | | x | x | x | | |

| | | | | | | | | | | | |
|----------------------|------------------------------|-------------------|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Arctic Tern | <i>Sterna paradisaea</i> | Küstenseeschwalbe | B | x | x | x | x | x | | x | |
| Brunnich's Guillemot | <i>Uria lomvia</i> | Dickschnabellumme | B | x | x | x | x | x | x | x | |
| Black Guillemot | <i>Cephus grylle</i> | Gryllteiste | B | x | x | x | x | x | x | x | |
| Little Auk | <i>Alle alle</i> | Krabbentaucher | B | x | x | x | x | x | x | x | |
| Puffin | <i>Fratercula arctica</i> | Papageitaucher | B | x | x | x | x | x | | x | |
| Snow Bunting | <i>Plectrophenax nivalis</i> | Schneeammer | B | | x | x | x | | | x | x |
| Northern Wheatear | | | | | | | | x | | | |

MAMMALS

| English | Latin | German | Breeding / Transient / Vagrant | 16-jun | 17-jun | 18-jun | 19-jun | 20-jun | 21-jun | 22-jun | 23-jun |
|----------------------|--|-------------------|-----------------------------------|--------|--------|--------|--------|--------|--------|--------|--------|
| Walrus | <i>Odobenus rosmarus</i> | Walross | B | | | | x | | | x | |
| Bearded seal | <i>Erignathus barbatus</i> | Bartrobbe | B | | x | x | x | | x | | |
| Ringed seal | <i>Phoca hispida</i> | Ringelrobbe | B | | | | | | x | | |
| Common /Harbour seal | <i>Phoca vitulina</i> | Seehund | B | | x | x | | | | x | |
| Minke Whale | <i>Balaenoptera acutorostrata</i> | Zwergwal | T | x | x | x | | | | | |
| Blue Whale | <i>Balaenoptera musculus</i> | Blauwal | T | x | | | | | | | |
| Beluga | <i>Dephinapterus leucas</i> | Weisswal | B | | x | | | | | | |
| Polar Bear | <i>Ursus maritimus</i> | Eisbär | B | | | | x | | x | | |
| Arctic Fox | <i>Alopex lagopus</i> | Polarfuchs | B | | | | x | | | x | |
| Spitsbergen Reindeer | <i>Rangifer tarandus platyrhynchus</i> | Svalbard Renntier | B | | x | x | x | | | | |

Marcel Paul - Expedition Leader



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 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 indoor 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.

Charlotte Taplin – Asst. Exp. Leader



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

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

Jerry Zhao – Asst. Exp. Leader



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

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

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

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

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

Jens Binderup – Expedition Guide



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.

Jakub Małecki – Expedition Guide



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.

Alexander Romanovskiy – Exp. Guide



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

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

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

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

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

Meike Sjoer – Expedition Guide



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

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

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

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

Rose Li Hong - Expedition Guide



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

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

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

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

Pierre Gallego – Expedition Guide



Pierre is a veterinarian specialised in marine mammal medicine. He has been working in the field of marine biology for 18 years, and has been organising 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!

Deutsch

Pierre ist Tierarzt und hat sich auf Meeressäuger spezialisiert. Er arbeitet im Gebiet der Meeresbiologie seit 18 Jahre und organisiert Ausbildungen über Meeressäuger rundum die Welt seit 2004. Er vertritt die Regierung Luxemburgs an der Walfangkommission und CCAMLR, und arbeitet mit mehreren internationalen Umweltschutzorganisationen um die Erhaltung von Meeressäuger zu promovieren und deren Gefangenschaft zu bekämpfen.

Er macht gerade eine Doktorarbeit am Ozeanologie Lab der Universität Lüttich in Belgien. Seine Doktorarbeit beschäftigt sich mit stabile Isotopen und Schadstoffen in Buckelwalen aus Mosambik und Ecuador.

Er ist ein eifriger Vogelbeobachter und hat viel Spass an Fotografie. Das Meer ist seine Leidenschaft, und Wasser ist sein Element.

Philipp Konietzko – Expedition Guide



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

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

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

When he is at home in the north of Germany, he works as an engineer and spends his leisure time working on

his farm-like house with the associated apple tree orchard, where he is also beekeeping. He also has a little workshop where he brazes bicycle frames, and of course he is riding these bikes a lot.

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

Deutsch

Aufgewachsen auf dem Lande in Norddeutschland, hat es Philipp schon immer in die Natur hinausgezogen. Egal ob mit seinem selbst gebauten Floß, der eigenen Segeljolle oder dem Fahrrad war er immer draußen unterwegs.

Während er in Berlin Elektrotechnik studierte, nutzte er jegliche Semesterferien, um mit dem Fahrrad zu reisen, wobei es ihn besonders in den Norden zog.

Im Winter 2015 verbrachte er einen kompletten Monat mit Zelt und Ski auf Spitzbergen. Hier wurde er vollends vom Arktisvirus infiziert und verliebte sich in die raue Natur und die endlosen Weiten des Nordens. Seitdem verbrachte er jedes Jahr mindestens drei Monate auf Spitzbergen.

Hier arbeitete er zunächst hauptsächlich als Trekkingguide auf mehrwöchigen Touren, fing aber schon bald darauf an, auf kleinen und größeren Expeditionskreuzfahrtschiffen zu arbeiten. Seine Arbeit als Guide und Logistiker für wissenschaftliche Expeditionen führte ihn an Orte auf Spitzbergen, die nur wenige Menschen besuchen.

Wenn er zu Hause in Norddeutschland ist, arbeitet er als Ingenieur. In seiner Freizeit kümmert er sich um seinen Resthof mit zugehöriger Streuobstwiese, auf der auch seine Bienen stehen. In seiner kleinen Werkstatt lötet er Fahrradrahmen aus denen Fahrräder entstehen, mit denen er auch ausgiebig fährt.

Besonders interessieren ihn die Geschichte und Expeditionsgeschichte von Spitzbergen und den Polarregionen. Aber es gibt auf jedem Gebiet so viel Spannendes zu entdecken und daher freut er sich besonders auf eure Fragen, die oft zur Beschäftigung mit neuen Themen anregen.

Rustyn Mesdag – Expedition Guide



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.

Brenya Green – Expedition Guide



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.

Andi Schwertz – Expedition Guide



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!

German

Geboren in Budapest, aufgewachsen in Deutschland war Andi als Kind schon immer von Tieren und Natur fasziniert gewesen, besonders Meeressäuger hatten es ihr angetan. Sie wollte Walforscherin werden, wurde zu einer Walexpertin, zwar ohne Studium an einer Universität, aber mit Passion. Sie widmete sich in ihrem früheren Leben dem Studium der Soziologie und betrieb 10 Jahre lang ihre eigene Cocktailbar. Ihre Begeisterung für die Meeresgeschöpfe liess sie dennoch nie los und sie begann die Welt zu bereisen um diesen faszinierenden Tieren nahe zu sein und sie zu beobachten.

Als Taucherin und Freediverin konnte sie vielen Walarten besonders nahe kommen und Abenteuer erleben. Zum Beispiel ist sie im arktischen Norwegen bereits dreimal mit Orcas geschwommen. Weil sie ihre Leidenschaft mit Herz und Begeisterung teilen möchte, kam sie zu Oceanwide. Sie konnte bereits im Frühjahr dieses Jahres Erfahrungen sammeln als Trainee in der Antarktis. Die polaren Regionen mit ihrer speziellen Fauna üben eine ganz besondere Anziehung auf sie aus. Sie interessiert sich ausserdem für Landschaftsfotographie und hat tolle Tips für gelungende Handysfotos. Ausserdem ist eine ihrer weiteren Leidenschaften Yoga, was sie auch als Yogalehrerin praktiziert. Sie spricht englisch, deutsch, ungarisch und ein wenig spanisch und französisch. Andi freut sich auf weitere tolle Abenteuer als Teammitglied von Oceanwide!

Tiphanie May - Expedition Guide



Tiphanie is an 8th 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.

Tanja Bayer – Expedition Guide



Tanja is from Germany. There she works as a GP and also specializes in orthopedic surgery and diving medicine.

Her first job in remote areas was 1989 in Western Australia. She worked for 3 months for the Royal Flying Doctor Service in Port Headland. She loved the work outside the clinic, like she says: Bushmedicine.

In 2009 she travelled for the first time to the Antarctic peninsula. She was asked to write an article about diving in Antarctica for a German diving magazine and just 2 weeks later she

was there and she got the polar bug and figured out how she could manage to spend as much time as possible in Antarctica. She applied as a ship's doctor and started 2010 on different vessels.

2015 she became bipolar and started to work for Oceanwide Expeditions. Now she spends 12-14 weeks a year in the polar regions. This year even more!

She loves water, oceans, ice, waves and everything that lives in it.

In Germany she also runs a diving school since nearly 20 years and takes groups on dive trips all around the world. On Ortelius and Plancius she also worked as a dive guide earlier in this Arctic season.

If some time is left, she teaches diving centers and ship crews in her special course: First aid in remote areas. Teaching and safety checks during a cruise and helping to prevent accidents, so they just do not happen!

This is my wish and of course a fantastic trip and experience you will never forget!

Alexis Bellezze – Kayak Leader



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

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

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

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

He speaks fluently Spanish, Italian and English.

Julien Burellier – Kayak Leader



Julien was born and raised in the Auvergne region in central France. He started kayaking and skiing as a child and never stopped.

Sea kayak instructor since 1998, he is also a whitewater kayak and ski instructor. He travelled all over the world paddling and guiding guests in various locations such as Papua, Oman, Philippines, Malaysia, Thailand, Sweden, Greece, Corsica... and of course Norway!

He visited North Norway for the first time in 2010 and fell in love with the sea and mountain mix. Snow and northern lights in the winter combined with midnight sun during summer produce many breathtaking moments. Since then, Julien goes several times a year to Norway either for kayaking, skiing or hiking.

When he is not traveling, Julien lives in the French Alps and teaches skiing at Serre Chevalier or supervises whitewater rafting activities on the local rivers. He is also passionate about photography which led him to collaborate with French outdoor and kayak magazines, writing articles and reporting on his trips.

Kelly Pearson – Kayak Guide



Kelly grew up in the South East of England, home of the Norfolk Broads. After completing her BA Hons Degree in Contemporary Fine Art in Newcastle she worked as an Artist Assistant for Sir Antony Gormley for several years. One day walking along Tyne green she discovered the local kayak club and from there her journey to paddle across the world began.

Kelly is kayak instructor based in North Wales in the UK. Her source to sea adventures began almost 10 years ago when she discovered her passion for whitewater kayaking which naturally led

her to the sea. Whilst travelling she spent time exploring the waters of the Gulf Islands, the remote rivers on Vancouver Island, expedition kayaking and raft guiding across British Columbia. She later spent time working and playing as a kayak instructor on the South Island of New Zealand. After several years travelling overseas, kayaking on multi day expeditions in Canada, USA and New Zealand, she relocated to North Wales to pursue her ambition to share her passion with others as a kayak coach. When not guiding she loves to spend time paddling in tide races off the Anglesey Coast and exploring the abundant wildlife, kayaking the local whitewater rivers and running in the Eryri mountains and when there is time practicing her passion for Art.

Kelly's advice to those wanting to travel is "Be open and talk to people, never stop learning and say yes to everything, you never know where you will end up"

The most memorable experience for Kelly working in the polar regions so far was the first time she saw a polar bear in Svalbard and the overwhelming sense of privilege that overcame her. It is the same sentiment she enjoys to see in guests having these experiences for the very first time. Through the means of kayaking she hopes to share her passion to inspire and inform others about the importance of protecting these important places.

Loel Collins –Kayak Guide



Loel comes from a small village in the mountains of Snowdonia National Park, North Wales in the UK. Over a forty-year career he has worked around the globe, in North and South America, Europe, Arctic Greenland and Canada, the middle and far East as a kayak and canoe guide and coach. In the winter you can find him telemark skiing and training other outdoor professionals in rescue and emergency care.

He has a background as a performance psychologist with a focus on performance in expedition and adventure. He lectures at The University of Edinburgh in Moray House, the School of Education and Sport where he teaches and researches in adventure sports coaching and leadership.

He has several first kayak descents of remote gorges to his name as well as many expeditions to wilderness areas, among them the highland rain forests of Papua New Guinea, the Himalaya in Northern Pakistan and Nepal, and the Arctic of Northern Canada and Greenland.

Paolo Bellezze – Expedition Guide



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.

Brian Veltrop – Expedition Guide



This is Brian, he is 31 years young and lives in the Netherlands.

Brian is a true nature lover. He has been in nature since he was little and has really found his passion for it in recent years.

In recent years, Brian has completed various courses in the outdoor world. In 2021 he started the training as a hike & survival instructor, hike & backpacking guide, international wilderness guide lvl 1. He trained for this in the Netherlands, France and Canada. He also followed the training of BICO, Baby it's cold outside and

Mountain 101 (University of Alberta, Canada).

After completing these courses, he entered the specialization and completed the training as a wilderness guide lvl 2 and the winter travel & survival lvl 3 in Winter Canada.

As an examination for this, he had to endure a 48 hour solo in -30 (Celsius).

Furthermore, Brian is very passionate about identifying Flora & Fauna. He likes to look for animal tracks & signs and talk about them.

In addition to Oceanwide Expeditions, Brian works at two Dutch companies as a survival instructor and wilderness guide. These offer wilderness trips to Scandinavian countries, France, Poland, Canada and Spain. And is a member of the Wilderness Guide Association and Interpretive Guide Association.



North Spitsbergen Explorer – Versatile Landscapes, Sea ice and Wildlife

Date: 16/06/2025

Day: 1: Longyearbyen - 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

17:15+/- Ship safety briefing, in the **Observation Lounge on Deck 5**. Attendance to this is **MANDATORY for NEW GUESTS**.

For ALL GUESTS. 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**.

If you have been travelling with us **from the last voyage** you are required to participate in the emergency **MUSTER** only. Not the safety video.

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

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

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

20:45 **Kayakers**, please meet your Kayak Team in the lecture room on deck 5 for your kayak safety briefing

Tonight we head for the open sea, please 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!

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 agleam to guide us,

And the Wild is calling, calling . . . let us go.

Robert Service, The Call of The Wild.



North Spitsbergen Explorer – Versatile Landscapes, Sea ice and Wildlife - Summer solstice

Date: 17/06/2025

Day 2: Tinayrebukta & Signahamna.

In the morning, we hope to take you on your first zodiac cruise after our **MANDATORY** briefings

- 06:45 Wake-up call. Good morning!
- 07:00 Buffet breakfast will be served in the Dining Room on Deck 4 till 08.00
- 08:00 Please join us for AECO, Zodiac safety briefing & Polar bear safety briefing, in the Observation Lounge on Deck 5. Attendance to this is **MANDATORY** so please join us straight after breakfast.
- 09:45 +/- We invite the **Red Group** to the Zodiac boarding area on Deck 3 for a Zodiac cruise
- 10:00 +/- We invite the **Blue group** to the Zodiac boarding area on Deck 3 for a Zodiac cruise

In the afternoon, we plan to land take you for your first landing at Signahamna, A good please to stretch our legs and go for a hike while enjoying the real Arctic.

- 12:30 Buffet lunch will be served in the Dining Room on Deck 4 till 13.30
- 14:15 We invite the long hikers to the shell doors for a long hike
- 14:20 We invite the medium hikers to the shell doors for a medium hike
- 14:45 We invite the short hikers to the shell doors for a short hike
- 18:15 Please join the Expedition Team in the Bar for recap.
- 19:00 Plated dinner will be served in the Dining Room.

“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



North Spitsbergen Explorer – Versatile Landscapes, Sea ice and Wildlife – Summer solstice

Date: 18/06/2025

Day 3: Texas bar & Monacobreen

06:45 Wake-up call.

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

09:00 We invite the long hikers to the shell doors for a snowshoe hike at Texas bar

09:15 We invite the medium hikers to the shell doors for a snowshoe hike at Texas bar.

09:30 We invite the short hikers to the shell doors for a snowshoe hike at Texas bar.

We plan to do a polar plunge at the end of the landing, so please put your swimsuit under your expedition gear. We will have a towel ashore for you so don't worry about bringing your towel from your cabin.

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

In the afternoon we hope to do a zodiac cruise at Monacobreen. Formerly known as Glacier de Monaco and Liefde Bay-bræ, Monacobreen (or Monaco Glacier) is a glacier that reaches down into Liefdefjorden (The Love Ford) in Spitsbergen, Svalbard. One of the most beautiful glaciers you can find in Spitsbergen

14:45 We hope to invite the **Blue** Group to Zodiac loading area on Deck 3 for a Zodiac cruise

15:00 We hope to invite the **Red** Group to Zodiac loading area on Deck 3 for a Zodiac cruise

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

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

"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



North Spitsbergen Explorer – Versatile Landscapes, Sea ice and Wildlife - Summer solstice

Date: 19/06/2025

Day 4: Alkefjellet and Faksevagen.

In the morning, we plan to cruise Alkefjellet, one of the Arctic's most dramatic seabird cliffs. Towering basalt walls rise 100m from the sea, providing nesting grounds for 60,000 breeding pairs of Brünnich's guillemots during the summer months.

07:45 Wake-up call.

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

09:30 We hope to invite the **Red Group** to Zodiac loading area on Deck 3 for a Zodiac cruise.

09:45 We hope to invite the **Blue Group** to Zodiac loading area on Deck 3 for a Zodiac cruise.

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

In the afternoon, we hope to offer a landing at Faksevagen, a side bay in Lomfjord, north in Hinlopen Strait. It has fine tundra, interesting geology and good hiking opportunities.

14:30 We invite the long hikers to the shell doors for long hike at Faksevagen.

14:45 We invite the short hikers to the shell doors for a medium hike at Faksevagen.

15:00 We invite the medium hikers to the shell doors for a short hike at Faksevagen.

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

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

20:30 Wildlife list with Meike in the lecture room

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



North Spitsbergen Explorer – Versatile Landscapes, Sea ice and Wildlife

Date: 20/06/2025

Day 5: Exploring the sea ice

During the day we plan to be exploring the sea ice to the north of Svalbard in search of wildlife.

We strongly encourage you to be on the outside decks, the bridge, and the bow to enjoy this spectacle spotting for wildlife. Listen for announcements regarding wildlife. If we spot wildlife 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.

If we have some time in the open ocean, or encounter adverse weather conditions, we will offer lectures from the team. However, we are planning to keep the first morning in the ice free, so you can all enjoy the magical sea ice without distractions.

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

15.00 Jakub, our in-house iceman, invites you into the lounge for his lecture on sea ice and glaciers.

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

19:00 We will serve you a special arctic dinner on the back of deck 5!
Dress warmly and bring your dancing shoes!

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



North Spitsbergen Explorer – Versatile Landscapes, Sea ice and Wildlife - Summer Solstice

Date: 21/06/2025

Day 6: Exploring the sea ice towards the West.

During the day we plan to be exploring the sea ice to the north of Svalbard in search of wildlife. We strongly encourage you to be on the outside decks, the bridge, and the bow to enjoy this spectacle spotting for wildlife. Listen for announcements.

07:45 Wake-up call.

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

10.30 Charlotte invites you into the lounge for her lecture on Polar Bears.

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

16.30 Please join the expedition team in the lounge for an Arctic Summer Solstice quiz. To celebrate the longest day of the Arctic Summer. The bar team will also put on a happy hour for you!

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



North Spitsbergen Explorer – Versatile Landscapes, Sea ice and Wildlife

Date: 22/06/2025

Day 7: Magdalenefjorden

07:15 Wakeup Call.

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

This morning we hope to offer a split landing-zodiac cruise to visit the historical site of Gravneset in the stunning Magdalenefjorden.

09:00 We hope to invite the **Blue group** to the zodiac boarding area on Deck 3 for a landing at Gravneset in Magdalenefjorden.

09:15 We hope to invite the **Red group** to the zodiac boarding area on Deck 3 for a zodiac cruise in Magdalenefjorden.

Please note that we will be swapping the groups halfway during the morning for you all to enjoy both activities.

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

In the afternoon our last activity of this voyage will be a zodiac cruise in Gullybukta where we also hope to be able to show you a Walrus haul-out.

14:30 We hope to invite the **Red group** to the zodiac boarding area on Deck 3 for a zodiac cruise at Gullybukta.

14:45 We hope to invite the **Blue group** to the zodiac boarding area on Deck 3 for a zodiac cruise at Gullybukta.

Once back on the ship we will call you deck by deck to return your muck boots.

18:30 Please join the Expedition Team and Captain in the Lounge for the final recap. Details about disembarkation, Captain's farewell cocktail and we will be showing you the amazing slideshow of this voyage.

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

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



North Spitsbergen Explorer – Versatile Landscapes, Sea ice and Wildlife

Date: 23/06/2025

Day 8: Longyearbyen

07:15 Wake-up call. Please ensure your luggage is outside your room before 7:30am.

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 on flight SK4497– please use a dark blue luggage tag

For all those on flight SK4491– please use a yellow luggage tag.

For all those on flight SK4493– please use a red luggage tag.

For all those on flight DY391 - please use a light 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 Butikken.

For passengers on flight SK4497 – you will go straight from the ship to the airport

For passengers on flight SK4491; There will be a bus to take you to the airport from Svalbard Butikken at 13:00

For passengers on flight SK4493; There will be a bus to take you to the airport from Svalbard Butikken at 16:30.

For passengers on flight DY391; There will be a bus to take you to the airport from Svalbard Butikken at 17:30.

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.

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