



North Spitsbergen Explorer – Into the pack ice – Polar Bear Special

Longyearbyen – Longyearbyen

19th June 2025 – 26th June 2025

On board *m/v Ortelius*



M/V Ortelius was built in 1989 in Gdynia, Poland as a special-purpose research vessel for the Russian Academy of Science. She was originally named “Marina Svetaeva” after a well-known Russian poet. The vessel was purchased by Oceanwide Expeditions in 2011, re-flagged in The Netherlands, and re-named Ortelius. She was extensively re-fitted in 2019 and complies with the latest SOLAS-regulations (Safety Of Life At Sea). *M/V Ortelius* is 91.25 m long, 17.2 m wide and has a maximum draft of 5.4 m. She has ice class UL1 (Equivalent to 1A), 10.5 knots average cruising speed and propulsion is 6 ZL 40/48 SULZER. Ortelius is named after the Dutch cartographer Abraham Ortelius (1527-1598) who published the first modern world atlas, the Theatrum Orbis Terrarum (Theatre of the World) in 1570. Her home port is Vlissingen.



Captain Per Andersson

[Sweden]

and his international crew of 54

Chief Officer:	Sjoerd Van Hoek	[The Netherlands]
Second Officer:	Warren Villanueva	[Philippines]
Third Officer:	Ian Vincent	[Philippines]
Chief Engineer:	Alexander Bondarev	[Ukraine]
Second Engineer:	Jhunwel Yuzon	[Philippines]
Hotel Manager:	William Barnes	[The Netherlands]
Assistant Hotel Manager:	Bogdan 'Bobi' Manevski	[Macedonia]
Head Chef:	Ivan Yuriychuk	[Ukraine]
Sous Chef:	Felix Lobo	[India]
Sous Chef:	Sergiy Sklyarov	[Ukraine]
Bosun:	Eniano Agarin	[Philippines]
Bosun:	Philip Malang	[Philippines]
Bartender:	Jake Montevirgen	[Philippines]
Ship's doctor:	Marieke Timmerman	[Netherlands]
Expedition Leader:	Claudio Ghiglione	[Italy]
Assistant Expedition Leader:	Allan White	[Falkland Islands]
Expedition Guide:	Marco Rosso	[Italy]
Expedition Guide:	Marcelo Tarapow	[Argentina]
Expedition Guide:	Gabi Kolodko	[Poland]
Expedition Guide:	Martin Anstee	[United Kingdom]
Expedition Guide:	Matt Cheok	[Australia]
Expedition Guide:	Beth Hitchcock	[United Kingdom]
Expedition Guide:	Rao Xingpeng	[China]
Expedition Guide:	Paipai Liu	[China]

WE WELCOME YOU ON BOARD!

Day 1 – Thursday June 19th. Longyearbyen, Embarkation Day.

18:00 GPS Position: 78° 14.0' N / 014° 51.1' E

Wind: W-3 • Sea: Rippled • Weather: Clear • T_{air}: 5°C • T_{sea}: 4°C

Our Arctic adventure aboard Ortelius was about to start. Throughout the entire day the sun had shone in Longyearbyen, a perfect setting for our departure. At 4pm we all gathered at Kulkaya, the coal pier of the northernmost city in the world. A reminder of the old past of this remote archipelago tucked in the northwestern corner of the Barents Sea.

One by one, we made our way up the gangway, greeted by bright sunshine and the crisp, invigorating Arctic air. Excitement carried us through our first half hour onboard as we explored the ship—occasionally losing our way in its winding corridors. Soon after, we were warmly welcomed by Claudio, our Expedition Leader, and William, the Hotel Manager. As everyone settled into their cabins, Captain Per was introduced and offered his signature toast to each guest, setting a wonderfully warm and inviting tone for the journey ahead.

Once everyone was on board, we assembled for the mandatory safety drill. Donning our lifejackets, we gathered at the muster station before making our way up to the top deck. As the Ortelius slowly pulled away from the harbour, northern fulmars joined us, effortlessly gliding alongside the ship—their reflections shimmering on the glassy surface of the water. The moment of departure had truly arrived, and a shared sense of excitement buzzed in the crisp Arctic air. The sense of departure was real now, and excitement filled the air.

Our first dinner together set the tone for the voyage ahead; plentiful, delicious, and filled with laughter. The dining room buzzed with conversation as we helped ourselves to a generous buffet, featuring impressively large steaks that quickly became the subject of friendly jokes about the weight we might gain by the end of the trip.



Afterward, we gathered in the lecture room for the much-anticipated boot party, where we were fitted with our rubber boots, these would become our best friends during the following days when stepping out of the ship.

Just as we were settling into the rhythm of ship life, excitement surged once more, a blue whale and perhaps more than one individual, had been spotted off the bow. We rushed outside, hearts racing, to witness the enormous creature surface gracefully in the distance, a breathtaking welcome to the wild wonders that awaited us.



The blue whale, an awe-inspiring giant and the largest mammal ever to have lived on Earth, is a true marvel of the natural world. Reaching lengths of up to 30 meters and weighing as much as 180 tons, its sheer size is almost beyond comprehension. Despite its enormity, it moved with surprising grace, gliding through the ocean with slow, powerful strokes. Seeing one in the wild is a humbling reminder of the planet's vastness and the extraordinary creatures that call it home.

Day 2 – Friday June 20th. Alicehamna and Buchananhalvøya, Raudfjorden

12:00 GPS Position: 79° 44.5' N / 012° 09.7' E

Wind: SE-2 • Sea: Calm • Weather: Clear • T_{air}: 2°C • T_{sea}: 3°C

We were awakened at 6.45am by Claudio's enthusiastic voice echoing through the ship. After stirring from our cabins, we made our way to the dining room where a generous breakfast buffet awaited. With the sunlight already flooding in and a calm Arctic stillness outside, the day felt full of promise. After fuelling up, we gathered in the lounge to officially meet our expedition team. Safety briefings followed, covering Zodiac procedures and field protocols. Despite their importance, many of us were already glancing out the windows, eager to begin exploring.



Our first landing was Alicehamna, tucked into Raudfjorden on the northwestern coast of Spitsbergen. Conditions were near perfect. Clear skies, almost no wind and incredible visibility made for a beautiful outdoor experience. The expedition team went ahead to scout, and once all was ok, we descended into the zodiacs and headed to shore. That first cool breeze across the face marked the beginning of a true Arctic adventure.



At the landing, we visited a small trapper's hut, a reminder of the early twentieth century hunting era in Svalbard. Weathered by decades of snow and wind, the hut told stories of solitude and survival. Not far from the hut, we walked to a wooden cross and cairn that mark a simple grave site. These graves are believed to belong to Norwegian hunters from the early 1900s, a poignant link to the human history of the archipelago. From the top of the rise, the view was unforgettable. A mirrored lake laid below on one side, and on the other, mountains rose sharply in the mid-morning light. Our vessel sat perfectly framed in the bay.

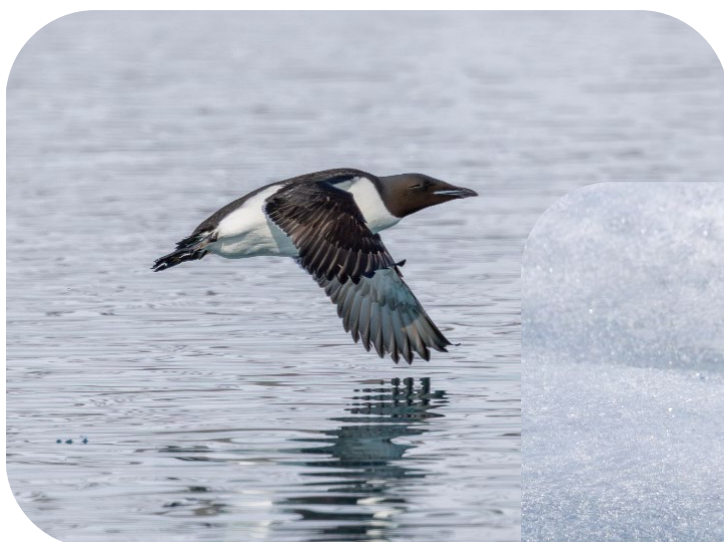
In the afternoon, we had originally planned to hike at Buchananhalvøya. But the snowpack was deep and inconsistent, with signs of snowshoe and ski tracks as well as a clear set of polar bear prints. With safety in mind, the team made the call to switch plans and offer a Zodiac cruise instead. Guests rushed to swap gear and lenses, and there was a growing sense of excitement as we lined up at the gangway.

The cruise proved to be a highlight. We motored through areas of fast ice where bearded seals appeared very fleetingly as if to tease us. Birdlife was abundant, kittiwakes soared overhead, guillemots (both Black and Brunnich's) hovered close to the water, and, to everyone's delight, a few King Eiders were spotted resting near the ice. The calm water created perfect reflections, and with the sun shining overhead, many guests asked whether the weather could possibly be any better.



Back on board, our day continued with the evening recap, where the team shared highlights and Marcelo gave a fascinating talk on the history of Svalbard and the origins of Longyearbyen. With appetites well and truly worked up, we gathered in the dining room for a delicious a la carte dinner, full of stories and warm conversations after such a rich day outside.

Just as we were settling in for the evening, Captain Per surprised us with another change of plan. We were headed towards Møffen Island, a protected nature reserve known for its walrus haul-outs. Though landings are not permitted, we cruised slowly past the low-lying island and were rewarded with several walrus piled together along the shoreline. Guests gathered on deck with cameras and binoculars, watching these massive animals resting peacefully in the light of late evening. Some snorted, others barely stirred, and the scene felt like the perfect end to a spectacular day in the Arctic.





Day 3 – Saturday 21st June. Texas Bar and Monacobreen, Liefdefjorden

12:00 GPS Position: 79° 35.2' N / 012° 40.1' E

Wind: NE-1 • Sea: Calm • Weather: Clear • T_{air}: 4°C • T_{sea}: 3°C

The walk up call from Claudio came at 06:45 letting us know of the conditions and our position, anchored next to Texas Bar. The hut was visible on the shore, with cliffs rising up behind it and low-lying islands across the fjord.

By the time we'd enjoyed a nice breakfast it was time to layer up and get the zodiac shuttle ashore ready for a hike on the slopes surrounding Texas Bar. In groups we made our way to higher ground giving rewarding views across to Hannabreen to the north. On the glacial outwash plane in front of Hannabreen we spotted reindeer searching for the first of the vegetation.



Between the intense search through our binoculars, we enjoyed the purple saxifrage and mountain avens flowers. Occasionally we found woolly lousewort adding to the burst of colour amongst the grey moraines and white glaciers. Roaming across the moraines we could find evidence of all the wildlife which use this site for nesting and feeding: reindeer antlers, poo from reindeer, geese and arctic fox and bones from a deceased young reindeer.

The birdlife already started to return for the season, particularly around the small lake where many of us enjoyed photographing the arctic skuas, pink footed geese and snow buntings. From a distance a rock ptarmigan was spotted which had already begun to change from its white winter appearance to its mottled summer plumage.

Some took the chance to hike to a cairn above the landing site which gave tremendous views across all of Liefdejorden from Monacobreen in the south all the way up to the flat promontory of Worsleyneset.



Before returning to the landing site, we all took some time to see what the Texas Bar hut had to offer. Marcelo explained to us how it was built in 1927 by a famous Norwegian trapper in the area, Hilmar Nøis, who built a number of huts in northern Spitsbergen.

The landing site was a hive of activity as everyone prepared mentally and physically for the polar plunge! The blue skies appeared and without much wind many people were enticed to try a dip at such a high latitude. Invigorated swimmers piled into the zodiacs to return to Ortelius for lunch.

It was soon time to get back in our layers again as over lunch the crew repositioned the ship and anchored deep in Liefdefjord, near the glacier front of Seligerbreen. From the zodiacs we cruised into the brash ice which radiated out from sites of calvings in the glacier front. We could feel the temperature drop as we neared the glacier. The view from the zodiacs was impressive with the towering blue ice scouring away between the jagged mountains.

A bearded seal was spotted laying on a flat piece of glacier ice. The distinctive orange head was noticeable as we neared the relaxed seal. The quiet sound of crackling ice was interrupted by the bang from calvings on the middle section of Seligerbreen. We were lucky to get to witness some collapses.



We cruised along the retreating glacier front, keeping watch for the occasional arctic skua, kittiewake, brünnich's guillemot, black guillemot and little auks. At a small cove in Monacobreen glacier front, many kittiewakes crowded on the water and surrounding icebergs enjoying the plentiful food from the upwelling glacial meltwater. Whilst enjoying this we were lucky to spot some Ivory gulls too.

It was a spectacular outing to have time to observe the glaciers and wildlife found at the glacier front. We headed back to Ortelius with many photos of new sightings. Claudio shared with us the plan of traveling north to reach the pack ice overnight after which Marco explained more about how glaciers work and characteristic features of Svalbard glaciers.



The day was packed with activities and the bar was busy in the evening with stories being shared on the sightings and highlights of the day! There was much anticipation for the days to come as we travelled north to the sea ice!

Day 4 – Sunday 22nd June. Drifting Pack Ice in Northern Svalbard

12:00 GPS Position: 80° 49.7' N / 011° 11.9' E

Wind: SW-5 • Sea: Calm • Weather: Foggy • T_{air}: -2°C • T_{sea}: 0°C



After leaving the northern coast of Svalbard behind during the night, *M/V Ortelius* set a course due north, reaching the edge of the drifting pack ice in the early hours of the morning. The shimmering reflection from the high-albedo sea ice lit up the horizon and our smiling faces, as the ship began navigating through the first scattered ice floes. We stood in quiet awe, captivated by the pristine Arctic landscape,

ready to begin a truly memorable day in this pure and untouched environment.

After breakfast, we eagerly made our way to the outer decks, cameras in hand, to capture the mesmerizing scene as the ship navigated through a mosaic of ice floes in varying shapes and sizes. The first hours of the morning slipped by quickly, with little wildlife in sight across the vast, silent expanse of white. As the ship pressed steadily northward, it was soon time for Marco to guide us into the fascinating world of the sea ice; explaining its formation, movement, and the critical role it plays in the complex dynamics of the Arctic basin.



Sea ice in the Arctic Ocean is a dynamic and ever-changing environment, shaped by wind, ocean currents, and fluctuating temperatures. It begins to form in autumn as the surface waters cool, first appearing as a thin, glassy layer called frazil ice, which gradually thickens into more solid floes over time. In regions like northern Svalbard, the interaction between the cold polar atmosphere and the relatively warm Atlantic waters creates a complex boundary where sea ice can advance or retreat dramatically over short periods.

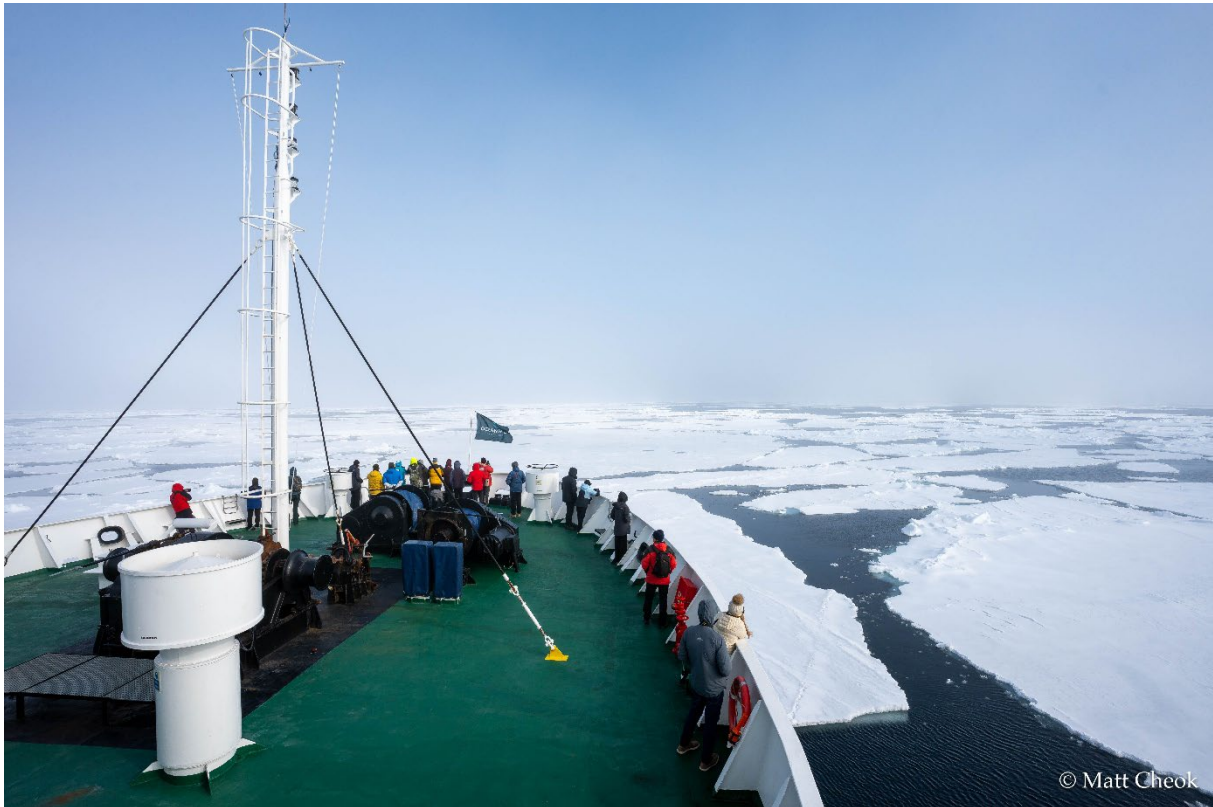
The drifting pack ice we encountered today, as Marco explained was most likely single year sea ice. Constantly in motion, pushed by the wind and steered by ocean gyres, ice floes drift around cracking, colliding, and rafting over one another. This fluid, living surface is not only a navigational challenge but also a vital habitat for polar bears, seals, and seabirds, all of whom rely on the ice for hunting, resting, and breeding.



After lunch, some of us wisely took the opportunity for a restful nap, while others devotedly stayed on the bridge, scanning the ice with binoculars and spotting scopes to assist the staff in the ongoing search for wildlife. Before long, a number of ringed seals began appearing on the larger ice floes, occasionally joined by elegant ivory gulls gliding overhead—a promising sign that the Arctic's elusive apex

predator might be nearby. M/V Ortelius, pressing steadily northward, crossed the 81st parallel by mid-afternoon; while Martin in the bar gave a thorough presentation of Arctic birds. Not long after, we were treated to a joyful surprise: a cheerful gathering at the bow, complete with hot

chocolate and a splash of rum, bringing everyone together in celebration of the journey and the icy wonderland surrounding us.



Just as the day seemed to be winding down, a wave of excitement swept through the ship—thanks to the sharp eyes and unwavering dedication of our staff on the bridge, a polar bear had been spotted. At first, it appeared as nothing more than a small, creamy dot on the vast ice, barely distinguishable to our untrained eyes. But as *Ortelius* slowly circled a massive ice floe, the bear came into clearer view. We quickly gathered at the bow and on the bridge, cameras poised, hearts racing, ready to witness a magical encounter under the glow of the endless Arctic summer night. Initially, the bear seemed focused on a pair of ringed seals resting nearby, but to our amazement, it soon turned its attention toward us—sniffing the air and playfully weaving in and out of view behind pressure ridges. We watched in breathless anticipation as it edged closer, only to stop, settle near a ridge, and lie down, leaving us awestruck, with dry mouths and full hearts.

By midnight, most of us had retreated to the bar or slipped quietly into our cabins, holding onto hope that the bear might stir during the night or in the early hours of the morning. It was a gentle reminder of how elusive and unpredictable wildlife can be in the vast, silent expanse of the Arctic; a place where patience is essential, and every encounter is a gift. Spotting animals in this endless white wilderness is never guaranteed, but the anticipation itself is part of the magic of exploring this region.

Day 5 – Monday 23rd June. Drifting Pack Ice in Northern Svalbard

12:00 GPS Position: 80° 54.6' N / 011° 45.5' E

Wind: NW-4 • Sea: Calm • Weather: Overcast • T_{air}: -1°C • T_{sea}: 0°C



Last night we went to bed knowing that there was a polar bear about 250 metres away from the ship, sleeping. We slept as well, knowing that we could be woken up any time by Claudio to hear that the bear was moving.

At 4.45 the call came, the bear had woken up and was on the move.

We hurriedly dressed and headed for the outside decks, the bear was on the move, it walked seemingly effortlessly but so quickly, each one of its huge strides powering it forward on the search for food.



The bear found a hole in the ice and went into the water, we couldn't see if it was hunting but it sure got very wet. The bear had a good shake and headed for the ice edge.

Eventually it reached the edge of the huge ice flow and slid down into the water, we watched as it started to swim across the open water in front of the ship, its head up watching and sniffing the air, some Little auk and Brünnichs guillemots flew overhead

as it swam, at one point it ducked down, lifted its back legs and dived down, completely submerging, shortly it reappeared and continued on its swim to the next ice flow.



We watched as the bear climbed out of the water and walked along the ice, every now and then it would quicken its pace into a short run, the bear eventually turned and walked away from the ship further into the ice and the falling snow, disappearing from our view, that was our first bear encounter of the trip, spectacular!

Most of us then took some time to rest and before we knew it, it was time for breakfast. Yet another super meal was laid out, we were hungrier than ever having already been up and about for three hours!

We then had time to enjoy the scenery, this amazing landscape of ice and snow, to sit and watch the different patterns of ice as we sailed through was mesmerising. We saw several seals and birdlife along the way, Matt gave a very informative lecture on photography and then it was time for lunch.

After lunch, those that chose to - watched the new Ocean film; those that didn't could rest or hunt for wildlife or just watch the ice and the frequent snow showers.

It was late afternoon when Claudio gave a great lecture on some of the science work carried out in the Arctic area.



The day was brought to a close with recap and a very special dinner by way of a BBQ outside with dancing late into the evening.

Day 6 – Tuesday 24th June. Magdalenefjorden and Hamburgbukta

12:00 GPS Position: 79° 34.2' N / 010° 49.3' E

Wind: N-1 • Sea: Calm • Weather: Overcast • T_{air}: 3°C • T_{sea}: 3°C

During the course of the night, the ship made its way back toward the Svalbard coast, transiting in the early hours of the morning past the islands of Amsterdamøya and Danskøya—historic sites once used by whalers in the 17th century. The air was warmer and damper than during the past few days we had spent in the sea ice, with a heavy gloom hanging in the sky. Low, brooding clouds partially veiled the jagged, dramatic jagged (Spits) peaks (Bergen) of Spitsbergen's mountains, lending the coast an eerie and majestic silhouette.



During breakfast, *MV Ortelius* navigated steadily into Magdalenefjorden, setting the stage for our scheduled morning activity: a three-hour Zodiac cruise. Right after breakfast, the Zodiacs were launched, and our cheerful and experienced expedition team took the tillers, ready to guide us through one of the most scenic fjords in the Svalbard archipelago.

Magdalenefjorden is often described as one of the crown jewels of northwest Spitsbergen. Surrounded by steep, glacier-carved peaks and edged by dramatic cliffs, the fjord offers breathtaking views and rich historical significance. In the XVII century, it served as a key harbour for European whalers, and remnants of their presence—such as blubber ovens and grave sites—still remain along the shorelines. The fjord is also home to impressive tidewater glaciers, such as Waggonwaybreen that calve into the icy waters, and its sheltered bays provide excellent opportunities to spot seabirds,



seals, and occasionally polar bears. The interplay of history, wildlife, and stark Arctic beauty makes Magdalenefjorden a highlight of any Svalbard voyage.

The cruise began with delightful sightings of playful harbour seals, hauled out on smooth boulders deposited long ago by retreating glaciers. We spotted several pups closely following their mothers in the water, while others rested on the rocks in their classic "banana-shaped" pose: arched backs, heads and tails lifted, a posture that helps them stay dry and conserve heat.



Harbour seals, also known as common seals, are among the most widespread pinnipeds in the Northern Hemisphere, yet their presence in Svalbard is more localized and less predictable than other Arctic species. They tend to favour sheltered coastlines and fjords, where they can haul out on rocks and ice to rest, molt, or nurse their young. These seals are relatively small, with rounded heads, large expressive eyes, and a wide range of coat patterns—from light grey with dark spots to darker hues with pale rings. In Magdalenefjorden, their relaxed demeanor and inquisitive nature make them a favourite among visitors.



Next, we approached the stunning icebergs calved from Waggonwaybreen. Their vivid blue hues, ranging from pale turquoise to deep sapphire, revealed the dense, compressed ice. As we drifted closer, the soft crackle of popping air bubbles released from melting ice, created a subtle, otherworldly soundtrack. Towering above us, the glacier's jagged front stood like a frozen wall,

occasionally rumbling as chunks of ice broke off and crashed into the sea, reminding us of the glacier's quiet but constant movement.



The original plan for the afternoon was fortunately disrupted by the sighting of not one, but two polar bears—an unforgettable highlight made possible thanks to our sister ship, MV Hondius, which generously shared the location with us. We dropped anchor in Gullybukta and settled in for a patient wait, scanning the shoreline with anticipation. After a few hours, our patience was rewarded: two magnificent polar bears appeared, slowly making their way along the coast. Their powerful, deliberate strides carried them across the rocky terrain with ease, occasionally pausing to sniff the air or investigate the shoreline. The golden light caught their thick fur, giving them a warm glow against the cold, stark landscape. It was a moment of pure Arctic magic, the kind that makes every frozen mile worthwhile.

What a great way to end another fabulous day!

Day 7 – Wednesday 25th June. Poolepynten and Alkhornet

12:00 GPS Position: 78° 27.1' N / 011° 52.5' E

Wind: N-3 • Sea: Rippled • Weather: Overcast • T_{air}: 5°C • T_{sea}: 4°C

During the morning of our last expedition day, *M/V Ortelius* moved slowly, easing into Forlandsundet, the narrow channel that separates the island of Spitsbergen from Prins Karls Forland.



To the west, Prins Karls Forland emerged—a narrow, elongated crown with snow-draped peaks. Today, it stands as a protected sanctuary, offering refuge to seabird colonies, grazing reindeer, and walruses basking along its sandy edges. The island also bears a subtle yet notable mark in the chronicles of early Arctic exploration. It was first glimpsed in 1610 by the English navigator Jonas Poole, who was sailing under the banner of the Muscovy Company in pursuit of whales and uncharted trade passages. In tribute to the future monarch Charles I of England, Poole christened the land "Prince Charles's Foreland."

Early in the morning, divided into two small groups, we set foot on the island at Poolepynten, a low-lying sand spit on the eastern side of Prins Karls Forland, named after Jonas Poole himself. Guided by our team we followed an unmarked path across gravelly terrain dotted by drifted wood and observed the small group of Arctic pinnipeds sprawled across the beach from a respectful distance.



Their massive, tusked bodies piled together like driftwood. Atlantic walruses can weigh over 1,500 kilograms and use their tusks not only for defense but also to haul themselves out of the water and onto ice or shore. Social and often vocal, they grunted and snorted, occasionally lifting their heads to eye us with mild curiosity. Despite their bulk and awkward gait on land, in the water they are graceful swimmers, perfectly adapted to the icy Arctic seas.



It was hard to picture their underwater lives as we watched them doze on the beach. Walruses are expert benthic feeders, using their sensitive whiskers (vibrissae) to detect clams buried in the seafloor. With powerful suction, they can extract the soft parts of a clam without cracking the shell. An adult may eat thousands of clams in a single day, playing a key role in stirring up the seabed and maintaining the balance of the Arctic marine

ecosystem.

Back on the ship the reception was busy with our last purchases and payments, whilst the ship started to reposition towards the mouth of Isfjorden. As we enjoyed lunch onboard, we slipped into the sheltered bay of Trygghamna.

This natural harbour, used by whalers since the 17th century, offered calm waters and an ideal spot for our final landing. We stepped ashore onto tundra still dotted with lingering snow, eager to stretch our legs one last time. The staff offered us a secure perimeter guarded by the guides for safety,



and within it we could roam freely and take our time to soak into the landscape one last time. Some of us made our way toward the cliffs of Alkhornet, taking in the sights and sounds of the Arctic wilderness. Along the trail, Pink-footed Geese and Snow Buntings flitted about, while Svalbard Reindeer wandered around us in great numbers. Some grazing, other running after each other and a few resting on the snow patches. It was a fitting and beautiful conclusion to our journey through this remote and remarkable corner of the Svalbard archipelago.



Alkhornet comes from the shape of the mountain that domain the place, it looks like a horn. Back on the ship we gathered for the farewell cocktail. Multiple people, including captain Per and Expedition Leader Claudio, declared words of appreciation for the trip. After watching the fantastic and touching slide show made by Gabi, we had one last dinner before returning our boots and packing our luggage for the next day.

Some of us could see the Arctic fox, others couldn't but all of us could enjoy the beautiful tiny flowers.

Day 8 – Thursday 26th June. Longyearbyen, Kulkaia

08:00 GPS Position: 78° 14.6' N / 015° 32.6' E

Wind: SE-3 • Sea: Calm • Weather: Overcast • T_{air}: 4°C • T_{sea}: 4°C

After a quiet night adrift in the storied stillness of Colesbukta, *MV Ortelius* gently made her way into port. By morning light, we arrived in Longyearbyen.

A last breakfast aboard offered both comfort and closure, as we lingered over warm cups and soft conversation. Then came the time to gather our things, to walk the familiar path to the gangway, and to say our farewells to the crew who had steered us through ice and wonder, and to the companions who had become more than fellow travellers.

Some turned toward the streets of Longyearbyen, eager for one more adventure. Others, homeward bound, carried with them the hush of glaciers and the cry of seabirds. And as we stepped onto solid ground, we looked back one final time at *MV Ortelius*, her silhouette already etched in memory; a vessel not just of passage, but of transformation. In that moment, we knew: the journey had ended, but its echo would linger, calling us forward toward new horizons.

On behalf of Oceanwide Expeditions, Captain Per Andersson, Expedition Leader Claudio Ghiglione, Hotel Manager William Barnes and all the crew and staff of *M/V Ortelius*, it has been a pleasure and a privilege travelling with you.

**Total distance sailed on our voyage: 832 nautical miles.
Northernmost position: 81° 08.4' N / 011° 29.5'E**

Your Oceanwide Expeditions Team





No.	Date	Location
1	19 th June 2025	Longyearbyen
2	20 th	Alicehamna
3	20 th	Raudfjordbreen
4	21 st	Texas Bar
5	21 st	Monacobreen
6	22 nd – 23 rd	Sea ice day
7	24 th	Waggonwaybreen
7	24 th	Gullybukta
8	25 th	Poolepynten
9	25 th	Alkhornet
1	26 th	Longyearbyen

Birds and Mammals of Svalbard and Franz Josph Land

[illegible]

Herring Gull	<i>Larus argentatus</i>												
Lesser black-backed Gull	<i>Larus fuscus</i>												
Great black-backed Gull	<i>Larus marinus</i>		X										
Kittiwake	<i>Rissa tridactyla</i>		X	X	X	X	X	X					
Ross' Gull	<i>Rhodostethia rosea</i>												
Ivory Gull	<i>Pagophila eburnea</i>			X	X								
Arctic Tern	<i>Sterna paradisaea</i>						X	X					
Common Guillemot	<i>Uria aalge</i>												
Brunnich's Guillemot	<i>Uria lomvia</i>		X	X	X	X	X	X					
Black Guillemot	<i>Cepphus grylle</i>	X	X	X	X	X	X	X					
Little Auk	<i>Alle alle</i>			X	X	X	X	X					
Puffin	<i>Fratercula arctica</i>	X	X	X			X	X					
Barn Swallow	<i>Hirundo rustica</i>												
White Wagtail	<i>Motacilla alba</i>												
Meadow Pipit	<i>Anthus pratensis</i>												
Wheatear	<i>Oenanthe oenanthe</i>												
Blackbird	<i>Turdus merula</i>												
Snow Bunting	<i>Plectrophenax nivalis</i>		X	X			X	X					
Redpoll	<i>Carduelis flammea</i>												
Lapland longspur	<i>Calcarius lapponicus</i>												
Fieldfare	<i>Turdus pilaris</i>												
Redwing	<i>Turdus iliacus</i>												
Brambling	<i>Fringilla montifringilla</i>												
Gyr Falcon	<i>Falco rusticolus</i>												

MAMMALS

English	Latin												
Walrus	<i>Odobenus rosmarus</i>		X				X	X					
Bearded seal	<i>Erignathus barbatus</i>		X	X	X	X							
Ringed seal	<i>Phoca hispida</i>		X		X	X							
Harp seal	<i>Pagophilus groenlandicus</i>												
Hooded seal	<i>Cystophora cristata</i>												
Common /Harbour seal	<i>Phoca vitulina</i>						X						
Minke Whale	<i>Balaenoptera acutorostrata</i>			X			X						
Sei Whale	<i>Balaenoptera borealis</i>												
Blue Whale	<i>Balaenoptera musculus</i>	X											
Fin Whale	<i>Balaenoptera physalus</i>												
Humpback Whale	<i>Megaptera novaeangliae</i>												
Bowhead whale	<i>Balaena mysticetus</i>												
Sperm Whale	<i>Physeter macrocephalus</i>												
Narwhal	<i>Monodon monoceros</i>												
Northern Bottlenose Whale	<i>Hyperoodon ampullatus</i>												
Orca (Killer Whale)	<i>Orcinus orca</i>												
White-beaked Dolphin	<i>Lagenorhynchus albirostris</i>												
Beluga	<i>Devinapterus leucas</i>	X											
Polar Bear	<i>Ursus maritimus</i>				X	X	X						
Arctic Fox	<i>Alopex lagopus</i>						X	X					

[illegible]

Claudio Ghiglione – Exp. Leader



Claudio was born in Italy in 1983. He is a marine ecologist specialised in polar regions, expedition guide and nature photographer.

Interested in science and nature since he was very young, he graduated first in *Marine Environmental Sciences* (BA) and then in *Marine Science* (MA). In March 2017 he obtained a *PhD in Earth, Environmental and Polar Sciences* run in cooperation with the Italian National Antarctic Museum (Italy) and the British Antarctic Survey in Cambridge (UK).

For several years he worked as a polar researcher focusing his work mainly on the South Pole (Antarctica); his objective is to analyse and evaluate information used for ecological modelling and possible future scenarios following global warming. During his academic career, he actively takes part in some scientific expeditions both in Arctic and in Antarctica in cooperation with Norway and England.

His passion for travel, mainly to cold and often inhospitable places, and his career as a photographer led him to travel a lot, creating and managing – often in complete autonomy – itineraries and logistics. In 2017 – thanks to his professional experience, the skills acquired over the time and the need to spend more time on the field – he starts working full time as a guide Oceanwide.

Specialised in nature, scientific and travel photography, Claudio uses his photos as a means of telling stories to draw attention mainly to his main subjects, namely animals, nature and environment. In the 2019 he published his first book 'Polar Lights' with whom he shares the passion for nature photography.

Allan White – Asst. Exp. Leader



Allan was born and raised in the Falkland Islands. He's a fifth generation Islander, and a descendant of one of the original British colonists in 1840. His higher education was completed in England, after which he embarked on a military career.

He joined the British Army aged 17. After serving in West Germany for two years during the Cold War period, he completed deployments in Northern Ireland, Cyprus as a United Nations peacekeeper, and with British Forces South Atlantic Islands. He left the Army to settle back in the Falklands.

While working as a Port Agent in the Falklands, Allan worked with the late Lars-Eric Lindblad, the inspirational pioneer of small ship expedition cruising. He encouraged Allan to become a Zodiac driver and go to sea for a year. Thirty years later, he's still at it. His voyages have taken him all over the world, with particular focus on the Polar regions. His travel experience ranges from 90° North to 78° South.

In the Falklands, Allan and his wife owned and operated their own tourist lodge for over a decade. More recently they managed a privately owned island, where they were the sole residents for almost 5 years, with thousands of albatrosses, penguins and seals for neighbours.

Allan is an experienced guide and Zodiac driver, with a keen interest in natural history and polar exploration. He lives in the Falklands capital Stanley, with his wife Jacqui.

Marco Rosso – Expedition Guide



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

Currently he is studying Earth Science at Stockholm University, Sweden.

After a few years working in the automotive industry, he decided to embark himself on a new quest. For two

years he backpacked from the tropical forests of Central America, through the snowy peaks of the Andean Cordillera, rolling all the way down to the tip of South America.

The raw and powerful beauty of Patagonia convinced him to swap Mother Nature wonders for mankind artifacts. Fascinated by applied geophysics, he therefore decided to use his deep and broad knowledge in thermodynamics and fluid mechanics to satisfying his innate curiosity, thereby started to study Earth Science.

During the last decade he has been living in Puerto Natale, Chile; leading groups as a trekking guide and tour leader in some of the most beautiful and rugged trails of Patagonia and since a couple of years has started to join expeditions to the Arctic and the Antarctic on board of Oceanwide vessels.

Marcelo Tarapow – Expedition Guide



Marcelo Tarapow has a Master's degree in Social Sciences, specialized in History from the National University of Quilmes, retired Rear Admiral of the Argentine Navy, Honorary Professor at the Nikola Vaptsarov Academy (Bulgaria) and Graduate in Naval Systems.

He participated in twelve expeditions to Antarctica between 1988 and 2017, occupying different roles until being the leader on his last two occasions, spending around 900 days in Antarctic activity.

He has also carried out studies in Environmental Preservation, Climate Change, Energy Efficiency and Tourism.

He has been a professor in pre-Antarctic courses taught in Argentina, Colombia and Bulgaria, especially on navigation, meteorology, the Antarctic Treaty and the Madrid Protocol.

He is the President of the Academy of Antarctica, a lecturer and researcher especially on topics related to the White Continent, having presented on historical Antarctic expeditions in Argentina, Belgium, Bulgaria, Colombia, France and Romania.

He is a member of the Council at Polar Educators International for the 2024-2025 biennium.

His main hobbies are swimming, cycling, tango, reading, an enthusiastic collector of ancient objects linked to Antarctic history and an amateur photographer.

Always ready to learn from other cultures, listen to stories, passionately share their experiences and care for the environment.

Gabi Kolodko – Expedition Guide



Having been exposed to the pristine wilderness of Alaska, Canada, and Lapland before turning ten, Gabi developed a deep-rooted passion for cold climates and the great outdoors. Each summer, she devoted herself to sailing, and in 2012, her adventures included crossing the Baltic Sea from Poland to Scandinavia and back aboard the Zawisza Czarny, a historic 42-meter vessel originally built in 1952.

With a Master's in Fine Arts and a fascination for art, culture, and history, Gabi's curiosity led her to explore the unique human-animal relationships in polar regions, combining her interest in zooanthropology with the stories of Antarctica's early exploration and modern conservation. Her first journey to Antarctica in 2019 only deepened her connection to the continent's striking landscapes and rich history.

Gabi's enthusiasm for the cold extends beyond her travels; she actively practices the Wim Hof method and regularly takes on ice baths, walrusing, and cryotherapy throughout the year. A memorable encounter with a herd of Musk Oxen in 1993 at Herschel Island off the Canadian Arctic coast sparked her love for Arctic wildlife, with the Gentoo Penguin now topping her list of favorites in Antarctica.

She loves being part of life-changing voyages, rediscovering the polar regions with each new group of guests. Driven by a passion for adventure and a genuine desire to share the wonders of the poles, Gabi aims to inspire awe and respect for these breathtaking and fragile landscapes, offering others a transformative glimpse into the natural world.

Martin Anstee – Expedition Guide



Martin has been a keen naturalist and wildlife photographer for most of his life.

Martin has been an active Bird Ringer since the year 2000 and particularly enjoys studying/ringing and just being around seabird colonies.

Martin has used a camera since an early age and has combined his love of the outdoors and seabird habitats with photography. Martin has spent time in Zimbabwe and Botswana photographing other wildlife.

Martin has combined this with a career in the Police Service, firstly in the UK where he was, amongst other roles, a wildlife crime officer. His last role in The Police was as a Police Sergeant in The Royal Falkland Islands Police.

Martin lived in the Falkland Islands, Stanley, for just over two years, leaving to return to the UK in November 2021. In his two years Martin was a volunteer with Falklands Conservation, he helped with The Falkland Islands Seabird Monitoring Program (FISMP) in particular counting Seabirds and ringing Black browed Albatross. Martin was also involved in fieldwork for a Striated Caracara (Johnny Rook) study. As a result Martin has visited most of the larger (and some of the smaller) outlying islands that form part of The Falkland Islands.

This is also where Martin started his career as a guide, he enjoys sharing his knowledge of the Islands and the wildlife which he continues to do to this day. Martin has also guided in The Arctic, Antarctica and some of the sub-antarctic Islands as well as some of the least visited Islands in The Atlantic such as Tristan da Cunha.

Matt Cheok – Expedition Guide



Matt is an adventure photographer and videographer from Sydney, Australia.

His work has taken him to some of the planet's most remote and captivating destinations – from the polar regions of Antarctica, Svalbard and Greenland to the majestic African savannah, landlocked steppe countries of Central Asia, and rugged mountains of South America.

In Antarctica, Matt's favourite subjects to capture are the playful gentoo penguins and the dramatic polar landscapes in the late afternoon light.

As a photography educator, Matt enjoys sharing his expertise with fellow travellers and inspiring them to connect with the natural world.

Matt's career path has been full of surprises. He previously worked as a commercial and insurance lawyer in Sydney, but he's now much happier pursuing his passion for photography and adventure.

When he's not guiding, Matt spends much of his time camping, thru-hiking, drinking lots of Bialetti coffee, and exploring the outdoors, having recently returned from the Fann Mountains in Tajikistan.

Onboard, you'll find Matt out on deck, cameras in hand. Don't hesitate to approach him with any photography questions or just for a friendly chat!

Beth Hitchcock – Expedition Guide



After graduating from her Geology honours degree in 2018 at Glasgow, Beth balanced two jobs until she succumbed to full time in the guiding world in 2021. Beth worked as a deckhand / guide on a tall ship and, when on the land, as an Engineering Geologist working mainly on Scotland's road and railway networks.

On the tall ships, Beth visited many places around the Atlantic Ocean from the Azores to Cape Town and Tristan da Cunha. In the austral summers she guides on the ship when they visit Antarctica and South Georgia. These

are ideal places to interpret the landscape and explain to the guests how the glaciers and geological processes have carved what we see today. The incredible human history in these regions has a significant impact on the regional geological story and on our understanding of geology globally.

Beth also enjoys spending time in the mountains of Scotland where she works when she is not guiding on board ships. She grew up sailing around the islands of the west coast of Scotland - home to some fascinating geology where she spent many field trips during her undergraduate years. This sparked the desire to explore and embark on adventures to discover new landscapes and cultures around the world.

Paipai Liu - Translator



Pai Pai is a native of Beijing, China, where she worked for several years as an Ear, Nose, and Throat (ENT) surgeon at China's top ENT hospital. Growing up, she split her time between China and France, where she completed seven years of her education. As a result, Pai Pai is trilingual, comfortably speaking English and French along with her native Mandarin Chinese. This facilitated her subsequent travels to over 60 countries, often volunteering as an organizer, interpreter, and medical assistant along the way.

Pai Pai's first time in Antarctica was as a guest on a 23-day expedition. Since then, her interest in Antarctic preservation grew rapidly. The combined professionalism and warmth of the team left a deep impression on Pai Pai, eventually moving her to join as an assistant interpreter.

She looks forward to sharing this experience with you and her commitment to animal welfare and environmental protection.

中文

派派是中国北京人，曾经在全国最棒的五官科医院担任耳鼻喉科医生。她在成长过程中一半时间在中国，一半时间在法国完成了七年的学业。因此，除了母语普通话，她还能说英语和法语。这使得她之后有机会游历了 60 多个国家，并经常以组织者、翻译和医疗助理的身份进行服务。

派派第一次去极地是作为 23 天南极探险之旅的客人。从那时起，她对极地保护的興趣迅速增长。团队的温暖氛围还有专业精神给派派留下了深刻的印象，最终促使她加入探险队担任翻译和极地向导工作。

她期待着与未来的客人分享这段经历，以及她对动物福利和环境保护的承诺。

Xinpeng Rao - Expedition Guide



Rao was born in Harbin China, the city full of snow and ice. This is still the reason he gives to others that he is really afraid of hot, he is a true northern man.

His hometown made him full of love in ice and ocean. After he retired from CAPF army and finished college in 2011, he works as an international tour leader in Travel agency for 6 years, during that time, he first went to Europe for western history, then Africa for wildlife.

After his first time in Antarctica, he actually found that most of the information written in Chinese such as Baidu in some common sense about Polar region were totally wrong. Then he decided to make some change.

Now 5 years since that first tour leader trip, during this time he tried to learn anything he could. He has some friends also working in polar region as a staff or a translator. They together making Science popularization in China.

Rao always encourage people to learn from the place they have been. Now the world changing so fast, every modern city looks like same. Original culture and wild environment were taken place by “modern”. That is also the reason why now the wildlife tour is more and more popular in tourism industry.

中文

饶出生在哈尔滨这座充满冰天雪地的城市，这也是他非常怕热的理由——因为他是北方人。

家乡让他从小就爱上了冰雪和海洋。2011 年，他从武警部队退役，并在大学毕业后，在旅行社担任了 6 年的国际领队，在旅行的过程中，他先是去欧洲学习西方历史，然后去了非洲学习野生动物。

在他第一次去南极后，他发现实际上大多数国内书写的知识，比如百度百科，在关于极地的许多常识信息都是完全错误的。从此他决定做些改变。

现在距离他第一次领队旅行已经 5 年了，在这段时间里，他试图在船上学习任何他能学到的东西。他有一些朋友也在极地地区作为探险队或翻译。他们一同试图在国内进行科普教育。

他总是鼓励人们在旅途中学习。现在的世界变化之快，每个现代城市看起来都是一样的。民俗文化和野生环境被“现代社会”所取代。这也是为什么现在野生环境为目的地的旅游在旅游业中越来越受欢迎的原因。

Marieke Timmerman – Ships Doctor



This is the **ship's medical doctor** for everybody on board: passengers, staff and crew. She is from the Netherlands. After medical school, she worked as a resident in surgery for a year. After that, she worked as a resident in ENT (ear nose throat): research and clinics for four years. Furthermore, she was a doctor in a nursing home. In 2014 she started her training becoming a General Practitioner (GP) and with a lot of pleasure she works as a GP in Hilversum and Haarlem (the Netherlands) nowadays.

This is her sixth expedition to Arctica/ Antarctica as a doctor and hopefully not

her last!

In her days off, she loves to do sports (tennis, padel, kitesurfing, to the gym, skiing), go to the beach which is nearby her house, meeting up with friends and to travel.

Many medical problems can be prevented:

Seasickness is a common problem in these waters. It is easier to prevent it than to treat it. Please let her know if you have any questions or if you need medication.

Accidents and injuries: always one hand for the ship, one hand for yourself. Carry your things in a backpack or around your neck for example, to have both hands free when moving around a sailing ship with so many stairs, heavy doors and slippery decks. And watch out for your fingers with slamming doors!

On a ship, *contagious diseases* are easily spread around, like Covid19. Please wash your hands after every toilet visit and before every meal and use the alcohol suspenders in front of the restaurant. Furthermore, cough in your elbow instead of your hand.

Look well after your eyes and skin. The atmosphere within the ship is dry and outside the sun is bright. Always wear sunglasses to prevent *snow blindness* and sunscreen to prevent *sunburn*.

Finally, feel free to contact her about anything if you have a question! She is happy to help you and to prevent is better than to cure



North Spitsbergen Explorer – Into the pack ice – Summer Solstice – Polar Bear Special

Date: 19th June 2025

Day 1: Embarkation – Longyearbyen

WELCOME ABOARD!

Please make yourselves at home in your cabins and check you have received all your luggage; **if you are missing any luggage, or find bags in your cabin which are not yours, please visit reception on Deck 4.** Please be patient as hotel staff may be busy with embarking guests – thank you 😊

Tea/coffee is available in the **Bar located on Deck 6.**

PLEASE LISTEN FOR ANNOUNCEMENTS.

1700 +/- Ship safety briefing in the **Bar on DECK 6.** Attendance is **MANDATORY.**

After the briefing the emergency alarm will be sounded. You must go back to your cabin to get your life jacket and dress warmly. All guests must then go to the **MUSTER STATION** which is the **Bar on Deck 6.** Please ensure you have your own room key with you as you will need this to check in, and it will also indicate which lifeboat you are assigned to.

1800 +/- Please join the Expedition Team and Hotel Manager in the **Bar on Deck 6** for a welcome briefing to orientate you to life on board and explain the plan for the forthcoming days.

1900 - 2000 Dinner in the **Restaurant on Deck 4.**

2030 +/- You will be called deck by deck to go to the **Lecture Room on Deck 3** to pick up your Muck Boots: please bring your thick socks.

Please note that we will be sailing into open seas. If you are concerned about sea sickness, the doctor will be available if you require medication. Medication should be taken as soon as possible after embarkation. Please ensure that all your belongings are stored away safely and that doors and drawers in your cabin are tightly closed.



探索北斯皮茨伯根群岛- 夏至海冰北极熊之旅

日期: 2025 年 6 月 20 日

第二天: Alicehamna 及 Buchananhalvøya

0645	晨间广播
0700-0800	自助早餐 - 四层餐厅
0815 +/-	探险队介绍及强制性安全解说 - 三层演讲厅
1045 +/-	我们希望 在 Alicehamna 进行冲锋艇登陆活动 ，并在这里欣赏到罗德峡湾 (Raudfjorden) 的迷人景色、历史遗迹和北极植物。 <u>请在户外活动中务必穿着保暖衣物以及防水衣裤</u>
1245 +/-	全体乘客登船
1300-1400	自助午餐 - 四层餐厅 <u>请在每日中午用餐时与服务人员一同确认晚餐的菜单。</u>
1430	我们希望 在 Buchananhalvøya 进行冲锋艇登陆活动 在登陆活动中将提供不同难度的徒步活动，以欣赏斯瓦尔巴特西北部这一标志性地区两个冰川前沿之间的美丽风景。 <u>请在户外活动中务必穿着保暖衣物以及防水衣裤</u>
1800 +/-	全体乘客登船
1830	当日行程回顾及次日计划 - 六层酒吧
1900	桌餐式晚餐 - 四层餐厅 <u>请准时到场，餐饮服务将在全体乘客到达时开始。</u>

如果条件允许，我们鼓励您充分利用傍晚的光线，在室外露台或船桥上欣赏风景，寻找野生动物！



North Spitsbergen Explorer – Into the pack ice – Summer Solstice – Polar Bear Special

Date: 21st June 2025

Day 3: Texas Bar & Monacobreen

- 0645 Wake-up call.
- 0700-0800 Buffet breakfast will be served in the **Dining Room on Deck 4.**
- 0845 +/- We hope to start disembarkation for **going ashore at Texas Bar.** This site is named after a trapper's hut which you will see ashore and is a fantastic place for hiking, along with a variety of flora and fauna. **Please dress warmly; it is mandatory to wear waterproofs.**
- 1200 POLAR PLUNGE!!! *We will provide you with towels, please don't take towels from the cabins.*
- 1245 +/- Last Zodiac back to the ship.
- 1300-1400 Lunch in the **Restaurant on Deck 4.**
- 1430 Disembarkation for a **Zodiac Cruise of Monacobreen**, one of the most iconic glacier fronts in Svalbard. This is named after Prince Albert I of Monaco, for his 1898-1907 oceanographic expedition to map the area. If we are lucky, we may spot wildlife such as bearded seal, ivory gull and beluga. **Please dress warmly; it is mandatory to wear waterproofs.**
- 1800 +/- Last Zodiac back to the ship.
- 1830 Please join the Expedition Team in the **Bar on Deck 6** for our daily recap, including plans for tomorrow.
- 1900 Dinner in the **Restaurant on Deck 4.**
Please attend promptly: service only starts once everyone is seated.

If conditions are good, we encourage you to make the most of the evening light by being on the outside decks or on the bridge; enjoy the landscape and look out for wildlife!



North Spitsbergen Explorer – Into the pack ice Summer Solstice – Polar Bear Special

Date: 22nd June 2025

Day 4 – Into the pack ice

This will be the first of our days exploring the Arctic pack ice looking for wildlife. We hope to find birds, seals, whales and, of course, polar bear. We encourage you to spend as much time as possible on the outside decks and on the bridge to help us search: the more eyes looking for animals, the better chance we have to spot them!

PLEASE REMEMBER TO BE QUIET ON THE OUTSIDE DECKS:
NOISES/SOUNDS CAN SCARE AWAY WILDLIFE!

- 0745 Wakeup-call: Good Morning!
- 0800-0900 Buffet breakfast will be served in the **Dining Room on Deck 4.**
- 1100 +/- **Marco** will give a lecture about **Sea Ice Formation and Dynamics.**
Please join her in the **Bar on Deck 6**
- 1230-1330 Lunch will be served in the Dining Room on Deck 4.
- 1530 +/- **Martin** will give a presentation about **Birds of Svalbard.**
Please join him in the **Bar on Deck 6**
- 1830 Please join the Expedition Team in the **Bar on Deck 6** for our daily recap.
- 1900 Dinner is served in the **Restaurant on Deck 4.**
- 2030 We will show the latest BBC documentary called OCEAN with Sir. David Attenborough. Please join us in the **Bar on Deck 6.**

We will continue to look for wildlife during the night; in the event of any good wildlife sightings, we will wake you up via the Public Announcement system.



North Spitsbergen Explorer – Into the pack ice Summer Solstice – Polar Bear Special

Date: 23rd June 2025

Day 5 – The northern pack ice

This is our second day exploring the Arctic pack ice looking for wildlife. As always, we encourage you to spend as much time as possible on the bridge and outside decks to help with the search. The Arctic Ocean is a mighty wilderness, some 5.4 million square miles in size, and finding individual wildlife is a colossal challenge that requires a huge all-round effort.

PLEASE REMEMBER TO BE QUIET ON THE OUTSIDE DECKS
AND NOT TO SLAM THE HEAVY DOORS.

- 0745 Wakeup-call: Good Morning!
- 0800-0900 Buffet breakfast is served in the **Dining Room on Deck 4.**
- 1100 +/- **Matt** will give a lecture which is an **Introduction to Polar Photography in Svalbard**, in the **Bar on Deck 6.**
- 1230-1330 Lunch is served in the **Dining Room on Deck 4.**
- 1530 +/- **Claudio** will give a presentation about **Scientific Programs in Svalbard**, in the **Bar on Deck 6**
- 1830 Please join the Expedition Team in the Bar for our daily recap.
- 1900 Dinner tonight is a **barbecue** served outside on the helicopter deck, on the same level as the bar on Deck 6. **Please dress warmly.**

We will continue to look for wildlife during the night; in the event of any good wildlife sightings, we will wake you up via the Public Address system.



North Spitsbergen Explorer – Into the pack ice Summer Solstice – Polar Bear Special

Date: 24th June 2025

Day 6 – Magdalenafjord & Hamburgbukta

- 0645 Wakeup-call: Good Morning!
- 0700-0800 Buffet breakfast is served in the **Dining Room on Deck 4.**
- 0845 +/- Disembarkation for a **Zodiac cruise in Magdalenafjord.** This will include a visit to Waggonwaybreen, a scenic glacier 7km in length with a glacial face over 500 metres wide. We hope to spot wildlife such as Harbour seal, Little auk, Common Eider & Reindeer.
Please dress warmly; it is mandatory to wear waterproofs.
- 1230-1330 Lunch is served in the **Dining Room on Deck 4.**
- 1430 Disembarkation for a **landing at Hamburgbukta.** This site is a fantastic place for hiking, along with a variety of flora and fauna.
Please dress warmly; it is mandatory to wear waterproofs
- 1830 Please join the Expedition Team in the **Bar on Deck 6** for the daily recap, including plans for tomorrow.
- 1900 Dinner is served in the **Dining Room on Deck 4.**
Please attend promptly: service only starts once everyone is seated.



North Spitsbergen Explorer – Into the pack ice – Summer Solstice – Polar Bear Special

Date: 25th June 2025

Day 7: Poolepynten and Alkhornet.

06:15 Wake-up call: Good morning!

06:30-07:30 Breakfast will be served in the **Dining Room on Deck 4**.

07:30+/- Disembarkation for **Zodiac Group 1** to go ashore at **Poolepynten**. This is a known haul out site for **Atlantic Walrus**.

08:00+/- Disembarkation for **Zodiac Group 2**.

**Any time after returning from your morning excursion,
please pass by Reception to settle your account.
This needs to be done before 17:00. Thank you!**

12:00-13:00 Lunch is served in the **Restaurant, Deck 4**.

14:30 We hope to start disembarkation for **going ashore at Alkhornet**, our final landing for this trip.

18:00 Join the Expedition Staff in the **Bar on Deck 6** for Captain's Farewell Cocktails and a viewing of the slideshow.

19:00 Farewell dinner is served in the **Restaurant on Deck 4**.

20:30 After dinner please return your muck boots to the **lecture room on Deck 3**. Please leave your life jackets in the cabin.



North Spitsbergen Explorer – Into the pack ice – Summer Solstice – Polar Bear Special

Date: 26th June 2025

Day 8 - Longyearbyen

Ensure all luggage is placed outside your cabin by 07:15 latest as we need to move it to the pier while you have breakfast. Keep the public areas clear when luggage is being moved.

- 07:00 Wakeup call.
- 07:30-08:30 Breakfast is served in the **Restaurant on Deck 4**. Please make sure that your luggage is outside your cabin before going to Breakfast.
- 08:30 Disembarkation for guests on flight **SK4497** – RED baggage tags.
Please identify your luggage on the dock before boarding your bus.
The luggage will be loaded into a truck for transfer to the airport, where it can be collected prior to check-in.
- 08:45 Disembarkation for guests on flight **SK4491** – YELLOW baggage tags.
Please identify your luggage on the dock before boarding your bus.
The luggage will be loaded into a truck and will meet you at the airport. The bus will take you into town for a drop-off at Svalbard Butikken for some free time. It will depart from the same place at **10:50** for the airport.
- 08:45 Disembarkation for guests staying in Longyearbyen.
Please collect your luggage and take it on the bus to town with you.
- 09:00 Disembarkation for guests on flight **SK4493** – BLUE baggage tags.
Please identify your luggage on the dock before boarding your bus.
The luggage will be loaded into a truck and will meet you at the airport. The bus will take you into town for a drop-off at Svalbard Butikken for some free time. It will depart from the same place at **17:30** for the airport.

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