

Into the Northwest Passage Cruise Itinerary

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Tour Overview

The Northwest Passage represents the pinnacle of Arctic exploration. On this trip, like the explorers before us, we'll experience the quaint villages, dramatic fjords, and calving glaciers of Greenland, working our way north to spectacular Kap York. Then, crossing Smith Sound, we'll visit Aujuittuq (Grise Fiord), Canada's northernmost community, and pay respects at the Franklin Expedition graves at Beechey Island. Melville, Banks, and Devon Islands offer opportunities to spot Peary caribou, polar bear, walrus and musk ox—and visits to ghostly RCMP and Hudson's Bay Company posts. Prince of Wales Strait affords a passage to Amundsen Gulf and our destination: Kugluktuk (Coppermine), the end of our epic journey above the Arctic Circle.

To sail the Northwest Passage is to sail living history and the history of the Inuit who have called this remarkable place home for countless generations. This is your chance to cruise the Northwest Passage and join the ranks of the fearless adventurers who have been lured by its spirit and legend.

Itinerary

Day 1: Nuuk, Greenland



After your charter flight from Toronto, ON, we will transfer you to the ship by Zodiac. Your journey begins in Nuuk, Greenland's vibrant capital city and home to the country's newest airport. As Greenland's cultural and economic hub, Nuuk blends modern life with rich history and stunning natural beauty. With a population of under 20,000 people, it's one of the smallest capital cities in the world, offering a unique mix of contemporary architecture and traditional Inuit culture.

Days 2-3: Sisimiut Coast



Explore West Greenland's complex coastal waterways that include small communities, glaciers, islands, and fjords against a towering mountain backdrop, with plentiful opportunities for hiking and Zodiac cruising. Learn about the Saqqaq, Dorset, Thule, and modern Inuit cultures that have called the Sisimiut region home for the past 4,500 years. The waters are relatively warm here, due to the West Greenland Current and the subarctic location.

Day 4: Ilulissat



Experience the remarkable beauty of Ilulissat Icefjord, renowned for its enormous icebergs. Ilulissat means “iceberg”—an apt name for this site at the outlet of the Sermeq Kujalleq glacier. It is a UNESCO World Heritage Site and the source of many of the icebergs in the North Atlantic. Marvel at the sheer grandeur of the towering ice formations as you take a stroll along the boardwalk—truly a sight to behold! Visit the town, with its captivating museums, charming cafes, craft shops, and bustling fishing harbour. Be sure to make your way to the Ilulissat Icefjord Centre, where you can delve into the fascinating narratives surrounding the ice and gain a deeper appreciation for this awe-inspiring natural wonder.

Day 5: Western Greenland



Exploring by ship and Zodiac along the west coast of Greenland, we have numerous options for expedition stops, to make the most of weather and wildlife conditions. Whether you're setting foot on land, cruising by Zodiac, or out on the ship's deck, you'll have plenty of chances to learn alongside expert geologists, naturalists, and marine biologists. With Inuit expedition team members at your side, you'll gain an intimate perspective on the abundant flora and fauna you encounter. Take a moment to savour the tranquility and absorb the knowledge and stories shared by Inuit cultural educators, which will deepen your connection to this breathtaking landscape. Departing Greenland, we cross Baffin Bay toward Nunavut.

Day 6: At Sea — Davis Strait



As we sail toward Nunavut, our expedition team will deepen your understanding of the Arctic. This is an excellent time to enjoy workshops, watch a documentary, or get out on deck. Keep your binoculars ready for minke and humpback whales, as well as the seabirds that are sure to mark our passage. Take the unique opportunity to learn from Inuit in their homeland, gaining a better understanding of the daily lives of the regions we visit. Enjoy cultural performances and maybe even participate in Inuit games, or sample country food. Through shared experiences and interactions, develop a deep appreciation for the region's vibrant culture and gain a connection to the stunning landscapes we traverse.

Day 7: High Arctic



Enjoy the warmth of an Inuit welcome as drum dancers, throat singers, and cultural ambassadors share their stories, songs, and connections to the land. Explore the beautiful surroundings of an Arctic hamlet, get to know local residents and learn about their ways of life, and have the opportunity to purchase carvings and handicrafts to bring back home.

Day 8-9: Tallurutiup Imanga (Lancaster Sound) & Devon Island



We will spend ample time exploring Tallurutiup Imanga (Lancaster Sound), one of the newest National Marine Conservation Areas in Nunavut. Narwhal, beluga, and bowhead whales transit and feed in this area. Cruise by ship and Zodiac in search of wildlife with expert biologists and ecologists. Learn more about the crucial role Inuit play in conserving the vibrant biodiversity of these waterways and the enduring connection between the ocean and Inuit. On the northern border of Tallurutiup Imanga lies Devon Island, the largest uninhabited island on Earth at over 50,000 square kilometres. Flat-topped mountains, glacial valleys, and a substantial ice cap give Devon Island its unique character. We will hike the tundra, cruise a glacier face, and seek wildlife from the ship and on shore. Visit archaeological sites and the remains of an RCMP and Hudson's Bay Company site at Dundas Harbour.

Day 10: Beechey Island



In 1845, Sir John Franklin set out from England with the HMS Erebus and HMS Terror, attempting to sail through the Northwest Passage. His crew overwintered at Beechey Island, where three of his men died. Numerous search parties later used Beechey as a depot and rendezvous. Amundsen, Bernier, and Larsen visited Beechey. Thomas Morgan of the HMS Investigator was buried here in 1854 alongside Franklin's men. The graves and ruins of Northumberland House are a haunting memorial.

Day 11: Peel Sound



Peel Sound, once traversed by the Franklin expedition on its route south, presents numerous wildlife and exploratory opportunities. As we sail through this region, we'll enter prime polar bear territory where we'll be on the lookout for good spotting opportunities. The area is also home to muskoxen, belugas, and other wildlife, making every moment a potential discovery. Depending on ice conditions, we may make expedition stops along the way among the spectacular landscapes, a perfect setting for hiking and exploring the geological diversity of the area.

Day 12: Ikirahaq (Bellot Strait)



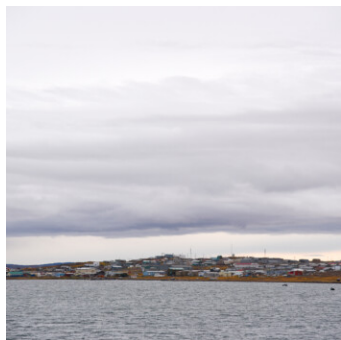
Discover the famed Ikirahaq (Bellot Strait), a narrow passage separating Somerset Island from the Boothia Peninsula. As we sail through this two-kilometre-wide waterway, get the unique opportunity to reach the northernmost part of mainland North America. Keep watch for an array of enchanting marine mammals from beluga whales to narwhals and seals. Delve into the region's fascinating history and learn about Joseph René Bellot, French naval officer and Arctic explorer who joined an 1850s expedition in search for Sir John Franklin, who inspired the strait's namesake.

Day 13-16: Kitikmeot Region



Sail the Northwest Passage! Navigate the ice-strewn waters of this fabled waterway in search of wildlife. Although this is Nunavut's least-populated region, this area is home to a diverse range of wildlife, both in the sea and on land. Visit a local community where Inuit hosts will share their knowledge of their home and the area's history. Discover the legacy of this important waterway and the captivating story of Roald Amundsen, who overwintered in the bay for two years while searching for the Northwest Passage. Learn more about the triumphs of explorers like Amundsen and the vital role that Inuit knowledge played in successful crossings.

Day 17: Kugluktuk, NU, Canada



Today marks the completion of your incredible journey through the Northwest Passage—an achievement few can claim. Arriving in Kugluktuk, take pride in having traversed one of the world's most historic and storied waterways, following in the wake of legendary explorers while forging your own unforgettable path through the Arctic. Located at the mouth of the Coppermine River, Kugluktuk is the westernmost community in Nunavut. Known for many years as Coppermine, the community reverted to its original Inuinnaqtun name—meaning “place of moving waters”—on January 1st, 1996. Iqaluktuuttiaq (Cambridge Bay), NU, is an alternate disembarkation point, and may be used based on sea, ice, and weather conditions. Today we will disembark and make our way to the airport to meet our charter flights to Yellowknife, NT.

What to Expect

Our small ship Northwest Passage cruise program allow you to experience the best of the natural world, while enjoying the comforts of our friendly floating hotel. The ship generally makes crossing between islands at night, so every morning you awake to new vistas and discoveries. Every day we offer a combination of interesting shore excursions and fun shipboard activities. You can choose which elements of the program you want to participate in.

This expedition cruise necessitates passengers to be in reasonably good health. Zodiac cruises and transfer times can be lengthy. You must be able to climb stairs between decks on the ship, as well as the external gangway stairs to transfer between the zodiac and ship.

Some of our shore landings will be ‘wet’, requiring waterproof boots. Once you have left the zodiac, you’ll find our shore excursions accommodate both those who wish to enjoy a gentle stroll and those who prefer more active hikes. The excursion may involve walking over uneven or sandy terrain in variable weather conditions. Our onboard specialists will join us on these shore excursions to provide interpretation and narration to these wonderful landscapes and experiences.

Each evening we will gather in the lounge to recount the day’s events and share memorable stories. Our onboard musician will provide some lively entertainment during happy hour and the expedition leader will outline the following day’s schedule. Our resource staff of naturalists, historians, and other guest speakers will give informative talks at various times throughout the voyage.

Meals in the ship’s dining room are a great opportunity to meet new friends and recount the day’s adventures. Special diets can be accommodated with advance notice. Safety is also a top priority with Eagle-Eye Tours - our team has extensive experience in the field, and all of our Voyages are run in conjunction with operators with the highest safety standards.

When the ship is underway, it is a wonderful time to join a naturalist on deck, take photos of the stunning scenery, or get caught up on some reading in the library.

Weather, ice, government regulations, and community requests may necessitate changes to the planned itineraries and/or the cancellation of certain shore excursions and enhancements. Published itineraries are examples only and we reserve the right to change or modify the itinerary and landing sites at any time prior or during an expedition. Changes will be communicated at your expedition orientation or during your onboard expedition briefings.

We know that everyone travels for different reasons. Over the years, however, we have found one common element among the guest who choose to travel with us – a thirst of knowledge and authentic experience. Knowing this drives us to ensure the highest quality learning experience on our trips, by taking time to carefully design each trip we offer.

What's Included

Tour Price Includes

- Passage aboard the ship
- Applicable taxes and credit card fees
- Complimentary expedition jacket
- Special access permits, entry, and park fees
- Expert expedition team
- Guided activities
- Sightseeing and community visits
- All Zodiac excursions
- Port fees
- Pre-departure materials
- Educational program
- Interactive workshops
- Evening entertainment
- All shipboard meals

Tour Price Does Not Include

- Commercial and charter flights
 - Program enhancements/optional excursions
 - Gratuities
 - Personal expenses
 - Mandatory medical evacuation insurance
 - Additional expenses in the event of delays or itinerary changes
 - Possible fuel surcharges and administrative fees
 - Pre- and post-trip hotel accommodation
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