

# Out of the Northwest Passage Cruise Itinerary

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## Tour Overview

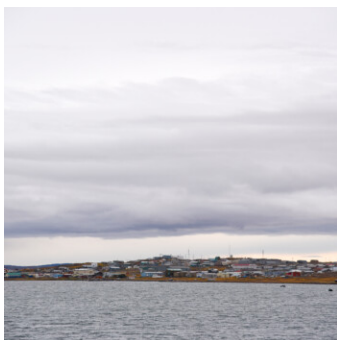
The Northwest Passage remains one of the world's last true frontiers, and this expedition takes you to its heart. In Canada's vast northern wilderness, wildlife roams free and the great geological forces shaping our planet reveal themselves to the wondering eye. The recent finding of Franklin's ships, HMS Erebus and HMS Terror reminds us that we sail into history, legend, and myth that continues today!

Nunavut's communities offer a warm welcome, blending the traditional and the contemporary in unique and compelling ways. Making our way north to Smith Sound, we enter the realm still defined by ice: towering icebergs, vast glaciers, and the last redoubt of the great northern pack. Greenland offers geology, geography, and culture with a European flair.

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## Itinerary

### Day 1: Kugluktuk (Coppermine), Nu, Canada



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. Our charter flight will land in Kugluktuk and we will embark the ship by Zodiac. Iqaluktuuttiaq (Cambridge Bay), NU, is an alternate embarkation point, and may be used based on sea, ice, and weather conditions.

## Days 2-5: Kitikmeot Region



Experience the glory of the subarctic tundra in the fall and perhaps discover a geological wonder at Port Epworth. Here, intriguing rock formations known as stromatolites stand as evidence of some of Earth's earliest life forms. These fossilized structures, created by cyanobacteria billions of years ago, played a crucial role in producing oxygen, forming an essential link in creating Earth's atmosphere and allowing other life forms to evolve. Sail onward into the storied waters of the Coronation Gulf, where the legendary Roald Amundsen navigated with his six-man crew to complete the Northwest Passage in 1905. Learn more about the vital role that Inuit knowledge played in Arctic exploration, including Amundsen's expedition. Visit an Inuit community in this least populated region of Nunavut and feel the excitement and warm hospitality as you listen to stories of resilience, adaptation, and a deep love for the land. Join a Zodiac cruise at Conningham Bay, where the stark beauty of the Arctic tells a timeless story of survival and adaptation. Here, the paths of polar bears intersect with the watery journeys of belugas—one the hunter, the other the prey. With luck, you'll witness these majestic creatures in their natural habitat, an unforgettable moment etched onto the stark Arctic landscape. Each stop along the way feels like stepping into a living museum, where geology, landscape, wildlife, and culture weave together into a story only this iconically northern place can tell.

## Day 6: 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 7: 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 HMS Investigator was buried here in 1854 alongside Franklin's men. The graves and the ruins of Northumberland House are a haunting memorial.

## Days 8: Tallurutiup Imanga (Lancaster Sound)



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 onshore.

## Day 9: Ausuittuq (Grise Fiord), NU



Asuittuq means "place that never thaws." 1,150 kilometres above the Arctic Circle, Canada's northernmost civilian community originated during the Cold War. In 1953, Inuit were relocated here by the Canadian government under false pretenses, with the aim of asserting Canadian sovereignty. We'll be welcomed into the hamlet, where we will have a chance to meet members of the community, learn about their way of life, and hear their poignant stories.

## Day 10: Smith Sound



Smith Sound, an ancient Inuit travel route, divides Ellesmere Island from Greenland, and served as the main route for explorers and adventurers searching for the North Pole. Adolphus Greely, Sir George Nares, and Elisha Kent Kane all travelled these waters with varying degrees of success.

## Day 11: At Sea



On this exploration day, we'll be making the most of what the wind, weather, and wildlife have to offer. Our expedition team will scan for polar bears, walruses, whales, seals, and seabirds as we go. 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. Indulge in 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.

## Days 12-13: Northwest Greenland



We will explore stunning fjords that line the coast. Glaciers and icebergs abound here. In true expedition style, we will seek opportunities to hike, explore, and view wildlife as conditions allow. 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. 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.

## Day 14: 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 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 15-16: Sisimiut Coast



Explore West Greenland's complex coastal waterways that includes 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 17: Kangerlussuaq, Greenland



Kangerlussuaq Fjord (Søndre Strømfjord) is one of the longest fjords in the world and boasts 190 kilometres of superb scenery. We end our adventure by sailing up this dramatic fjord. Kangerlussuaq, the town at its eastern head, is a former U.S. Air Force base. Here we will disembark for our return charter flight to Toronto, ON.

## What to Expect

Our small ship cruising programs 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 is a general natural history and cultural expedition rather than a dedicated birding tour. Travellers can look forward to a mix of wildlife viewing, cultural experiences, and time to appreciate the region's incredible scenery — with opportunities for birding included along the way.

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.

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## What's Included

### **Tour Price Includes**

- Passage aboard the Ocean Victory
- 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
- Complimentary wine, beer, and soft drinks are served with dinner
- Wi-Fi access (basic service included)

### **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
  - Kayak program
  - Premium internet access available at an additional cost
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