Eagle-Eye Tours

Svalbard Cruise: North to the Midnight Sun Itinerary

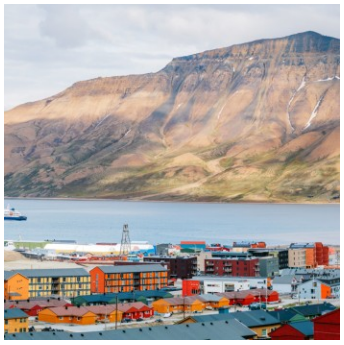
Link: Svalbard Cruise: North to the Midnight Sun

Tour Overview

Join us aboard the Ocean Albatros on an unforgettable Arctic expedition through Svalbard's breathtaking wilderness, cruising among whales, walruses, polar bears, and millions of seabirds. This ice-class vessel is specially built to navigate the polar pack ice, allowing exploration of remote and pristine environments. Experience the high summer in the Arctic, when reindeer and Arctic foxes prepare for winter and seabird cliffs teem with life. This expedition aims to sail as close as possible to the northern pack ice, the favored summer habitat of polar bears, while also visiting accessible locations along Svalbard's west coast kept navigable by the warm Gulf Stream. From wildlife hotspots to eerie historical sites, glittering icebergs to breathtaking glaciers, this voyage offers a true immersion into nature's high-Arctic paradise, blending staggering scenery, wildlife-watching, and historical discovery.

Itinerary

Day 1: All Aboard in Longyearbyen!



Begin your journey in Norway and arrive in Longyearbyen, Svalbard—the northernmost town on Earth. Despite its remote Arctic location, Longyearbyen offers warm Nordic hospitality. Upon arrival, you're greeted by crisp polar air, dramatic mountain views, and a polar bear warning sign reminding visitors of their wild new location. Your expedition ship Ocean Albatros awaits you in the harbor; toast your departure from civilization as you sail into the Arctic wilderness, on course for adventure!

Days 2-3: Northwest Svalbard

Northwest Svalbard, a National Park since 1973, preserves a rich history of early Arctic exploration and whaling. First visited by William Barents in 1596, the area became a hub for Dutch and English whalers. Their haunting remnants, such as the blubber ovens and graves of young sailors at sites such as Smeerenburg, remain visible. Now heavily protected, the region has been reclaimed by nature, rich in Arctic flowers, seabirds, walrus, and polar bears, making it once again a pristine wilderness and haven for wildlife.

Day 4: Northeast Svalbard

In the morning, the expedition enters the icy wilderness of northeastern Svalbard, a stark polar desert shaped by the absence of warming ocean currents. Here, vast glaciers descend into ice-choked waters, surrounding rugged landscapes which appear barren, yet teem with life. Arctic foxes prowl the chilly shores, while hundreds of thousands of seabirds nest on cliffs above. These cold coastal waters are rich in shellfish, attracting the walrus, which are common in the area. Our exploration plans depend on rapidly changing sea, wind, and ice conditions, embodying the dynamic and unpredictable essence of true polar adventure.

Day 5: North Svalbard

Next, we strive for some of the northernmost pieces of land on Earth – stark landscapes almost permanently beset by ice. With luck, we may reach the polar desert island of Nordaustlandet, or the smaller islands of Sjuøyane in the far north of Svalbard. The almost vegetation-free, rocky islands are located around 1000 km further north than mainland Norway’s famous Nordkapp. Weather permitting, we will land and walk upon these most northern landmasses. These high Arctic islands are quite barren, and only moss, hardy tundra plants and lichens cover the stones. The birdlife is rich in this area, with scampering shore birds and nesting terns and skuas – keep your binoculars handy! At the end of the day, we will start cruising towards the Arctic ice pack which stretches from Svalbard to the North Pole and beyond.

Day 6: Into the Ice

The Arctic ice pack north of Svalbard is a vast, ever-changing wilderness stretching to the North Pole and beyond to Alaska and Siberia, forming one of Earth's largest and most dynamic habitats. Though it appears empty at first, this icy realm conceals abundant wildlife—from tiny cod-like fish to seabirds and seals, belugas, bowhead whales, and the elusive polar bear, the region's apex predator. Ocean Albatros can navigate these narrow ice channels, offering a rare glimpse into this mysterious, shifting environment where nature's secrets unfold with patience and careful observation.

Day 7: Kongsfjorden Area

During the Arctic "night," we sail into the stunning Kongsfjord, a vast fjord system framed by glaciers and the dramatic Three Crowns mountains. Here we will visit Ny-Ålesund, Earth's northernmost settlement, known for its scientific stations and historic role as a base for legendary polar explorers such as Amundsen and Nansen. This remote outpost continues to support vital research amid its breathtaking surroundings, blending the frontiers of science and exploration.

Day 8: Longyearbyen Disembarkation

On the final morning of our expedition, we arrive back in Longyearbyen. Even this small town will feel like a metropolis after days of isolation in the wilderness of the Arctic! After exploring Longyearbyen and bidding a fond farewell to the crew and fellow Arctic explorers, return to Svalbard Airport and join your flight back to the Norwegian mainland- with memories to last a lifetime.

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.

What's Included

Tour Price Includes

• Passage aboard the Ocean Albatros
• All meals on the ship (full board): breakfast, lunch, dinner, and snacks
• Complimentary house wine, beer, and soft drinks at dinner (selected labels and brands)
• 24-hour access to tea, coffee, and 'Grab and Go' comfort food
• 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
• 500MB Complimentary WiFi for use on your personal device

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
• Premium internet access available at an additional cost