

Expedition to the Ice Sheet - with National Geographic

From **14/7/2022**
to **27/7/2022**

Ship: **L'AUSTRAL**

From **Reykjavik**
to **Kangerlussuaq**



Transfer + vol Kangerlussuaq/Paris

In partnership with National Geographic Expeditions.

This **PONANT** itinerary is your chance to embark on a **brand-new 14-day expedition cruise to Greenland**. Aboard **L'Austral**, you will enjoy a combination of adventure and discovery in the company of an experienced team of naturalist guides, anthropologists, ornithologists and marine mammal specialists...

From Reykjavik, you will touch the east coast of Greenland in Tasiilaq, a city founded by the Danish explorer Gustav Holm. You will be able to disembark and walk along the first foothills of the ice sheet, a gigantic mass of frozen freshwater.

During your cruise and Zodiac® outings, you will have many opportunities to admire an abundant and varied fauna: **seals**, whales, **orcas**, not to mention the many species of seabirds.

Your ship will then sail down the narrow **Prins Christian Sund** passage, which connects the south-east of Greenland to the south-west. Jagged mountains, rocky cliffs, waterfalls and floating ice form a wonderful wild landscape in which frolic colonies of **bearded seals**.

To the country's west, you will sail amid the blue icebergs of the **Narsaq** region, and among the **largest icebergs in the Northern Hemisphere** in **Disko Bay**, before reaching the **Ilulissat** fjord, a UNESCO World Heritage Site and the transition point from the ice sheet to the ocean.

Subject to ice and weather conditions. The expedition highlights and itineraries described above illustrate possible experiences only and cannot be guaranteed.

We are privileged guests in these remote lands where we are at the mercy of weather, ice, tidal and current conditions. Landings on certain sites and the observation of certain wildlife cannot be guaranteed. They vary from day to day, making each PONANT cruise a unique experience. The Captain and the Expedition Leader will make every effort to ensure that your experience is as rich as possible, while complying with the safety rules and instructions imposed by the AECO.



The information in this document is valid as of 24/3/2021

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YOUR STOPOVERS :

REYKJAVÍK

Embarkation 14/7/2022 from 16h00 to 17h00

Departure 15/7/2022 at 18h00

Iceland's capital stretches along the edge of a vast bay in the west of the country. **Perlan**, the "Pearl of Reykjavík", a museum located on 'Oskjuhlíð hill, offers a panoramic view of the lush, green landscapes. A little further, one can easily spot the signpost showing the way to the evangelical **Hallgrímskirkja** church, and to the historical centre where one can stroll along the Skólavörðustígur and the Laugavegur, two lively streets with charming small shops. For some relaxation just outside of the city, visitors have the opportunity to visit the Reykjanes peninsula and its famous thermal lagoons of the **Blue Lagoon**.

AT SEA

Arrival 16/7/2022

Departure 16/7/2022

During your day at sea, make the most of the many services and activities on board. Treat yourself to a moment of relaxation in the spa or stay in shape in the fitness centre. Depending on the season, let yourself be tempted by the swimming pool or a spot of sunbathing. This day without a port of call will also be an opportunity to enjoy the conferences or shows proposed on board, to do some shopping in the boutique or to meet the PONANT photographers in their dedicated space. As for lovers of the open sea, they will be able to visit the ship's upper deck to admire the spectacle of the waves and perhaps be lucky enough to observe marine species. A truly enchanted interlude, combining comfort, rest and entertainment.

TASIILAQ

Arrival 17/7/2022

Departure 17/7/2022

In **Tasiilaq**, on Ammassalik Island, follow in the wake of Captain **Jean-Baptiste Charcot's** famous ship, the *Pourquoi Pas ?*, which set off with its crew in 1935 to discover this small island of primitive and wild beauty that remained unexplored until the end of the 19th century. Along with Ittoqqortoormiit, a village with 500 inhabitants located at the entrance of the **Scoresby Sound**, the village of **Tasiilaq** and its surroundings, 800 kilometres (500 miles) further north, are the only inhabited areas on the **east coast of Greenland**. The name of this island is a reference to the capelin, a small flamboyant silver-coloured fish whose presence in the thousands announces to inhabitants the return of spring. A surprising discovery in a spectacular setting.

SERMILIK FJORD

Arrival 17/7/2022

Departure 17/7/2022

You will be captivated by the spectacular scenery of the **Sermilik Fjord**, the largest in the **south-east of Greenland**. To the north, above the glacial valleys, the **Schweitzerland Alps** and their peaks that rise to an altitude of more than 3,000 metres (10,000 feet) stretch out in the distance, while in the south, where it opens onto the Irminger Sea, heavy erosion has carved the landscape. Three main glaciers calve a multitude of dazzling **icebergs** that drift serenely along the indigo waters of this majestic fjord. It owes its name to the Inuit word *Sermilik*, which generally refers to a fjord into which a glacier flows. It was mapped in 1884 by the Danish explorer **Gustav Holm** and his crew, while they wintered in the **Ammassalik region**.

SKJOLDUNGEN

Arrival 18/7/2022

Departure 18/7/2022

Discover **Skjoldungen Island** on the south-east coast of Greenland. This uninhabited land boasts magnificent landscapes that are sure to dazzle you. The island is surrounded by a stunning **fjord**, a distinctive feature of which is its **double entrance**: it forms a bend before joining the sea on the other side. Mountains, glacial valleys, rocky outcrops, tundra and willow forests make up the beautiful scenery which you will be able to admire more closely when you land here. At this port of call, surrounded by wild and pristine nature, it is quite common to see **bearded seals, orcas**, but also birds such as the common redpoll, the northern wheatear, or the common raven.

AUGPILATOK

Arrival 19/7/2022

Departure 19/7/2022

Augpilatok, is a small Inuit village of around one hundred inhabitants, whose name means “sea anemone” in Greenlandic. Located in a mountainous region inaccessible by road, its picturesque, colourful houses stretch out to the southern tip of Greenland, on the banks of the spectacular **Prince Christian Sound**. Some one hundred kilometres long, the sound connects the Labrador Sea to the Irminger Sea, meandering through stunning landscapes such as majestic glaciers, craggy peaks, and rocky cliffs with waterfalls fed by the ice sheet. This region was uninhabited in the 19th century. The village was created in the 1920s and the main activities revolve around hunting, fishing and livestock farming.

HVALSO

Arrival 20/7/2022

Departure 20/7/2022

Around you, a **grassy meadow** filled with flowers stretches out, dotted with imposing granite rocks. A few semi-wild sheep and horses greet you; they are the only inhabitants of this place surrounded by beautiful mountains. You are in **Hvalsø**, in the heart of the fertile lands in Greenland's south. During the 10th century, this site was colonised by the **Vikings**, who established a large community here. When your ship calls at these lands brimming with history, you will see the ruins of a church whose remains are still very well preserved. It was most likely built in the 14th century. It has

lost its timber roof, but its four stone walls continue to stand proudly as a moving relic of a long-gone era.

NARSAQ FJORD

Arrival 20/7/2022

Departure 20/7/2022

From your ship, discover the town of **Narsaq**. You will be dazzled by the beauty of the surrounding **icebergs** – large masses of ice in different shapes and shifting colours. Dominated by **lush mountains**, this small town is typical of Greenland and is located in the heart of a wonderful natural landscape. The multicoloured house facades and the glaciers with their myriad shades of blue offer a magical setting, conducive to wonderment.

IVIGTUT

Arrival 21/7/2022

Departure 21/7/2022

NUUK

Arrival 22/7/2022

Departure 22/7/2022

When Erik Le Rouge, the exiled Norse chief, landed on the coast of Nuuk, he found a fertile and welcoming land dotted with fjords. He settled there with a group of his former countrymen, and **the Norse** remained the principal inhabitants until, over a period of 500 years, their population declined and gave way to the Inuit. **Nuuk** is situated at the mouth of one of the largest networks of fjords in the world, where the waters never freeze. The town spreads gently out towards the **Davis Strait** and enjoys an historic center that is particularly rich in national heritage. The vivid reds, blues, greens and yellows of the houses are a lively contrast to the somber waters of Greenland and serve to lift the spirits of the locals during the Winter months.

SISIMIUT

Arrival 23/7/2022

Departure 23/7/2022

During your cruise, we invite you to discover **Sisimiut**, founded in 1756 and the second largest town in Greenland. This small town is typical of Greenland, boasting bewitching panoramas: here and there, **colourful stilt houses** dot the **undulating landscape**, and the small fishing port stands as the gateway to an icy realm. As for the town centre, it is home to a number of historic buildings, a small church and a museum which retraces the history of the Inuit people, as well as many craft shops. When your ship drops anchor here, you will set out to meet the locals in a typically arctic atmosphere.

PAUL-ÉMILE VICTOR BASE CAMP, EQI GLACIER

Arrival 24/7/2022

Departure 24/7/2022

"The most beautiful place in the Arctic" is how Paul-Émile Victor described Greenland, a land of great icebergs and of towering ice formations calved by the giant glaciers of the polar ice cap. **The Eqi Glacier** is one of the region's most impressive sights. Here, the silence is broken only by the roaring and cracking of the ice. It is impossible to know if one is shivering from cold or from the sheer thrill of being here... Imagine the vast outline of a glacier, its **translucent crystals** glowing with an ice-blue fire in the sunlight. Paul-Émile **Victor's shelter** cannot be overlooked; it was from here that the French Polar Expeditions' anthropological and geographic explorations set off in the 1950s.

ILULISSAT

Arrival 25/7/2022

Departure 25/7/2022

At the heart of Disko Bay - a UNESCO World Heritage Site - **the Ilulissat Icefjord** provides an extraordinary spectacle of almost surreal beauty, with the largest icebergs of the northern hemisphere. The sculptural icebergs continue their timeless journey, shimmering with their eternal light. Vast pieces of ice break off from the bergs and rejoin the inexorable movement of the sea. Close by lies the town of Ilulissat, the region's principal destination. Encircled by icebergs, it has retained a unique mix of **traditional Arctic life**, with multicoloured wooden houses, huskies and the **leather tanners** who still work today using the ancient methods of their ancestors.

ITILLEQ

Arrival 26/7/2022

Departure 26/7/2022

Itilleq is a tiny island lying within the **Arctic Circle**, 45 km south of Sisimiut. Home to barely 100 people, they mainly earn a living from fishing and hunting in their **typical Greenlandic village**, whose bright colours evoke those of their traditional clothing. During your visit, you will maybe have the pleasure of playing a game of football with them, enjoying a "kaffemik" (a coffee break) or a moment of contemplation when the gentle light of the **midnight sun** dapples the horizon.

KANGERLUSSUAQ

Arrival 27/7/2022 early morning

Disembarkation 27/7/2022 at 07h00

From 1941 to 1992, the town of **Kangerlussuaq** in Greenland was home to an American military base. Nowadays, thanks to its international airport, it has become a transit point for travellers seeking adventure in the Far North. Located to the north of the Arctic Circle, this town is the starting point of magnificent discoveries surrounded by **unspoiled nature**. Indeed, just a few dozen kilometres from there it is possible to get close to the Greenland ice sheet, the largest **body of ice in the Northern Hemisphere**. From Kangerlussuaq, admire also the superb landscapes of tundra in autumnal colours, where Arctic hares, musk oxen, Arctic foxes, reindeer, falcons and eagles live.