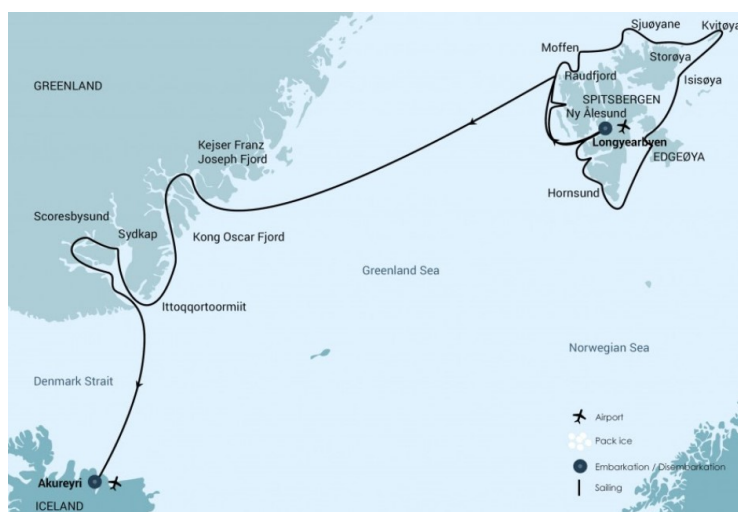




23 DAYS EXTENDED AROUND SPITSBERGEN & NORTHEAST GREENLAND - AURORA BOREALIS

When you join two outstanding Arctic cruises into one, you get powerhouse polar adventures like this. After edging the pack ice of the planet's most stunning polar bear habitat, you head to scenically surreal northeast Greenland for views of the magical northern lights – and much, much more. PLEASE NOTE: The probability of sailing into Scoresbysund is high (based on our experiences from 1993 – 2019), but there is still a chance (about 10%) that ice will obstruct passage into the fjord system. All itineraries are for guidance only. Programs may vary depending on ice, weather, and wildlife conditions. Landings are subject to site availabilities, permissions, and environmental concerns per AECO regulations. Official sailing plans and landing slots are scheduled with AECO prior to the start of the season, but the expedition leader determines the final plan. Flexibility is paramount for expedition cruises. The average cruising speed of our vessel is 10.5 knots.



ITINERARY

Day 1: Largest town, biggest island

You touch down in Longyearbyen, the administrative center of Spitsbergen, the largest island of the Svalbard archipelago. Enjoy strolling around this former mining town, whose parish church and Svalbard Museum make for fascinating attractions. Though the countryside appears stark, more than a hundred species of plant have been recorded in it. In the early evening the ship sails out of Isfjorden, where you might spot the first minke whale of your voyage.

Day 2: Cruising Krossfjorden

Heading north along the west coast, you arrive by morning in Krossfjorden. Here you might board the Zodiacs for a cruise near the towering blue-white face of the Fourteenth of July Glacier. On the green slopes near the glacier, colorful flowers bloom while



flocks of kittiwakes and Brünnich's guillemots nest on the cliffs. You have a good chance of spotting an Arctic fox scouting for fallen chicks, or a bearded seal paddling through the fjord. In the afternoon you sail to Ny Ålesund, the northernmost settlement on Earth. Once a mining village served by the world's most northerly railway – you can still see its tracks – Ny Ålesund is now a research center. Close to the community is a breeding ground for barnacle geese, pink-footed geese, and Arctic terns. And if you're interested in the history of Arctic exploration, visit the anchoring mast used by polar explorers Amundsen and Nobile in their airships, Norge (1926) and Italia (1928).

Day 3: Stop at the Seven Islands

The northernmost point of your voyage may be north of Nordaustlandet, in the Seven Islands. Here you reach 80° north, just 870 km (540 miles) from the geographic North Pole. Polar bears and walrus inhabit this stark desolate landscape. Later in the day the ship may roam for several hours among the pack ice in search of wildlife.

Day 4: The great glacier front of Schweigaardbreen

Pushing east to Nordaustlandet, you reach the area where the Italian captain Sora tried to rescue the Nobile Expedition in 1928. The focus here is the great glacier front of Schweigaardbreen, though you may also land at Firkantbukta, getting the chance to gain some altitude and take a few higher-elevation photos. Alternately, you could make a Zodiac cruise near Storøya, where you might encounter walruses.

Day 5: Ice cap at Kvitøya

Today you try to reach the rarely visited Kvitøya, far to the east and close to Russian territory. The enormous ice cap covering this island leaves only a small area bare. You land at the

western tip of Andréeneset, where the Swedish explorer S. A. Andrée and his companions perished in 1897. Another objective for the day is Kræmerpynten, where a sizable group of walruses reside.

Day 6: The longest glacier in Spitsbergen

South of Nordaustlandet you may land on Isisøya, formerly a Nunatak area surrounded by glaciers but now an island surrounded by the sea. You then may pass by Bråswellbreen, part of the largest ice cap in Europe and famed for its meltwater waterfalls.

Day 7: Barentsøya's many bounties

The plan is to make landings in Freemansundet, though polar bears sometimes make this impossible. Potential stops on Barentsøya include Sundneset (for an old trapper's hut), Kapp Waldburg (for its kittiwake colony), and Rindedalen (for a walk across the tundra). You might also cruise south to Diskobukta, though Kapp Lee is more likely your destination. On Kapp Lee is a walrus haul-out, Pomor ruins, and the chance for hikes along Edgeøya.

Day 8: Land of the pointed mountains

You start the day by cruising the side fjords of the Hornsund area of southern Spitsbergen, taking in the spire-like peaks: Hornsundtind rises 1,431 meters (4,695 feet), and Bautaen is a perfect illustration of why early Dutch explorers named this island Spitsbergen, meaning "pointed mountains." There are 14 sizable glaciers in this area as well as opportunities for spotting seals, beluga whales, and polar bears.

Day 9: Bell Sund's flora, fauna, and haunting history



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Today you find yourself in Bell Sund, one of the largest fjord systems in Svalbard. The ocean currents make this area slightly warmer than other areas in the archipelago, which shows in the relatively lush vegetation. Here there are excellent opportunities to enjoy both history and wildlife. A possibility is Ahlstrandhalvøya, at the mouth of Van Keulenfjorden, where piles of beluga skeletons can be found. These remains of 19th-century whale slaughter are a haunting reminder of the consequences of rampant exploitation. Fortunately, belugas were not hunted into extinction, and you have a good chance of coming across a pod. Alternately, while cruising the side fjords of Bellsund, you can explore tundra where reindeer like to feed as well as rock slopes where little auks are breeding.

Day 10: Farewell to some, hello to others

Today we arrive in Longyearbyen, typically the endpoint for our Svalbard voyages. But while some passengers will be disembarking, others will have just arrived to join the expedition. Expect to see many new and enthusiastic faces on board.

Day 11: Route to Raudfjorden

Sailing to Raudfjorden, on the north coast of Spitsbergen, you take in an expansive fjord spilling with glaciers – and maybe even visited by ringed and bearded seals. The cliffs and shoreline of this fjord also support thriving seabird colonies, rich vegetation, and the possibility of polar bears.

Day 12 - 13: Onward to east Greenland

You may eventually see the jagged edge of the east Greenland sea ice flashing into sight ahead, depending on the conditions. Keep watch for whales and migrating seabirds here.

Day 14: Tundra, mountains, and icebergs

As you approach Greenland, you may sail through the sea ice into Foster Bay and land at Myggebugten. Beyond the old hunters' hut (where Norwegian trappers hunted for polar bear and Arctic fox in the first half of the 20th century), there is a sprawling tundra populated by musk oxen, with geese floating the small lakes. From here you sail through Kaiser Franz Josef Fjord, surrounded by towering mountains and bright interior icebergs. An alternate route is Sofia Sound, a narrower waterway.

Day 15: The islands of Antarctic Sound

You arrive at Teufelschloss (Devil's Castle), a mountain with layered geology. On the other side of the fjord is Blomsterbugt and the intended landing site. In the afternoon you head into Antarctic Sound, where you find the islands of Ruth, Maria, and Ella. Maria is the most likely spot for a landing.

Day 16: Alpefjord's lofty peaks

In the morning you enter Segelsällskapets Fjord, with the streaked slopes of the Berzelius Mountains bordering the north side. You land on the south shore, where ancient sedimentary formations lie right at your feet. A hike takes you near a small lake with good chances to see musk oxen, Arctic hares, and ptarmigans. In the afternoon the ship ventures into Alpefjord, aptly named for the spire-like peaks that thrust up around it. You may then embark on a Zodiac cruise around Gully Glacier, which once blocked access to the interior of these waters. Continuing deep into the fjord, you experience a definitive Greenland adventure.

Day 17: Sights of the Arctic autumn

The first half of the day you spend in Antarctic Havn, an extensive valley where you can spot groups of musk oxen. At this



time of year, the sparse vegetation is dressed in the fiery colors of autumn.

Day 18: Inuit neighborhood of yesteryear

Today you reach Scoresbysund, sailing along the glaciated Volquart Boons Kyst. You may also enjoy a Zodiac cruise past one of the glacier fronts, along with a visit to the basalt columns and ice formations of Vikingebugt. The afternoon goal is to visit Danmark Island, where you find the remains of an Inuit settlement abandoned around 200 years ago. The circular stone tent rings indicate the summer houses, while the winter houses can be seen closer to a small cape. The sites are well preserved, with easy identifiable entrances, bear-proof meat caches, and grave sites. In the evening, you continue sailing the berg-crowded fjords to the west.

Day 19: Colors of the cape

The goal is a Zodiac cruise near Røde Ø, one of the world's most cherished iceberg attractions: The austere blue-white of the icebergs sets sharp against the brooding red backdrop of the sediment slopes. The afternoon plan is to sail through the northern parts of Røde Fjord, with the chance to see musk oxen and warm autumnal foliage.

Day 20: Enormous bergs, Arctic hares

In the morning you encounter colossal icebergs, some over 100 meters (328 feet) high and more than a kilometer (.62 mile) long. Most of them are grounded, as the fjord is only about 400 meters deep (1,312 feet). You then land near Sydkap, with fine views of Hall Bredning and a good shot of seeing Arctic hares.

Day 21: Settlement at Scoresbysund

Today you make a tundra landing on Liverpool Land, in Hurry Inlet. The afternoon stop is Ittoqqortoormiit, the largest settlement in Scoresbysund at about five hundred inhabitants. At the post office you can buy stamps for your postcards, or just stroll around to see the sled dogs and drying skins of seals and musk oxen. In the afternoon you sail south, passing the picturesque landscapes of the Blossville Coast.

Day 22: Sea life under the northern lights

A sea day grants you the opportunity to spot whales and seabirds – and at night, the magical northern lights.

Day 23: Journey's end at Akureyri

Every adventure, no matter how grand, must eventually come to an end. You disembark in Akureyri, where on request you can transfer (T) by chartered bus (a six-hour drive that you must book in advance) to the Reykjavik city hall, taking home memories that will accompany you wherever your next adventure lies.

Please note:

Itineraries are subject to change.



YOUR SHIP: PLACIUS

YOUR SHIP:	Plancius
VESSEL TYPE:	Expedition
LENGTH:	
PASSENGER CAPACITY:	
BUILT/REFURBISHED:	

M/V "Plancius" was built in 1976 as an oceanographic research vessel for the Royal Dutch Navy and was named "Hr. Ms. Tydeman". The ship sailed for the Dutch Navy until June 2004 when she was converted into an expedition cruise ship..The vessel was completely rebuilt as a 114-passenger vessel in 2009 and complies with the latest SOLAS-regulations (Safety Of Life At Sea). M/v "Plancius" is classed by Lloyd's Register in London and flies the Dutch flag. "Plancius" accommodates 114 passengers in 53 passenger cabins with private toilet and shower in 4 quadruple private cabins, 39 twin private cabins (ca. 15 square meters) and 10 twin superior cabins (ca. 21 square meters).All cabins offer lower berths (either two single beds or one queen-size bed), except for the 4 quadruple cabins (for 4 persons in 2x upper and lower beds).The vessel offers a restaurant/lecture room on deck 3 and a spacious observation lounge (with bar) on deck 5 with large windows, offering full panorama view. Plancius has large open deck spaces (with full walk-around possibilities on deck 3), giving excellent opportunities to enjoy the scenery and wildlife. She is furthermore equipped with 10 Mark V zodiacs, including 40 HP 4-stroke outboard engines and 2 gangways on the starboard

side, guaranteeing a swift zodiac operation.M/v "Plancius" is comfortable and nicely decorated, but is not a luxury vessel. Our voyages in the Arctic and Antarctic regions are and will still be primarily defined by an exploratory educational travel programme, spending as much time ashore as possible. The vessel is equipped with a diesel-electric propulsion system which reduces the noise and vibration of the engines considerably. The 3 diesel engines generate 1.230 horse-power each, giving the vessel a speed of 10 - 12 knots. The vessel is ice-strengthened and was specially built for oceanographic voyages.M/v "Plancius" is manned by 17 nautical crew, 19 hotel staff (6 chefs, 1 hotel manager, 1 steward-barman and 11 stewards / cabin cleaners), 8 expedition staff (1 expedition leader and 7 guides-lecturers)



and 1 doctor.



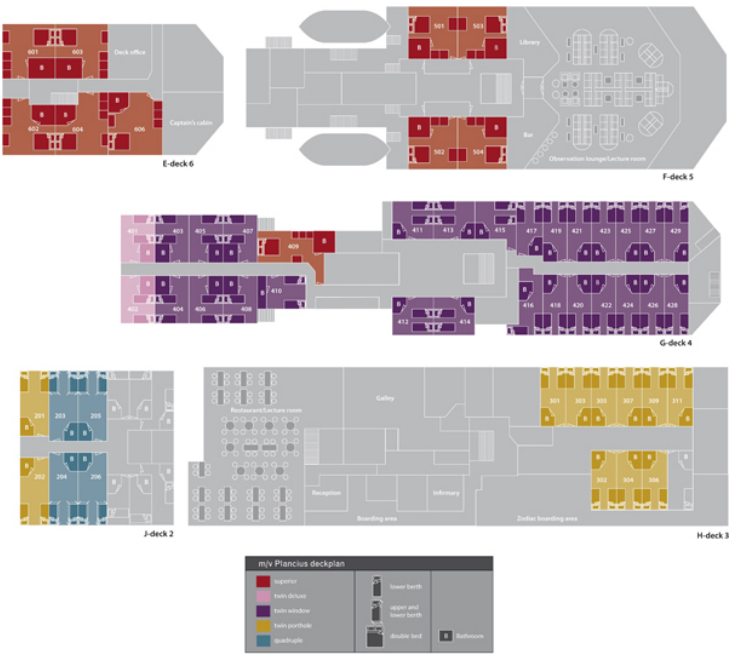
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