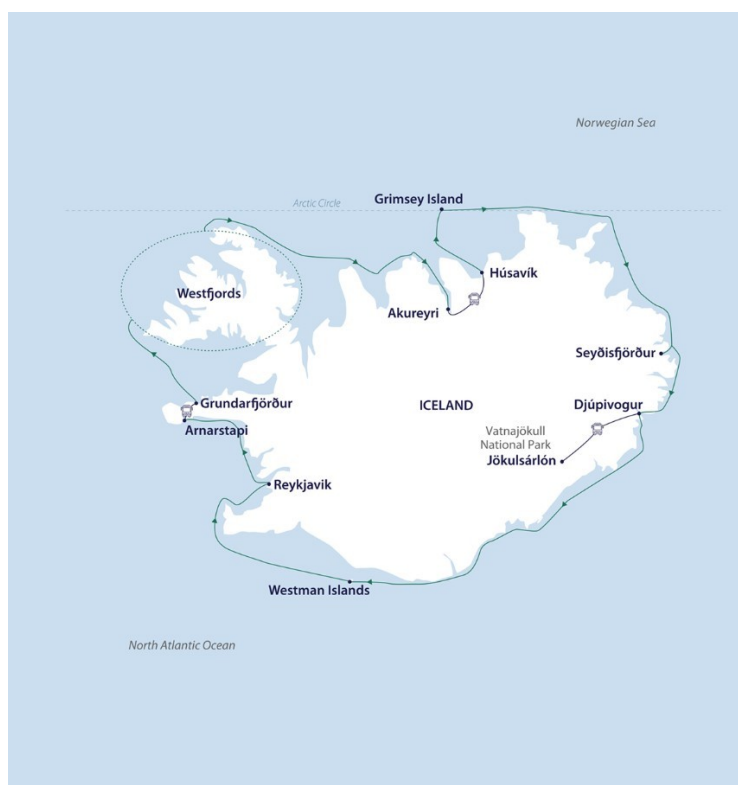




## ICELAND CIRCUMNAVIGATION - 12 DAY CRUISE FROM REYKJAVIK

Welcome to Aurora Expeditions' Iceland: Encircling the Land of Fire and Ice Discovery Voyage (formerly called Iceland Circumnavigation). On this adventure, where we plan to circumnavigate Iceland, a country often described as 'the land of fire and ice,' where snow-capped peaks rise above glaciers and active volcanoes rumble. We explore Westfjords, one of the remotest and most pristine regions in Iceland--ideal for nature hikes and sea kayaking. We amble along black sand volcanic beaches, cross over the Arctic Circle to Grimsey Island to stretch our legs on hikes and discover cliffs teeming with seabirds. Our team of experts will interpret this fascinating country-- one of the world's youngest. It's a land of spectacular geology that is rich in wildlife, culture and human history. \_Note: In order to experience some of the incredible scenery of Iceland, a number of the shore excursions on this itinerary require coach travel away from the coast.\_



### ITINERARY

Day 1 Arrive Reykjavik

Having made your way to Reykjavik, you will be met by a representative of Aurora Expeditions and transferred to our group hotel. Upon arrival at your included hotel, please visit the Aurora Expeditions hospitality desk to collect your luggage cabin tags and to speak with our ground operations team, who may





have information to share with you about pre-embarkation or to provide you with information about where to dine, withdraw cash or purchase last minute items from a local pharmacy or supermarket.

The remainder of your time is at leisure. All meals today are at your own expense.

Accommodation: Fosshotel Reykjavik Hotel (or similar)

#### Day 2 Embarkation Day

This morning, please ensure your cabin luggage is fitted with cabin tags clearly labelled with your name and cabin number. Your luggage will be collected from your hotel and transferred directly to the port for clearance and delivered to your cabin ahead of your arrival on board. Please keep any valuables or personal items with you throughout the day.

Breakfast and check-out. Join our guided Golden Circle and Geothermal Energy tour. With 85% of its electricity sourced from renewable sources, Iceland sets an outstanding example when it comes to sustainable energy.

Our journey takes us to the famous seismic sights of the Golden Circle route - Gullfoss waterfall, Geysir and history-rich Thingvellir National Park, before we experience first-hand how green, sustainable energy is produced at one of the largest single-site geothermal power plants on the planet at the Geothermal Energy Exhibition and Ljosafossvirkjun Power Station.

We'll also spend time at a true eco-village. Powered with thermal and solar energy, Solheimar is fully sustainable, boasting greenhouses and forestry programmes, while it's sustainable workshops are dedicated to candle-making, carpentry, weaving and soap-making. Late afternoon we return to Reykjavik for embarkation.

This evening, get to know your fellow expeditioners, expedition team and crew.

#### Day 3 Arnarstapi / Grundafjordur

At Arnarstapi, our Zodiacs tender as ashore. Located on the Snaefellsnes Peninsula, this area features diverse landscapes characterised by lava fields, glistening fjords and home to Breidafjordur Bay which is rich in birdlife. The area is crowned by the magnificent, ice-capped Snaefellsjokull volcano, a 700,000-year-old dormant subglacial volcano, visible from Reykjavik on a clear day and immortalised in Jules Verne's Journey to the Centre of the Earth. You can choose from a selection of shore excursion options that best suits your interests and level of fitness. Options include a bus tour to Mount Kirkjufell, one of the most famous mountains in Iceland, or a choice of hikes including a glacier hike at Snaefellsjokull Glacier.

#### Days 4-5 Westfjords

Over the next two days, we explore the Westfjords region featuring outstanding landscapes with jaw-dropping views of





dramatic fjords carved by ancient glaciers, sheer table mountains that plunge into the sea and pristine North Atlantic vegetation.

At Patreksfjörður, a shore excursion by coach takes us to Latrabjarg cliffs. As Europe's largest bird cliff, Latrabjarg is home to millions of seabirds, such as puffin, razorbill, fulmar and guillemot. Enjoy the impressive variety of natural wonders and unspoiled nature. Latrabjarg also happens to be the westernmost point in Europe, east coast of the North American continent on the other side of the Atlantic. Alternatively, enjoy a shore excursion by coach to Rauthasnduris to explore the beach and seal watching.

At Dynjandi, witness one of Iceland's most impressive waterfalls - a difficult feat in a country that is filled with spectacular cascading falls.

#### Day 6 Akureyri & Husavik

Picturesque Akureyri is Iceland's second largest city outside the capital area and is blessed with a superb snow-capped mountain backdrop. Choose from a selection of shore excursions in Akureyri to best suit your interests and level of fitness. Choose to visit Godafoss Falls and soak at Myvatn Nature baths, an outdoor hot spring bathing complex surrounded by mountain views. Alternatively, explore both Godafoss and Dettifoss waterfalls, the Mývatn region and Krafla.

In the late afternoon, we reboard our vessel in Husavik, the whale watching capital of Iceland.

#### Day 7 Grímsey Island

Located approximately 40 km (25 miles) off the mainland, Grímsey is a verdant grassy island, probably best known for its proximity to the Arctic Circle, which cuts across the island. Many people travel to Grímsey just to say they have stepped across the imaginary line. With a tiny population of approximately 100 inhabitants, it's a fantastic place for Zodiac cruising, kayaking, and photographing seabirds such as guillemots, gulls and puffins.

Leaving Grímsey to return closer to the mainland, we spend time scanning the waters of Skjalfandi Bay around Husavik, a town known as the Iceland's 'whale watching capital', home to up to 24 different whale species, as well as dolphins and 30 variety of birds. The largest animal on earth, the blue whale, has also been spotted in Skjalfandi Bay, and if you are lucky, you might catch a glimpse of this magnificent creature as well as others, such as orcas, fin whales and pilot whales.

#### Day 8 Seydisfjörður

We spend some time exploring Seydisfjörður, a picturesque fishing village that is renowned for its charming collection of colourful wooden buildings located around the lagoon. Take a stroll around town and discover the timber houses that are remnants from when the Norwegians settled here and established the herring fishing facilities from 1870-1900. From the valley above the town, the river Fjardara tumbles down in beautiful cascades to the lagoon. There are a number of delightful hiking trails to explore, or alternatively, you can





discover a flourishing cultural scene with an arts centre, the famous blue church that stages music concerts and the only two cinemas in the east of Iceland. Back in town, browse the stores where you will discover handicrafts by local artists and artisans - perfect as a souvenir or gift.

#### Day 9 Djupivogur

In Iceland's east, we disembark in Djupivogur, our gateway to Vatnajökull National Park, home to Europe's largest glacier. We drive to Jokulsárlón glacier lagoon, a glacial lagoon filled with floating icebergs that wash up on shore and stand gleaming on the nearby black-sand beach, dubbed Diamond beach. At Jokulsárlón, you can choose from a boat excursion on the lagoon, try a hike on the glacier or hike to a canyon, visiting a number of waterfalls along the way.

#### Day 10 At sea

As we sail along the south coast, enjoy a sea day to catch up on editing your photos and enjoy an informative lecture from our knowledgeable expedition team.

#### Day 11 Westman Islands

Located off Iceland's south coast, the Westman Islands were formed by volcanic eruptions around 10,000 years ago. Sail past Surtsey Island, a UNESCO World Heritage site that emerged from the sea in 1963 and is one of the youngest land masses on earth. Westman Islands are surrounded by 15 other uninhabited

islands and around 30 rocks and skerries offering refuge for rich array of seabirds. Westman Islands are considered to have the largest Atlantic puffin colony in the world, and when sailing around the islands it is not uncommon to see puffins but also whales and seals.

Heimaey is the main island in the archipelago, and it has the population of around 4,200. Ashore on Heimaey, the only inhabited island in the archipelago, we see half-buried houses that remain from a violent 1973 eruption of Eldfell volcano, which you can hike up if you wish. A visit to the weather station offers bird-watching opportunities and splendid views of the surrounding islands.

Eruptions are a big part of the history of the Westman Island, where there are two volcanoes - one that erupted some 6,000 years ago, and Mount Eldfell that erupted in 1973, forcing all of the island's inhabitants to evacuate for the mainland. Serendipitously, due to bad weather the day prior to the eruption, all the fishing boats remained in the harbour and were able to help transport the inhabitants of Heimaey to the mainland. You can learn more about the story of the eruption and the aftermath at the fascinating Eldheimar museum, which includes a display of a house that was buried in ash during the eruption.

#### Day 12 Disembark Reykjavik

During the early morning, we cruise into Reykjavik and disembark at approximately 8.00 am. Farewell your expedition team and fellow passengers as you continue your onward





journey. Transfer to Keflavik airport or to your centrally located hotel.

Note: We do not recommend booking flights departing prior to 12.00 pm on the day of disembarkation, as we may experience delays at the conclusion of the voyage.

**Please Note:**

In true expedition style we encourage exploration and adventure, offering flexibility in challenging environments in a way that puts you among the action to see and do as much as possible. This itinerary is only a guide and subject to change due to ice and weather conditions.





## YOUR SHIP: GREG MORTIMER

**YOUR SHIP:** Greg Mortimer

**VESSEL TYPE:**

**LENGTH:**

**PASSENGER CAPACITY:**

**BUILT/REFURBISHED:**

Capable of negotiating the strongest winds and waves, the Greg Mortimer is built to world-class polar standards - designed in close consultation with our expedition specialists, taking advantage of our more than 25 years of experience. The Greg Mortimer redefines expedition cruising for the future, with just 132 passengers on board in the polar regions. Not only is the ship bigger to contend with adverse weather conditions, its added creature comforts make for a more enjoyable journey out on the open ocean. The Greg Mortimer remains true to our ethos and focus on multiple landings, flexible itineraries and family atmosphere - just with an improved home base! As a modern and custom-designed ship, the Greg Mortimer is at the cutting edge of nautical technology. Robust, powerful and built with our guests in mind, this ship marks a significant investment in our fleet's capabilities. From the European Arctic to the depths of Antarctica, and other far-flung destinations in-between, the Greg Mortimer will make your journey a breeze! Greg Mortimer X-BOWX-BOW™ Our expeditions face some of the worst Mother Nature can throw at us. However, this won't be problem on the Greg Mortimer with the introduction of the patented X-BOW™, created by Norwegian ship designer ULSTEIN. As one of the

leaders in marine engineering, ULSTEIN's X-BOW™ is an inverted bow concept that's been built on over 100 vessels in the shipping industry. Excitingly, we are the first expedition cruise operator to utilise this technology for the challenging open ocean waves! Hydraulic viewing platforms Although there is no doubt that you'll love the aesthetics of the Greg Mortimer, we are all here to admire the spectacular landscape and spot the elusive wildlife in their natural habitat. To ensure you get the best views possible, the new ship features unique viewing platforms, custom-built for the Greg Mortimer. Accessed from Deck 5, the two platforms fold out hydraulically for unobstructed views of passing marine life and seabirds - make sure your camera is locked and loaded! Zodiac launching platform Zodiacs are a vital part of getting up close and personal on your adventure - sneaking into areas that the Greg Mortimer can't reach. On this new ship, there are specially designed launching platforms that enables us to load Zodiacs easily and quickly, allowing you to spend more time exploring on the two to three daily landings. There are 15 Zodiacs that are boarded from either side of Deck 3 (sea level), perfect for when there is a group of fluffy cute penguin chicks that we need a photo of! Activity Platform Regardless of your destination, we offer a number of additional activities to allow you to see more of the environment. From kayaking and diving to climbing and ski touring, it's these optional activities that often leave the biggest impression on your trip as a whole. Onboard the Greg Mortimer, there is a spacious prep and loading platform for these activities and more - designed in consultation with our expert activity guides. Environmentally friendly Climate change and carbon





emissions continue to be major issues that everyone needs to be aware of and actively managing. This includes reduced emissions into the air and sea, lower energy consumption, high fuel efficiency, reduced light pollution for minimal wildlife disruption and lower on-board plastic use. It's vital to also mention the state-of-the-art virtual anchoring technology of the X-BOW™, which means the ship can float anchorless while launching Zodiacs, kayaks etc, without disturbing delicate sea floor areas. Safety features This starts with the return-to-port equipment - not compulsory on a ship of this size - which duplicates the propulsion system. This enables the ship to maintain operating systems and comfort in the event of engine failure. Furthermore, the Greg Mortimer is Polar Code 6 compliant, holds BV class and is fully compliant with the latest SOLAS requirements. It's also built with a Rolls Royce stabiliser system. If there's an incident or accident during your adventure, the ship has an on-board, fully-stocked medical centre - where our trained medical team can provide necessary treatment in a timely fashion. Safety continues to be an issue that our team takes very serious and the Greg Mortimer allows us to create an environment where you can concentrate on the brilliant landscape and wildlife, without worrying about your wellbeing. Ship Life Greg Mortimer is designed to serve your every need. It's your bedroom, bathroom, lounge, dining room and even your observatory. Make yourself at home, the Greg Mortimer is yours to enjoy! Observation Points Let's face it - you don't want windowless rooms when travelling around some of the most beautiful locations around the world. This is why the Greg Mortimer is designed with plenty of dedicated observation spaces - ideal for keen bird spotters, wildlife watchers and those wanting to watch the scenery go past. From the indoor 180-degree lounge and outdoor 360-degree open deck, both

on deck 8, to the 270-degree open sundeck on level 7, there are plenty of observation points to share around the ship! If these are full, then you can take up a spot on one of the two hydraulic viewing platforms on deck 5. Aurora Expeditions also has an open bridge policy, which means at any point you can come up to the bridge and check out what the captain and officers are up to. From watching navigational practices to observing mapping techniques, you can get a firsthand look at the inner workings of the Greg Mortimer. Shore excursions Although the ship is fun, the real enjoyment comes from the many shore excursions that are available. Depending on the weather and itinerary, it's possible to take two to three landings daily, taking a look at everything from rock formations and ancient ruins to cute groups of penguins. We know time is of the essence in these wild locations, so the Greg Mortimer has been designed with 15 Zodiacs, which means you can maximise your time on shore. From four dedicated sea level launching platforms, transfers are quicker, safer and enable you to get closer to the action for a longer period of time. Just remember to charge your camera before you step onto the Zodiac! Activity options From kayaking and skiing to diving and climbing, these are one-in-a-lifetime opportunities that you need to take advantage of. Aboard the Greg Mortimer there is a specially designed launching platform for all activities, a concept overseen by our activity experts. This area also includes individual lockers in the expansive mudroom and rapid drying areas for wetsuits so you can quickly get warm after exploring in the elements! Dining From the moment you step onto the Greg Mortimer, we aim to give you the best hospitality service possible. Starting with the official Captain's welcome, as our guests, you're welcome to 24 hours complimentary coffee, tea and snack facilities in addition to the range of different menu





options and courses for each meal. Meals are served in large dining room/restaurant with family style dining, perfect to swap stories with your new expedition family. Enjoy the range of house wine, beers and soft drinks included with dinner after a long day in the wild, preparing yourself for another exciting day to follow. On the last day of your trip, the team on the Greg Mortimer put on a special farewell four-course dinner and cocktails - a perfect way to reflect on your time on the ship and consolidate lifelong friendships with the people you've met on-board. On-board entertainment When you're relaxing during a sea day or you have a little downtime on the ship between excursions, what is there to do onboard the Greg Mortimer? Plenty! On all our expeditions, there are experts who lead presentations in the spacious lecture room so you can understand the region a little better. These often include topics as broad as history and culture to biology and climate change, these presentations aim to educate and entertain. If you're keen to just watch the surroundings and keep your eyes peeled for wildlife, you have access to two bars/lounges where the stunning floor to ceiling windows offer a special perspective on the landscape. The Greg Mortimer is also decked out with other facilities for your enjoyment. There is a library on Deck 5 with books and maps and a Wellness Centre complete with gym equipment, sauna and spa. Feeling a little sore after walking around all day? Treat yourself to a massage at the Wellness Centre and feels the aches disappear! Keen photographers and artists will revel in the multimedia room



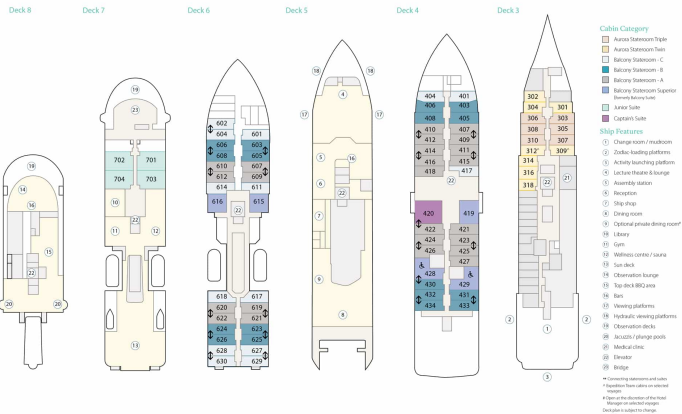
on Deck 5.





# INSIDE YOUR SHIP

The Greg Mortimer Deck Plan







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