



NORTH SPITSBERGEN, POLAR BEARS & BOWHEAD WHALES IN PACK-ICE

Search for whales, polar bears, birds and other exotic wildlife among the Arctic sea ice while enjoying the 24-hour daylight of the midnight sun, which provides excellent conditions for outdoor photography and activities.



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



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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: Walruses, seals & sea birds

After an exciting sailing through straits and fjord we arrive late morning at Smeerenburg, where a large group of Walruses often lays at its haul-out place. It is also a rare opportunity to see Harbour Seals on rocky islets. Smeerenburg was an important whaling station in the 17th century. Later on the day we land at Fuglesangen, where we have a great opportunity to sit among hundreds of nearby Little Auks. In the evening we make a short landing in Birgerbukta, where the Basq whalers had their station, and continue into the splendid Raudfjord.

Day 3: Route to Raudfjorden

Raudfjord, with glacier fronts, is a good area for meeting Polar Bears and Bearded Seals on fjord ice, which is still unbroken. In Hamiltonbukta is an impressive colony of Brünnich's Guillemots. Later we visit Ytre Norskøya, a small island which was used for many years as a lookout point for Dutch whalers. There we can still follow their tracks to the summit of the island. On shore the remains of 17th century blubber ovens can be found near about 200 graves. The north side of the island offers the rare opportunity to see Puffins near their breeding places. There is also a small colony of Kittiwakes. From there we sail northwest to the edge of the pack-ice.

Day 4 - 6: Along the ice edge in search of Bowhead Whales, Seals & Polar Bears

At sea sailing from 80°N to 76°N along and in the outer fringes of the ice edge looking for Bowhead Whales, Harp Seals, Hooded Seals, Polar Bears and migrating seabirds like Little

Auks, Brünnich's Guillemots, and Kittiwakes. On previous voyages in this area we have sometimes seen up to hundred Bowhead Whales. On the last day, at open sea we have good chances for Northern Bottlenose Whales and the first Fin Whales of the season.

Day 7: Bell Sund's flora, fauna, and haunting history

Bellsund is a fjord system with two major branches (Van Mijenfjord, Van Keulenfjord) and a side bay (Recherchefjord). The geology is fascinating and has created amazing landscapes, such as the long, narrow island of Akseløya that blocks Van Mijenfjord almost completely. The rich wildlife of the area has attracted hunters throughout several centuries, including English whalers, who also wintered there. - we will walk in their footsteps and see remains of their huts. We see often Polar Bears and we have also seen Beluga (white whales) in this area. Much is depending on the fjord -ice how far we can sail into these fjords.

Day 8: There and back again

Every adventure, no matter how grand, must eventually come to an end. You disembark in Longyearbyen, taking home memories that will accompany you wherever your next adventure lies.

Please Note:

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.



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YOUR SHIP:

Hondius

VESSEL TYPE:

LENGTH:

PASSENGER CAPACITY:

BUILT/REFURBISHED:

Hondius is the first-registered Polar Class 6 vessel in the world, meeting the latest and highest Lloyd's Register demands for ice-strengthened cruise vessels. Hondius also exceeds the requirements of the Polar Code as adopted by the International Maritime Organization (IMO), allowing you to enjoy the polar regions as much as possible while impacting them as little as possible. Upon completion, Hondius will be the most flexible, advanced, innovative ice-strengthened vessel in the polar regions. It is optimized for exploratory voyages that provide you the utmost first-hand contact with the Arctic and Antarctica. Hotel comfort, expedition class Hondius offers high-quality accommodation for 176 passengers in a range of suites and cabins. The spacious 'Hondius' suite (35 square metres, 377 square feet), six grand suites with balconies (27 square metres, 291 square feet), eight junior suites (19 to 20 square metres, 205 to 215 square feet), eight superior cabins (20 to 21 square metres, 215 to 226 square feet), 11 twin deluxe cabins, (19 to 21 square metres, 205 to 226 square feet), 14 twin window cabins (12 to 14 square metres, 129 to 151 square feet) as well as 28 twin porthole cabins, two triple porthole cabins, and four quadruple porthole cabins that vary in size from 12 to 18

square metres, or 129 to 194 square feet all offer a high level of accommodation. The passenger capacity certificate for Hondius is 196 persons. One deck consists of a large observation lounge and separate lecture room, which are reserved for a wide variety of interactive workshops, exhibitions, and performances particular to Hondius. Though elegantly designed in stylish mid-century modern decor, this vessel holds true to Oceanwide's distinctive cozy and informal atmosphere. Swift & safe ship-to-shore operations It is the philosophy of Hondius' managers to keep sea time as short as possible so that they can focus instead on fast, effective access to shore and near-shore activities. To give you the maximum contact with the nature and wildlife you traveled so far to see, they employ a tough fleet of rigid-hull inflatable Zodiac boats that guarantee swift and safe landing operations for all passengers at the same time. Hondius has two separate gangways and a sheltered indoor Zodiac embarkation platform that can also be used for special outdoor activities, such as kayaking. The fast, flexible, friendly heart of the polar regions The top priority is taking advantage of every wildlife and terrain opportunity as it occurs. To keep the itineraries flexible itineraries and the response time rapid, Hondius is equipped with advanced stabilizers and two main engines capable of powering the vessel up to 15 knots. But Hondius sacrifices no warmth to achieve its keen polar edge: You will have 72 crew and staff members (including expedition and hotel staff) at your service while on board, ensuring that what little time you do spend on the ship you will spend comfortably

A group of people in a zodiac boat on a glacier lake. The boat is filled with people wearing winter gear, some waving. The water is surrounded by large icebergs and glaciers under a cloudy sky.



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