ULTIMA THULE, THE HORIZONTAL EVEREST (L'Austral)

Travel to the heart of Ultima Thule, a legendary stopover for those in love with the polar regions.

Step aboard the L'Austral in Kangerlussuaq for a 17-day expedition cruise to the farthest reaches of the planet.

Between ice caps and ice floes, past glaciers, icebergs and brash ice, sail to the heart of the northern hemisphere's biggest ice producer.

You will stop over at Skraeling Island (Pim Island), the northernmost point reached by the Vikings, then return via the path taken by the famous American expedition led by Adolphus Greely.

From Greenland's west coast with its mountains softened by glaciers to the Arctic mountain range’s steep slopes and Thule’s high Arctic tundra, you will be sailing through the polar region’s most spectacular landscapes.

Polar bears, musk ox and Arctic wolves: journey to see this amazingly rich fauna.

Please note: your voyage prices include Flight Paris / Kangerlussuaq + transfers + flight Kangerlussuaq / Paris.

**ITINERARY**

Day 1 - KANGERLUSSUAQ
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.

Day 2 - SISIMIUT
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.

Day 3 - QIKIQTARJUAQ & KIVITOO
The small hamlet of Qikiqtarjuaq is on the east coast of Baffin Island, in the heart of Nunavut territory. Bounded by the Davis Strait, the island of Qikiqtarjuaq, formerly known as Broughton Island, is marked by the history of whale hunting. During the 19th century, European whalers travelled around the region and began trading with the Inuits. Later on, the installation of a military post and a landing strip facilitated access to this part of the world. Located very close to the Auyuittuq National Park, Qikiqtarjuaq has very beautiful landscapes of mountains, hills and ice, and is home to many emblematic Arctic animals: whales, seals, walruses, narwhals and polar bears. Located on the east coast of Baffin Island, in Nunavut, Kivitoo is a simultaneously calm and unsettling place that you will explore with your naturalist-guides. This former Inuit camp lying in the heart of a heathland landscape was abandoned in 1923. Here you will pass before a broken-down cabin surrounded by metal tanks that stored whale oil at the time when cetacean hunting was in full swing. You will see walrus skulls and the graves of Inuits, revealing their past presence. Kivitoo had its days of technological glory in the 1950s, with the installation of an American radar station on top of the mountain overlooking the area.

Day 4 - ARCTIC HARBOR & ISABELLA BAY, NIGHLINGANIQ
Arctic Harbor is on the small island of Aulitiving, barely 15 km long and 5 km wide, at the entrance to Isabella Bay. A major whale hunting site, this small natural harbour still has remnants from those times, notably some whaler graves. This port of call will be the opportunity to go for a lovely hike in the heart of the Arctic tundra, and perhaps to reach the highest point of the island, located at an altitude of 410 metres. Welcome to the kingdom of the cetaceans! Here, those who love the giants of the Arctic won’t know where to look. Isabella Bay is in fact part of the Ningiinganiq National Wildlife Area, one of the finest places to observe bowhead whales. From your ship, watch the sumptuous ballet performed by these impressive mammals. With undersea faults over 300 metres deep, Isabella Bay, located on the north-east coast of Baffin Island, attracts cetaceans which come here to feed. In addition to the bowhead
Day 5 - SAM FORD FJORD
All around you is a raw landscape of spectacular beauty. Nothing seems to want to disturb the silence. You are in the Sam Ford Fjord, on the east coast of Baffin Island. Located only a few kilometres away from the Inuit community of Clyde River, this fjord has the kind of world’s end appearance that only the Arctic lands can offer. From your ship, allow yourself to be dazzled by the series of vertiginous cliffs plunging into the waters of the fjord. These impressively high walls of rock, known worldwide to climbing enthusiasts, are reflected in the waters of the fjord, as though to completely shift perspectives and blur the lines between land and sea.

Day 6 - ICY ARM FJORD & FEACHEM BAY
The east coast of Baffin Island is a real lacework of fjords. Among them, in the north, is the spectacular Icy Arm fjord. As you sail these parts, you’ll be dazzled by the immense cliffs that are sometimes over 1,000 metres high. This is a paradise for base jumping (parachute jumping from the top of the cliffs). During your stop here, you will have the opportunity to hike at the feet of these mountains and within the glacial valleys. Keep your eyes open when you get back on your boat: you’ll probably get the chance to observe marine mammals, such as whales, orcas and even narwhals. After sailing the Buchan Gulf, where you may well be joined by orcas and narwhals, you will disembark in Feachem Bay. From a small beach, home to the ruins of sod houses, set off on a hike into the heart of very beautiful landscapes. The main part of the walk will be along magnificent tundra, fairly humid, full of colourful lichens, minuscule Arctic willows, Arctic poppies, cotton-grass and soft mosses, which will make feel like you’re walking on a mattress. Arriving at the top of a ridge, enjoy this very beautiful viewpoint over the glacier below. Frequented by polar bears, Feachem Bay also provides refuge for a great many birds.

Day 7 - BEATRICE POINT & COBURG ISLAND
Located at the entrance to the Canadian High Arctic, completely to the east of Devon Island, this surprising peninsular will provide an opportunity to discover a specific ecosystem and observe the glaciers coming from the Devon ice cap. During your port of call in these parts, you will perhaps also have the chance to encounter the ice floes descending directly from the North Pole, as well as the wildlife often found here. A real paradise for ornithologists lies to the north of Baffin Bay, very close to Ellesmere Island. Indeed, the small Coburg Island is one of the most important sea bird nesting areas in the Canadian Arctic; Tridactyl gulls, thick-billed murres and northern fulmars have all made it their favourite spot. 60% of the island is covered with ice fields and glaciers, giving a very rugged mountainous relief. In addition to the birds, it is also home to polar bears, walruses, beluga whales, narwhals, ringed seals and bearded seals. The Nijutiqavvik National Wildlife Area, created in 1995 with the goal of preserving these species, entirely encompasses Coburg as well as its surrounding waters.

Day 8 - PIM ISLAND & ALEXANDER BAY
Pim Island, also known as Skraeling Island, is of quite exceptional historic interest. In fact, in 1978 and 1979, artefacts of European origins (Viking) were discovered here, including around sixty remnants from the Dorset and Thule cultures: pieces of chainmail, rivets, chain links… These artefacts, dating from 1270, are perhaps the result of the
bartering practised by the Inuits, which would prove that the Vikings had been as far as the Smith Strait. Pim Island is also known for having been home to the members of the Greely expedition, during the 1883-1884 winter. They took refuge here in a makeshift shelter: Camp Clay, near Cape Sabine. Alexander Bay is a narrow passage located on Johan Peninsula, on Ellesmere Island. From 1953 to 1963, the Royal Canadian Mounted Police built a police station here, considered to be the world's northernmost. Still in place, it is now occasionally used by scientists.

Day 9 - GEOMAGNETIC NORTH POLE
There are three kinds of pole: magnetic, geographic and geomagnetic. The Geomagnetic North Pole, the least well-known of all, comes from a mathematic model supposing that the Earth behaves like a perfect magnetic dipole, which is not in reality exact, since the Magnetic North and South Poles and the centre of the Earth are not aligned. This model enables scientists to better apply the physics concepts that we know. The position of the Geomagnetic North Pole is therefore defined by calculations and changes constantly, following the movements of the Magnetic North Pole. In 1951, then located in Greenland at 78° 29’ N. and 68° 54’ W, it was reached by Jean Malaurie. It can currently be found on Ellesmere Island.

Day 10 - HANS ISLAND & HUMBOLDT GLACIER
Welcome to a rather particular island. Located between Greenland (part of Denmark) and Ellesmere Island (Canada), its sovereignty has in fact been controversial since 1973, when the maritime boundaries of the Nares Strait were drawn out. Today, Denmark and Canada are still fighting over the possession of this islet, although it is hardly an El Dorado. This tiny piece of uninhabited land, covered with ice for most of the year, is not the most hospitable of places. To protect the island, which could be subject to oil drilling in the future, a collective has been set up so that everyone can declare themselves an “inhabitant” of Hans, thus putting the ecological stakes before the financial interests. Greenland is naturally the land of eternal ice. The ice cap that covers the majority of this boreal island extends right down to the Arctic Ocean via vast glaciers that are each as majestic as the next. The most well-known and spectacular of these is without a doubt the Humboldt glacier. It is the vastest coastal glacier in the Northern Hemisphere, with a glacier terminus that reaches 110 km in width. Advancing inexorably towards the sea, it regularly calves veritable ice cathedrals – gigantic icebergs that detach themselves from the glacier before toppling and crashing into the frozen ocean.

Day 11 - ETAH & SIORAPALUK
To the north of the region of Thule, in Inglefield Land, there is an ancient Inuit hunting camp known for having been the departure point of many European expeditions to conquer the North Pole. Here, in Etah, you will have the possibility of discovering peat house vestiges from the Thule civilisation and making your way up the valley for a gorgeous walk in Greenland’s high Arctic. Today, this region is still a favourite hunting spot for Greenlanders. It is not unusual to see musk oxen here. Small colourful houses, a few small motorboats resting on the shore, a school, a grocery store, sled dogs: here you are in Siorapaluk, Greenland’s northernmost native settlement. With some fifty inhabitants, this tranquil village made famous by Jean Malaurie in his novel The Last Kings of Thule, lives in harmony with nature’s cycles. Here, hunting, fishing and skin tanning are part of everyday life, just like in many other Inuit villages. This is an authentic and typical port of call where you will probably be
greeted by a joyous group of children, who are always happy to welcome visitors.

**Day 12 - CAPE YORK & SAVISSIVIK**
A few kilometres to the west of Savissivik, in Greenland, your ship will pass Cape York, a place that is brimming with history and marked by the conquest of the North Pole. Indeed, it is here, at the end of the 19th century, that the American explorer Robert Peary discovered fragments of one of the biggest meteorites ever found to this day. He had them sent back to the United States and later sold them to a New York museum, where they are still on display. Despite Robert Peary’s disputed achievements and his sometimes controversial attitude towards the Inuit populations, a memorial was erected in his honour at Cape York. Constructed in the 1930s, the memorial still stands today. Some places in this world are so magical that their beauty cannot be described in words... Savissivik, a small Inuit village with less than a hundred inhabitants, is one such place. Rightly considered to be the biggest iceberg graveyard in Greenland, it is a stunning sight to behold. During your Zodiac® outing, you will sail between these icy giants that have become stranded in the shallows. Once on land, you can hike to a viewpoint from which to enjoy breathtaking views over these icebergs, which come in an incredibly diverse range of shapes and colours. Photographers will love it. Savissivik Bay attracts many bears and is also known for having been the home of one of the world’s biggest meteorites, but the latter has now been moved to a museum in New York.

**Day 13 - KULLORSUAQ**
Well beyond the Arctic Circle, in the majestic landscapes of Greenland’s Northwest, you will find the village of Kullorsuaq, the last bastion of Greenland’s traditional hunters. Here is where you will find Greenland’s true character... Vast mineral expanses, sumptuous mountains, impressive glaciers and, above all, the local population which still lives off fishing and seal or bear hunting. Hospitality and respect for nature are essential elements in the daily lives of these men, who live an austere life. When we drop anchor in this remote part of the world, set off to discover these friendly people who are also talented craftsmen, deftly sewing the furs and skins of marine mammals. This will be a unique and authentic experience.

**Day 14 - NULIARFIK**
This small island, lost north of Uummannaq Bay where two fjords meet, is often an opportunity for sumptuous sailing along the vertical cliffs, surrounded by drifting icebergs. Situated not far from Nugatsiaq, one of the small villages attached to the town of Uummannaq, Nuliarfik is an ancient village of the Thule civilisation. When your ship calls here, you will have the opportunity to visit the vestiges of peat houses. Then, take a walk up to higher ground and, from a magnificent panoramic viewpoint, you will be able to observe this beautiful network of iceberg-filled fjords.

**Day 15 - ILULISSAT**
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.

Day 16 - EVIGHEDSFJORDEN
Your ship glides slowly along the water towards the west coast of Greenland, to enter Evighedsfjorden, just a few kilometres south of Kangerlussuaq. Evighedsfjorden means “the fjord of Eternity”, and for good reason: just when you think you’ve reached the end of this stretch of sea measuring over 100 kilometres in length, it seems to go on forever, as though to bring even more pleasure to those sailing in it. The spectacular scenery ranges from glaciers to tundra with an abundant flora, and jagged cliffs where numerous bird species have taken up residence. Take the time to observe the white-tailed eagles and the colonies of seagulls and black-legged kittiwakes flying overhead in the area.

Day 17 - KANGERLUSSUAQ
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.

Please Note:
Subject to ice and weather conditions. The expedition highlights and itineraries described above illustrate possible experiences only and cannot be guaranteed.
YOUR SHIP: L’Austral

YOUR SHIP: L'Austral
VESSEL TYPE: Luxury Expedition / Cruise Ship
LENGTH: 142 metres.
PASSENGER CAPACITY: 264 (200 in Antarctica). Built: 2011

L'Austral has a unique atmosphere, a subtle blend of luxury, intimacy and well-being. A sleek silhouette softened by elegantly smooth contours and large, arched windows opening up to the sea and the light: so many features come together to give L'Austral her distinctive shape. Precious materials, discreet elegance and a perfect balance between chic and casual, combine to make you feel as if you are on your own private yacht. A design blending tradition and innovation, where a nautical mood has been subtly recreated. Precious materials in smoothing neutral tones are brought to life with splashes of cheerful reds. So many personal touches create the spirit of a "private yacht".

Suites and staterooms
You can expect magnificent ocean views as 124 staterooms and suites have balconies.

Individually-controlled airconditioning • Cabin layout: kingsize bed, or twin beds, communicating cabins available (children welcome) • Minibar • Flat screen satellite TV • IPod™ players • Desk with stationery • Electronic safe • French bath products • Dressing table and hairdryer • Bath robes • Satellite direct line telephone • 110/220 volts • 24hr room service • WiFi • Balcony

Cuisine
Loyal to the great French tradition, the haute cuisine on board is worthy of the finest restaurants, where discreet, attentive service is the hallmark.

Choose from two restaurants for breakfasts, lunch and dinner. The Gastronomic Restaurant is situated on Le Liberte Deck and serves you French and international cuisine accompanied by fine wine. On the Grill Restaurant, you have the opportunity to
eat outside and enjoy buffet lunch and themed dinner.

Life On Board

Whether you want to join other guests in the theatre or games area (Wii™ consoles, etc), or relax on your own in a quiet corner of the library, L'Austral has been designed to meet the needs of every guest.

Everything has been done to preserve the independence of each guest to suit their personal tastes: lounges for lectures and shows, a spa in partnership with Sothys™, but also more intimate spaces such as the library and internet corner.

Comfortable cabins, nearly all with private balcony, are available for families either as triples or as communicating cabins. There is also a games area with Wii™ consoles, children's menus, and a baby-sitting service. Just as if you were on a private yacht, your time is your own to do as you please.

Fitted with the latest equipment (Kinesis Wall, running machine) and in partnership with the famous Sothys™ brand, the Beauty Centre on L'Austral welcomes you for some unforgettable moments of relaxation and pampering (beauty treatments, hairdresser).

Wheelchairs3 specially adapted wheelchair cabins (Deck 3 = Superior cabin no. 307, no balcony, Deck 4 = Prestige Cabin no. 407 - with balcony and Deck 5 = Prestige Cabin no 509, with balcony) and lifts to all decks/areas.

Details

Please click the following links to read more about Ponant and the other Ponant cruise ships.
INSIDE YOUR SHIP

Deluxe Stateroom

Deluxe Suite

Owner’s Suite

Prestige Stateroom Deck 4

Prestige Stateroom Deck 5

Prestige Suite Deck 5

Prestige Stateroom Deck 6

Prestige Suite Deck 6
# Pricing

**30-Jul-2021 to 05-Aug-2021**

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**Additional Charges:** Port taxes. From 1190 AUD pp