Overview

This iconic voyage explores the remote Northwest Passage and stunning fjords of the Baffin Island coastline before crossing Baffin Bay to Greenland where we will marvel at the beauty of the icebergs calving off of the Greenland icecap. We follow in the footsteps of the early Arctic explorers such as Franklin, Amundsen and Larsen, exploring the archipelago of islands and channels that create Canada’s high Arctic region. This is the home of the polar bear, Muskox, caribou and walrus and we journey through the wild Canadian north aboard our celebrated expedition ship, Akademik Ioffe. Wildlife is a major draw card of our expedition, but there is plenty of historical interest and the stories of that ill-fated expedition by Sir John Franklin nearly 170 years ago is central to our voyage. Franklin made his last heroic foray into the Arctic in 1845 with two ships and 129 men, never to be heard from again. The fate of the expedition remained a mystery – until September 2014 – when one of the vessels, HMS Erebus, was discovered in a remarkable state of preservation in the frigid waters of Victoria Strait. The find is undoubtedly one of the great archaeological discoveries of the last 100 years and has been likened to the discovery of Tutankhamen’s tomb. This is small ship expedition cruising at its best.

As with all our expeditions, safety is our top priority. For that reason, weather, ice or other conditions may require us to change our itinerary and shore excursions as we go but that is half the fun of Polar exploring. Predictability is a word that has no relevance in this environment.

Day By Day Expedition Itinerary

August 23, 2017 – Edmonton (Alberta)

Arrive in Edmonton today, transfer to your hotel for included pre-cruise accommodation.

August 24, 2017 – Edmonton (Alberta) to Cambridge Bay (Nunavut)

We depart Edmonton this morning on our special charter flight to Cambridge Bay, a remote outpost above the Arctic Circle. Located on the southern shores of Victoria Island, today it is a centre for hunting, trapping and fishing. Upon arrival, enjoy a walking tour of the town and board our expedition ship, the Akademik Ioffe in the afternoon. After settling in to our cabins and exploring the ship, we meet our expedition team and fellow
passengers. Excitement is in the air as we enjoy a welcome cocktail and cast off, bound for the fabled Northwest Passage.

**August 25, 2017 – Victory Point, King William Island**

As we chart a course into the Northwest Passage, our onboard presentation series begins, and the legend of Sir John Franklin and his ‘lost expedition’ is beginning to unravel. The mystery of what happened to Franklin was partially solved in September 2014, when a joint Parks Canada and Royal Canadian Geographic Society expedition, found the long lost Franklin shipwreck, HMS Erebus in the Victoria Strait. One Ocean Expeditions played a pivotal role in the search by carrying underwater search equipment on our ship as well as scientists, historians, researchers, dignitaries and sponsors of this history defining mission. We aim to visit Victory Point, travelling very near the actual location of the wreck of HMS Erebus, all the while learning about the quest for exploration that eventually opened up the Arctic. Experts and marine archaeologists all agree, the second of Franklin’s lost ships, HMS Terror is likely to be in this vicinity. There is great optimism that it will also be found when ice conditions permit the search to resume.

**August 26, 2017 – Conningham Bay**

This morning we arrive at Conningham Bay on the shore of Prince of Wales. Here, in the heart of the Northwest Passage we hope to encounter one of the most remarkable wildlife sites in the Arctic. This is a known hotspot for polar bears who come here to feast on Beluga whales, often caught in the rocky shallows at the entrance to the bay during low tide. It is not unusual to find the shoreline littered with whale skeletons – and very healthy looking polar bears!

**August 27, 2017 – Bellot Strait and Fort Ross**

Today we transit the narrow passage of Bellot Strait – a channel separating northerly Somerset Island from continental North America. The aim is to enter at slack tide if possible, in order to avoid a current that roars through the passage at more than seven knots during the peak flow. The mixing of waters in this strait provides an abundant food source for marine mammals and we keep our eyes peeled for harp seals, bearded seals and even polar bears. The skill of the Captain, Officers and capabilities of the ship becomes apparent during this exciting day of Arctic navigation. The historic site of Fort Ross, located at the southern end of Somerset Island, is a former Hudson’s Bay Company fur trading outpost. Fascinating archaeological sites nearby tell a story of more than a thousand years of habitation by the Inuit and their predecessors.

**August 28, 2017 – Beechey Island**

Beechey Island holds great historic importance on our journey through the Northwest Passage. It is here that Sir John Franklin’s ill-fated expedition spent its last ‘comfortable’ winter in 1845 before disappearing into the icy vastness, sparking an incredible series of search expeditions that last almost three decades. A trip ashore at Beechey Island to visit the grave markers on a remote windswept beach, gives one pause to wonder on the bravery (or foolhardiness) of these pioneering explorers, as they sought a way through the barren, frozen landscape. This is a thrilling location for history buffs and for many it will be the defining moment of our expedition.
August 29, 2017 – Lancaster Sound and Dundas Harbour

We are now at almost 75° degrees north of latitude. Cruising the coastline of Devon Island, we are now in the waters of Lancaster Sound – a rich, bio-diverse region often referred to as the wildlife ‘super highway’ of the Arctic. These massive volumes of water from Baffin Bay to the east, Beaufort Sea to the west, and from the archipelago of islands to the north, combine to make a rich cocktail of nutrients supporting an abundance of Arctic wildlife. We plan on visiting the old Royal Canadian Mounted Police (RCMP) outpost at Dundas Harbour, situated on the southern shores of Devon Island. Muskox and Arctic hare are sometimes sighted in the vicinity and there are some great hiking options in the area.

August 30, 2017 – Mittimatalik (Pond Inlet)

We sight the wild north coast of Baffin Island and navigate through Navy Board Inlet. The vast landscapes of Sirmilik National Park surround us as we approach the remote Inuit community of Mittimatalik. We are welcomed ashore and a highlight will be a visit to the Natinnak Centre, where a fascinating cultural exhibit showcases aspects of daily life, culture and history of the people of the north. Inuit carvings, jewellery and other traditional craft is on display and purchasing such items from the local artisans is a great way to support the community. We enjoy meeting the local children of Mittimatalik and marveling at their athletic abilities as they demonstrate the skills and challenges of traditional Inuit games. The skills and physical agility developed by such games were often those necessary for everyday survival in the harsh Arctic environment.

August 31, 2017 – Gibbs Fjord

This morning we enter the spectacular Gibbs Fjord with towering cliffs all around us. Our expedition ship will seem dwarfed by the giant peaks and snowy glaciers as we cruise slowly along the dark waters. One past guest commented that Gibbs Fjord ‘was like something out of Lord of the Rings’ – and we think you’ll agree!

September 01, 2017 – At sea in Baffin Bay

Leaving the rugged coastline of Baffin Island, our crossing of Baffin Bay allows us time to slow down and reflect on the beauty and experiences we have shared. Our team of onboard experts will continue to educate us on the history and wildlife of the region while our naturalists keep watch looking for fulmars and dovekies, pilot whales and perhaps even orca. As we approach Greenland, we also increase our likelihood of spotting some of the big baleen whales like the fin and sei whales.

September 02, 2017 – Ilulissat, Greenland and the Jacobshavn Icefjord

If one word could sum up today’s experience it would be ‘ice’. Even our expedition team members, with years spent exploring both the Arctic and Antarctica, will take a moment to reflect on the awesome ice sculptures surrounding the ship in all directions. Truly one of the wonders of the world, the Jacobshavn Icefjord – a UNESCO World Heritage site - spews gigantic tabular icebergs out into Disko Bay. The glacier that creates these stunning monoliths advances at over 40 metres per day, creating around 50 cubic kilometres of ice annually. Our approach to Ilulissat is always dependent on the amount of ice in and around the mouth of the fjord. Our Captain and Officers
are skilled ice navigators and our ship has one of the highest ice ratings of any vessel exploring Arctic waters. Ilulissat was the hometown of Knud Rasmussen, one of Greenland’s most famous early explorers. The town is home to a pretty harbor with colourful fishing boats and houses on shore.

**September 03, 2016 – Sisimiut, Greenland**

We will explore the fjord behind the town of Sisimiut before going ashore to explore this beautiful location in the afternoon. Characterized by colourful local houses, the town features a towering granite peak as a backdrop. We hope to meet a few of the traditional Greenlandic kayakers and to see a demonstration of ‘Eskimo rolling’ by one of the former Greenland kayak champions. A small museum is another interesting diversion.

**September 04, 2016 – Sondre Stromfjord**

One of the world’s longest fjords, Sondre Stromfjord towers above the ship on either side as we sail up it. Our goal is not the end of the fjord, but rather some of the small side fjords along it that we can zodiac into and explore on foot or by kayak. Major geologic and geomorphologic features will surround us and for those looking for living and breathing excitement, we will hope to find Muskox along the shores of the fjord as well. Soaring high above us will be the white-tailed sea eagle, majestic as always while riding the thermals off the ridges. We expect some fantastic hiking opportunities with hikes geared to all fitness levels.

**September 05, 2016 – Kangerlussuaq, Greenland**

Our journey through the Arctic is all but complete as we disembark the ship and make our way to the airport. A charter flight returns us to Canada’s capital city of Ottawa. On arrival we bid farewell to our fellow passengers and our voyage comes to an end. A transfer is provided from the airport to a central location downtown.

About our itinerary – Small ship expedition cruising can sometimes be unpredictable. Specific sites visited will depend on prevailing weather and sea conditions at the time of sailing. The above itinerary should be read as a ‘guide only’ and may change. The ship’s Captain in conjunction with the Expedition Leader continually review the sailing plan throughout the voyage, making adjustments to the itinerary along the way to take advantage of optimal weather and sea conditions or to maximise our encounters with wildlife. Years of experience spent exploring these waterways mean we have plenty of outstanding landing sites and zodiac cruising locations to consider, even when the weather conditions may not be ideal. A flexible approach is something we encourage you to bring to the ship.

Before you Book – Important Voyage Details

**Proof of our Polar Commitment** - When travelling with One Ocean Expeditions, you will discover how much we care about the places and people we visit. We demonstrate this by finding ways to give back as well as taking away so many incredible memories. For more information on our commitment to responsible tourism, please review our document entitled, “Our Environmental Commitment”.

---

**About our itinerary** – Small ship expedition cruising can sometimes be unpredictable. Specific sites visited will depend on prevailing weather and sea conditions at the time of sailing. The above itinerary should be read as a ‘guide only’ and may change. The ship’s Captain in conjunction with the Expedition Leader continually review the sailing plan throughout the voyage, making adjustments to the itinerary along the way to take advantage of optimal weather and sea conditions or to maximise our encounters with wildlife. Years of experience spent exploring these waterways mean we have plenty of outstanding landing sites and zodiac cruising locations to consider, even when the weather conditions may not be ideal. A flexible approach is something we encourage you to bring to the ship.

Before you Book – Important Voyage Details

**Proof of our Polar Commitment** - When travelling with One Ocean Expeditions, you will discover how much we care about the places and people we visit. We demonstrate this by finding ways to give back as well as taking away so many incredible memories. For more information on our commitment to responsible tourism, please review our document entitled, “Our Environmental Commitment”.

---
Medical Documentation – Once you have booked your voyage to the Polar Regions, you will be required to complete a Medical Information Form. This form must be completed, signed and returned to One Ocean Expeditions no later than 90 days prior to departure.

Passport – Well before traveling, please ensure you have a current passport with an accurate photo, valid for at least six months after your scheduled return flight home. Also check that your airline tickets are in exactly the same name as your passport. Some countries may require you to have a return air ticket or sufficient funds to purchase such a ticket.

Budgeting – It is a good idea to bring along some $US cash. There are some onboard expenses such as those incurred at the bar, in our gift shop and for satellite communication via email or phone. There are also several souvenir shopping opportunities throughout the voyage including at some of the Inuit communities. $CA is the preferred currency in such locations.

Clothes – We do not need to tell you it is cold in the Arctic. So make sure you come prepared with clothes that will adequately protect you from the weather and wet conditions (sea spray is common onboard Zodiacs). Expensive specialty gear is not required, but you should have warm, waterproof clothing available upon your arrival at your embarkation point. Please read the One Ocean Expeditions Pre-departure Information for more details about what to bring on the journey. Windproof and waterproof outer weather gear as well as expedition gumboots are included in the price of your voyage. This saves you from having to bring heavy clothing and boots from home. Details of this gear can be found in your pre-departure information.

Onboard – Like the weather, sea conditions can also be unpredictable. Rough waters are not uncommon in this part of the world. You will be safe and comfortable aboard with your experienced crew in control of our ship, but you may suffer the effects of motion sickness, unless you have taken precautions. We recommend visiting your doctor prior to departure for medication that can help you avoid this easily treated condition.

Gratuities – We suggest you allow the equivalent of $US10 - $US15 a day for gratuities for the crew and expedition staff. This is usually collected just prior to the end of the cruise. Gratuities are at your discretion.

Sea Kayaking – If you have some experience sea kayaking and are interested in doing this activity during the expedition, you will need to book this option prior to departure from home. We cannot book this activity once onboard. There is a separate document for sea kayakers that you will need to review beforehand. It’s important you have some prior paddling experience. If you are unsure, speak to your booking agent or contact us to discuss.

Embarkation Protocol – Guests arrive with the rest of the group accompanied by the One Ocean Expeditions’ Representative. Full details of embarkation/disembarkation procedures will be supplied with your final documentation. Once onboard, you will be participating in an obligatory lifeboat drill. We will also conduct important briefings on landing procedures and Zodiac operations.

Travel Insurance – On all One Ocean Expeditions’ voyages, you must have comprehensive travel insurance. Your own domestic government medical insurance and private health care plans will not cover you in most overseas countries. Your travel agent can recommend a policy designed to cover participants on these cruises. Your policy must provide coverage for your medical costs in case of hospitalization, emergency travel and repatriation. We require that you obtain adequate insurance before joining the voyage. Cancellation insurance is also
recommended.

Please check the terms of your policy carefully, particularly with regard to limits of cover (i.e. replacement of photographic equipment, baggage loss, claims procedure, costs due to airline delays etc). Also ensure you are familiar with the procedure for making claims (for example, most policies stipulate that claims must be made within a certain time after completion of your journey). Once you have paid your deposit or full payment, certain fees will apply if you have to cancel your holiday (see the cancellation provisions in our terms and conditions). For this reason you should take out insurance at the time of paying your deposit, which should then protect you in such a situation.

Visas – Commencing in March 2016, Canada will be introducing an Electronic Travel Authorization (eTA) program. Under this program citizens from countries other than the United States (who do not need a visa to enter Canada) will need to obtain an online authorization before flying to Canada. A fee of $CA7 is payable for processing an application for an electronic travel authorization. An application must be made online with the Department (Citizenship and Immigration Canada) for that purpose. An electronic travel authorization is valid for a period of five years from the day on which it is issued. If you plan any side trips to other countries you will need to investigate visa requirements as it is your responsibility to ensure you have all required visas for your trip. Rules and regulations governing the issuance of visas are constantly changing and vary for different nationalities. You should check visa requirements with your travel agent or relevant consular authority well before traveling.

The information provided here is given in good faith and has been compiled with all reasonable care. However, some of the information may become out of date. Please keep this in mind and check with us if you want to be sure about anything. The document was correct at time of printing but you can check online for the most up to date version. If you have any queries, please contact your travel agent or our staff. We are here to help you!

(updated MAY 16_SG)