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Ship Collection

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NARSARSUAQ TO TASIILAQ – HOT SPRINGS, HISTORY AND ICEBERG PARADE EXPEDITION

Our journey from South Greenland to East Greenland begins in Narsarsuaq and an area that is as rich in history and culture as it is in natural wonders - with Norse explorers, Inuit culture, hot springs, whales and amazing scenery. We then explore the pointy mountains of Prince Christian Sound and continue along the wild, beautiful and unexplored eastern coastline. Our final destinations, the Sermilik Fjord area and the town of Tasiilaq, will treat us to icebergs in all shapes and sizes - as well as the stories and myths of the local Tunumiit culture. Travelling with a small group of merely 12 passengers gives us more flexibility, more unique itineraries and more time ashore. Also, the footprints we leave behind are a lot smaller! We get to visit remote settlements, meet the welcoming people living here and in a personal way learn more about their fascinating culture.



ITINERARY

Day 1: Flight to Narsarsuaq and embarkation

We fly to Narsarsuaq and embark the M/S Balto. We are now on a true expedition cruise. Our exact route is depending on weather and ice and the itinerary must be kept flexible!

Day 2 – 10: Expedition in depth

We sail out through Eriksfjord, named after Erik the Red, a Norse explorer believed to have founded the first settlement in Greenland around year 980, after being banished from Iceland for manslaughter. We plan to go ashore at Brattahlid, the estate he established at the end of the 10th century.

We also aim to visit Hvalsey Church, one of the best-preserved Norse ruins in Greenland.

We stop in Qaqortoq, the largest town in South Greenland with a

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population of around 3200. Qaqortoq is beautifully situated on a mountainside and surrounded by magnificent fjords. This part of Greenland has many stories to tell. We learn about the Inuit culture and their great respect and symbiotic relationship with the environment and animals.

Many of the stories originate from times of great weather changes and declining animal numbers, and they used objects from hunting and fishing to create artistic objects and amulets. There is great respect and love for animals, which are sacrificed, and the sea goddess Sedna is worshipped for releasing the souls of animals. Even today, the Inuit carry a small jug of fresh water with them when they hunt seals. After killing a seal, they give it fresh water to keep its soul from going thirsty. We will have the opportunity to hear many stories and legends, and to learn about different eras and the people who have migrated to Greenland.

This part of Greenland offers much more than history and culture. We will set foot on rarely visited islands and watch for playful whales. We also hope to visit one of the many sheep farms in southern Greenland. In Uunartoq we will have the opportunity to relax in one of the natural hot springs, while admiring the breathtaking views of mountain ranges and drifting icebergs.

We then continue our journey south. Through the western mouth of Prince Christian Sound, we slowly make our way into this extraordinary fjord system. Here we are surrounded by a mountainous landscape with peaks of up to 2000 metres and steep cliffs plunging into the fjord, and we see the similarity to the fictional landscape of Mordor from Lord of the Rings. We

look out for harbour seals, ringed seals and whales.

We have now reached East Greenland and are travelling along a wild and unspoilt coastline. We are very dependent on the weather and ice conditions, and our itinerary will be adapted accordingly. A couple of days will be spent mostly at sea. We are likely to see a parade of icebergs drifting south on the strong currents, and we marvel at mighty glacier walls plunging straight into the sea. Along the coast we hope to explore one of the rarely visited fjords. Perhaps we stop at Umivik Bay, from where Fridtjof Nansen began his East to West trek across Greenland in 1888.

When we arrive in the vast Sermilik fjord system, we are greeted by icebergs of all shapes and sizes. Most of these come from the Helheim glacier in the centre of the fjord, which produces some of the largest icebergs in Greenland. Sermilik Fjord is 90 kilometres long and cuts through a rugged landscape of towering glaciers and jagged peaks. The beauty around us is stunning! We anchor in beautiful spots and keep an eye out for whales. Perhaps the ice will let us through to the small village of Tillerlaaq. The wooden houses are beautifully situated, with the great Sermilik Fjord in the background. Here the local Inuit culture and traditional hunting and fishing activities play an important role in the way of life. Here we have the chance to go on a nice hike to get an overview of the Sermilik Fjord and its icebergs!

We visit the town of Tasiilaq. With a population of just under 2000 it is the largest settlement in East Greenland. There is an older and different Inuit culture here, where shamanism and indigenous culture are much more alive than in other parts of



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Greenland. During our expedition here we will learn more about local myths and legends, such as that of the Tupilaqs. In Greenlandic Inuit religion, a tupilaq was a vengeful monster created by a witch doctor using various objects such as animal bones, skin, hair or tendons. Tasiilaq is also known for its art scene, where local artists create prints, sculptures and textiles, usually depicting animals, landscapes and traditional stories from the region.

Day 11: Kulusuk – Keflavik

We disembark in Kulusuk and head to the airport for our flight to Keflavik, and check into our hotel. (Included in the flight and hotel package.)

Day 12: Homeward bound

Today we bid our farewells and return home or onwards for new adventures.

Please note:

Our exact route will depend on ice, weather conditions and wildlife. The places mentioned are just examples of some of the sites this region of Greenland has to offer. We always strive to maximize your experience. Please remember that flexibility is the key to a successful expedition!



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YOUR SHIP: BALTO

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Balto

VESSEL TYPE:

LENGTH:

PASSENGER CAPACITY:

BUILT/REFURBISHED:

M/S Balto, named after the leading sled dog of 1925 Nome serum run. She was built for the highest ice class in Rauma, Finland, to serve as a government service vessel in the Baltic sea. During 2019-2020, she has been totally refurbished and is now one of the roomiest and most elegant small polar expedition yachts in service. M/S Balto offers a relaxed luxury accommodation for 12 guests in 7 outside cabins, all with private facilities and lower beds. The spacious cabins include 1 Owner's cabin, 1 superior cabin, 3 double cabins and 2 single cabins. The Owner's cabin is 30m2, has 6 windows and a queen bed, the superior cabin has two twin beds while the double cabins has a queen bed. The Owner's and superior cabin also offer a separate seating area. In all cabins you find a desk with a chair and a closet for storage. On the guest deck you also find a cedar lined sauna, accommodating 4-6 persons, with a cold shower and a small changing room. The richly appointed saloon and the beautiful dining messroom feature crotch-mahogany panelling, a bar, a card table, a library, coffee and tea stations. She offers a large restaurant style open galley, where you can check on the marvels of our chefs and sample freshly baked bread. There are several open and semi enclosed deck spaces

from where you can enjoy the stunning Arctic sceneries. You are welcomed by an international crew and the bridge is open for visitors. The ship has been fitted with an electric diesel propulsion capable of maintaining versatile manoeuvring and survey speeds with no vibration. It is therefore ideal as film and photo platform. There is also a mud room for expedition gear and two Zodiacs for wilderness cruises and offshore experiences. M/S Balto is truly one of a kind when it comes to small polar expedition ships. Travelling with this unique 12-passenger ship offers a completely different and much more intimate experience of Greenland compared to a larger expedition ship. A small group of merely 12 passengers gives us more flexibility, unique itineraries and more time ashore. Also, the footprints we leave behind are a lot smaller! The M/S Balto is designed to explore the most remote fjord systems, visit isolated Inuit settlements, take you to secret anchorages and maximise each guest's experience in the unspoiled wilderness. This is true

micro cruising.



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Single Cabin Superior Cabin



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