

GREENLAND - GREENLAND AURORA EXPLORER | OCEAN ALBATROS



INTRODUCTION

Embark on an unforgettable journey through East Greenland with the Greenland Aurora Explorer expedition. Discover dramatic fjords, towering icebergs, and remote Inuit settlements while chasing the magical Northern Lights under pristine Arctic skies. This adventure blends awe-inspiring landscapes with authentic cultural encounters aboard a comfortable expedition vessel.

PLEASE NOTE: A mandatory transfer package (including flight between Copenhagen and Kangerlussuaq, and group transfer between Kangerlussuaq airport and the ship) costing \$650 USD p/p (approximately \$1085 AUD p/p) is payable on top of the cost of the cruise in your chosen cabin listed in the "From" Price.

ITINERARY

TRIP CODE

ACABGAE

DEPARTURE

30/08/2025

DURATION

12 Days

LOCATIONS

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DAY 1: Embarkation in Kangerlussuaq

On the first day of our expedition, meet at Copenhagen airport for your charter flight to Kangerlussuaq on the west coast of Greenland, the hub for travel in this vast island. Situated at the head of a 160km long fjord of the same name, Kangerlussuaq is Greenland's only inland town, and was established as Sondrestrom Air Base/Bluie West-8 by American troops in 1941. Existing largely to service the airport, the town of Kangerlussuaq itself retains a strong 'Cold War' feeling, hinting at its extensive American military use before it was signed over to the Greenlandic Government in 1992. Today Kangerlussuaq is Greenland's largest air hub, with flights arriving daily from Denmark and around the country. It's stable climate and lack of fog makes it ideal as an airport, but it exhibits some of the most varied temperatures in the country, commonly registering the highest summer and lowest winter temperatures due to its inland location. Upon arrival in Kangerlussuaq, you will be transported to the small port located west of the airport, where the Ocean Albatros awaits at anchor. Zodiacs will transfer us the short distance to the ship, where you will be checked in to your stateroom. After the mandatory safety drill, enjoy dinner and a glass of champagne as we set sail a course for adventure through the 160-kilometre Kangerlussuaq fjord.



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DAY 2: Kangaamiut and Evighedsfjorden

On the first full day of our expedition, we will arrive at the small village of Kangaamiut, an incredibly picturesque settlement in Greenland’s central Qeqqata region. Surrounded by rich cold waters and a vast back country brimming with game, life in Kangaamiut moves at a slower pace, and locals still live a largely traditional lifestyle, surviving by hunting and fishing. Hike to the heliport atop the hill for stunning views over the town and the surrounding fjordlands, or meet the friendly local people during a display of traditional clothing, foods, and seal-flensing. The artists of Kangaamiut are well-known throughout Greenland, and some of the locals' most splendid work can be viewed in the town's small museum. In the afternoon, we will sail inland into Evighedsfjorden/Kangerlussuatsiaq, one of the many deep fjords carved between the steep mountains of this region. The Danish name 'Evighedsfjorden' means 'The Eternity Fjord', referring to the vast size of the inlet, while the Greenlandic name 'Kangerlussuatsiaq' translates as 'The Rather Large Fjord' - something of an understatement! Evighedsfjorden stretches around 100km into the glacier-clad mountains, bisecting the large ice cap which overlies much of the land between Nuuk and Sisimiut - Greenland's two largest cities. We will aim to explore on a Zodiac cruise in front of the Evigheds Glacier, which flows into the fjord from the Maniitsoq Ice Cap above. Watch for calvings from the glacier, and guillemots and kittiwakes on the nearby bird cliffs.



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DAY 3: Nuuk, Capital of Greenland

A mixture of skyscrapers and traditional wooden houses, the quaint and the cosmopolitan, Nuuk is a city of contrasts. The vibrant bustling capital of Greenland, Nuuk feels much larger than it’s 19,000 inhabitants, and offers a wealth of experiences to visitors. The calm fjords around Nuuk have been inhabited by Paleo-Inuit cultures since at least 2200BCE, and archaeological evidence indicates waves of migration through the area as ancient hunters followed migrating prey. Around the year 100CE, Norse colonist from Iceland established the Western Settlement in the green meadows of Nuuk Fjord; these settlers mysteriously disappeared several hundred years later leaving the island to the Inuit, who were far better equipped to live in Greenland's harsh environment. The next Scandinavian to visit the area was Hans Egede, the controversial Danish missionary who 'rediscovered' Greenland, founding Nuuk as Godthåb ("Good Hope") in 1728. Danish initiatives to modernise Greenland in the 1950s left a significant mark on Nuuk. While they brought significant improvements to the city's infrastructure, the many large apartment blocks in the city attest to rapid (and sometimes haphazard) urbanisation. In 1979, the Home Rule Act created the Greenlandic Parliament (Inatsisartut), and proclaimed Nuuk the capital. The city's population continues to rapidly grow, with new suburbs being constructed beneath Ukkusissat, the mountain which looms to the east of the city. Nuuk offers a huge amount to the discerning visitor; larger than any other city in Greenland, Nuuk has a bustling cosmopolitan vibe, and hosts some of Greenland's best attractions. Swing by Kolonihavn district to visit the Greenlandic National Museum, a treasure trove of history stretching back to the first inhabitants of this icy island - including artefacts from the Paleo-Inuit and Norse periods, as well as the spellbinding Qilakisteq mummies. Explore Greenlandic culture at Katuaq, the city's cultural centre and an architectural marvel; shop for authentic Greenlandic artworks in the city's many boutique shops, or simply relax at a hip curbside café with a Greenlandic coffee and watch this vibrant city in action. Nuuk York (as proud locals call it) is unlike any other city in Greenland, or indeed the world.



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DAY 4: At Sea

From Nuuk, Ocean Albatros will follow the rugged coast of Greenland southwards. All settlements in Greenland (with the exception of Kangerlussuaq) are situated directly on the ocean coast of the country, and the vast majority of residents (some 50,000 or so) live on the narrow strip of coast on the west of the country, facing the Davis Strait. Ocean currents bring warm water up from the Atlantic to the west coast, enriching these wildlife-filled waters. During our day at sea, keep your eyes on the sea! Whales, seals and a huge variety of seabirds are common in these rich waters. Days at sea are never dull. We will arrange a variety of activities onboard for our guests to enjoy to engage the mind, body and soul. Join your knowledgeable Expedition Team lecturers in the Theatre to hear specially-crafted lectures on local history, wildlife, geology, culture and more, unwind with a massage in the Albatros Polar Spa, or simply watch the seabirds gliding along the ship from our hot tubs as the Ocean Albatros cruises along the coast of Greenland.



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DAY 5: Qassiarsuk and Itilleq

During the early morning, Ocean Albatros will sail through the majestic mountains of Tunulliarfik Fjord towards the small sheep-farming village of Qassiarsuk. While the modern village was founded in 1924, the location has a fascinating and much longer history; it was here that legendary Norse explorer Eric the Red settled after being banished from Iceland. He named the land he discovered 'Greenland' to encourage other settlers to follow him - a marketing ploy that has stood for over a thousand years! Erik the Red settled in this green landscape and set up a small farmstead in typical Norse style, naming his new home 'Brattahlíð'. Erik himself kept fiercely to the Norse gods, but his wife Thjodhild was a Christian. Legend has it, she refused to join his bed until he built her a church, which he eventually did, constructing a tiny hut (Þjóðhildarkirkja) which was nevertheless the first church in the Americas (although he refused to have it within view of his house). The southern fjords of Greenland offer a very different environment to the chilly north and east of the country. Situated at roughly 60°N, this region is level with northern Scotland or southern Scandinavia, with a climate to match. Here, the weather is calm, stable and humid, with much warmer summers and milder winters than the rest of the country. In place of rocky hillsides, the fjords here are lined with lush green meadows and dotted with small sheep-farming settlements, of which Qassiarsuk and Igaliku are perhaps the best known. Over lunchtime, we will repositon to the sheltered bay of Itilleq, where a farm trail beckons us inland. During the afternoon, we will trek through the lush green hills to see the remains of the Norse Bishop's palace at Garðar - once a place of great power and influence in this remote corner of the Norse world, now surrounded by the charming modern farming village of Igaliku. The Norse settlers in Greenland stayed for almost 500 years, but disappeared from all historical records in the early 1400s. Whether some plague or famine struck them, or whether deteriorating climate simply forced them to return to Scandinavia remains a topic of lively debate. Today the outlines of buildings (including Erik's house, Thjodhild's church and the Bishop's palace) can be seen, along with stunningly accurate reconstructions of Eric's farm, where modern Inuit farmers continue to raise sheep to this day. A statue of Erik now overlooks the area, commemorating the first European to reach the Americas, and whose son Leif would be the first European to reach Baffin Island and Newfoundland. Sites rich in fascinating history and culture old and new, the settlements of Brattahlíð and Garðar are today part of the Kujataa UNESCO World Heritage Site.



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DAY 6: Prins Christian Sound

South of Skjoldungen lies Kap Farvel, or Cape Farewell, which is renowned not only as Greenland's southernmost point, but also for its infamously challenging weather, which commonly features large swells and gale-force winds. With this in mind, we deliberately opt for a far more comfortable but also more spectacular route, cruising via the inside passage of Prins Christian Sund. Known in Greenlandic by it's typically descriptive name of Ikerasassuaq ('the Big Strait'), this 60 km long waterway reaches from Aappilattoq to the southeastern coast of Greenland, connecting the Labrador and Irminger Seas. In the morning, we will approach the small village of Aappilattoq, which sits hunkered beneath the towering mountains at the end of Prins Christians Sund. The village is a world away from busy Nuuk or even Kangaamiut; life here moves at a slower pace, following the rhythms of the wind, waves and tides. Aappilattoq (meaning 'Red' in Greenlandic, referring to the stark granite bluffs above) offers excellent hiking opportunities, and the local choir is renowned throughout Greenland. Prins Christian Sund is one of the most spectacular waterways anywhere on Earth. Kept free of ice year round by strong tidal currents, the strait is hemmed in on either side by mountains which rise straight out of the water some reaching over 2,000m in height. Large glaciers flow from the ice sheet into the sea on the northern side of the strait, while sapphire blue mountain glaciers loom over the water from the southern side, and vast icebergs stud the glassy waters. Join your Expedition Team on deck to experience the staggering beauty of this legendary waterway.



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DAY 7: Skjoldungen

Today's adventure begins as we sail into magnificent Skjoldungen, a staggeringly beautiful fjord on the southeastern coast of Greenland. The fjord is named for Skjold, an ancient Danish King of legend, while the Greenlandic name, Saqqisikuik, references the sunny climate of the area. Various archaeological finds on the island which sits in the middle of the fjord suggests nomadic Inuit groups visited and stayed in the area in years gone by; more recently, settlers were brought from Tasiilaq to settle the island in the 1930s, but returned there thirty years later; some houses can still be seen on the southern side of the fjord. A small weather station was also operated on the island by the Allies during WWII. Today uninhabited, Skjoldungen sits almost 300km from the nearest village, with Mother Nature its only ruler. Vast saw-toothed mountains lined with opalescent glaciers line the deep chilly waters of the fjord, which can freeze even in summer. At the head of the fjord lies the magnificent Thryms Glacier, a magnificent river of ice flowing down from the ice sheet. On the southern side of Thryms Glacier lies the sweeping U-shaped glacial valley of Dronning Marias Dal - a textbook example of a glacially-produced landscape. Join your expedition team for a walk on the flower-lined floor of this valley, and marvel at the stunning scenery. Ensure you are on the outer decks on our approach and departure from this magnificent fjord too: you will not be disappointed!



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DAY 8: Sermilik

As the sun rises on the crystalline waters, join your Expedition Team on deck to watch for the abundant whales which frolic in these frigid waters. We are now arriving in East Greenland, a land steeped in myths, legends and ancient Inuit tradition. Separating Ammassalik Island from the Greenlandic mainland lies the vast Sermilik Fjord. Sermilik is a typically descriptive Greenlandic placename, roughly meaning 'the Glacial Fjord' and it is no mystery why: this waterway is choked with vast icebergs, and surely ranks among the most spectacular natural wonders of the region. The icebergs here mostly originate at the vast Helheim Glacier, one of the largest glaciers in this icy country. The Helheim and other glaciers which empty into the fjord pour directly off the Greenland Ice Sheet, the edges of which can be seen to the east, rising thousands of metres towards the frozen core of this vast island. The volume of ice will dictate our precise activities in Sermilikfjord, although options include coming ashore to marvel at the spectacular scenery and untouched nature of the area, or exploring on the water and marvelling at the natural ice sculptures of the area on a Zodiac cruise through the icebergs. Whatever we do, prepare to be amazed by the jaw-dropping beauty of this otherwordly place.



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DAY 9: Ikateq and Kuummiut

In the morning, Ocean Albatros will visit the village of Kuummiut, which sits in breathtaking surroundings in the calm reaches of Ammassalik Fjord. Kuummiut - meaning 'People who Live by the River' - is one of the larger villages in the area, and one of the most prosperous. Sitting upon some of East Greenland's richest fishing grounds, Kuummiut holds the only fish factory in the region, and fishermen from miles around come through Ammassalik Fjord (which is wide enough to stay mostly ice-free year-round) to sell their catch here. Kuummiut is an ideal place to experience life in an East Greenlandic settlement. Where other towns have traffic, Kuummiut has the yowling of sled dogs and the sigh of the wind through the grass. No roads lead in or out of this isolated village, and the sea is the highway for local transport - although motorboats have replaced the skin boats which brought people to these shores long ago. It is a perfect place to simply sit, watch the icebergs pass, and perhaps see the whales which often frolic in the calm waters offshore, or chat with the friendly locals, who are rightly proud of their spectacular home. During the afternoon we will slightly eastwards towards Ikateq, a spectacular fjord with a fascinating history. During the darkest days of the Second World War, American forces established an airbase here (one of the network of air bases which includes Kangerlussuaq on the west coast) to serve as a stepping stone for aircraft transiting between Europe and North America. The rugged landscape of East Greenland meant the approach into the airport was hazardous, with frequent fog masking the treacherous mountains. Huge resources were invested into Ikateq Airbase (also known as Bluie 2 East), with a 5,000ft runway, hangar, barracks and port constructed. A fleet of military vehicles and thousands of barrels of fuel were also brought to this remote region. With Germany defeated, improvements to intercontinental aircraft, and increasing tensions with the Soviet Union, the United States Military abandoned the base in 1947, leaving almost everything behind. The air base has been a bone of contention between Nuuk, Copenhagen and Washington for many years. Many in the Greenlandic government wanted the site cleaned up and the ruins removed; an expensive and logistically challenging task. Eventually, the Danish Government agreed to remove hazardous waste from the site (mainly decaying fuel drums), but leaving the rest of the equipment in place as an important part of regional history. Over 75 years later however, almost everything remains as it was on the day the Americans left. Ikateq is a truly unique place, a time warp to the Second World War: eerie, fascinating and surrounded by staggering natural beauty. Spending the night in the calm waters of Ammassalik Fjord, be sure to keep an eye on the sky - conditions are often excellent to spot the northern lights!




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DAY 10: Tasiilaq

Our final port of call in Greenland is Tasiilaq, the largest settlement in East Greenland. Unlike the west coast, which has had uninterrupted contact with Europe since the 1700s, the coast of East Greenland remained more or less uncontacted until around 1894, when a Danish trading post was established at Tasiilaq. The vast distances involved in Arctic travel meant that the people of East Greenland (Tunumiit) were isolated from their cousins to the west, and the language, traditions and culture here therefore differ significantly to those in other parts of the country. Ancient traditions are strong here. This region of Greenland was the home of the last Angakkuut (Shamans) of Greenland, and is the home of the tupilak - a monster fashioned from animal (and sometimes human) body parts and animated by the power of an Angakkuq to wreak havoc on enemies. Creating such a monster was dangerous, as it could be turned back by a more powerful magic user to attack its creator. The first Europeans were curious as to what these dark beasts looked like, and locals carved facsimiles in bone or horn, beginning one of Greenland's finest artistic traditions. The tupilaat made by artisans in Tasiilaq are considered among the best in the country, and can be purchased directly from the artist at the Stunk Workshop in the middle o town. Tasiilaq sits in a perfect natural harbour on Ammassalik Island (meaning 'the Place of Many Capelin'). While superficially similar to towns on the West Coast, the landscape here is much more rugged, the people fewer, and the sled dogs much more numerous. Tasiilaq offers excellent opportunities to explore, with excellent hiking routes such as the Flower Valley easily accessible from town. For those wishing to delve into Tunumiit culture, visit the museum, located in the city's old church, hear the city's exquisite choir perform in the modern church, or watch a drum dancer in traditional East Greenlandic costume perform a millennia-old spiritual tradition. Otherwise, hike up the hill towards the hotel to enjoy some of the best views anywhere in the country, or join your Expedition Team for a trek through Tasiilaq's famous Flower Valley.



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DAY 11: At Sea

During our time at sea approaching Reykjavik, a variety of activities will be arranged on board to provide our guests with the chance to reflect on their voyage. Relax with an expertly crafted cocktail in the Nordic Bar in the company of new friends, soak up the knowledge and passion of our Expedition Team during lectures, or simply enjoy the flight of the fulmars which accompany us towards Iceland. Remember to take in the crisp ocean air and keep a look out for wildlife in this rich marine environment. During your last evening onboard, join the Captain and Officers for the Farewell Cocktail Party, followed by a presentation of photos and video by our onboard photographer - the ideal opportunity to re-live your Arctic adventure!



DAY 12: Reykjavik

The rock-like columns of Hallgrímskirkja Church loom over the city of Reykjavik, a hip Scandinavian capital which needs little introduction. With new Nordic cuisine, excellent shopping, fantastic excursions and an easy relaxed vibe, Reykjavik is one of Scandinavia's most welcoming and exciting cities. Such a bustling capital may feel strange after the remote wilderness of the Arctic! After a hearty breakfast, it is time to bid a fond farewell to the Crew and Expedition Team of Ocean Albatros, and descend the gangway back to dry land with memories of the voyage of a lifetime. *Please note: Cruise itinerary is subject to change depending on weather conditions, ice conditions and other factors.



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INCLUSIONS & DETAILS

Accommodation	Cabin On Board Ship
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Inclusions	<h3>INCLUSIONS</h3> <p>Cabin accommodation on board ship Flight from Copenhagen to Kangerlussuaq, at extra cost Group transfer to the port in Kangerlussuaq on Day 1, at extra cost Guided walks with the expedition team Nature hikes and Zodiac cruises, as per itinerary Information briefings and lectures by the expedition team Cultural activities in Greenland All meals whilst on board Dinner drinks package Coffee, tea, and afternoon snacks on the ship Welcome and farewell cocktails Taxes, tariffs, and landing fees Digital visual journal link after the voyage, including voyage log, gallery, species list, and more</p>	
	<h3>EXCLUSIONS</h3> <p>Extra excursions and activities not mentioned in the itinerary Beverages (other than coffee and tea and dinner drinks package) Gratuities for the crew (\$16 USD p/p per day is recommended) Personal expenses Transfer from the ship in Reykjavik on Day 12 Travel insurance International flights (except ones mentioned) Anything not mentioned as included</p>	
	Difficulty Rating	2 (Light Adventure)
	Single Surcharge	A single supplement surcharge applies and is subject to availability. Please contact us for more information.
	Notes	<p>Prices are based on per person, and may be based on quad, triple, or twin share. Prices are correct at time of publishing but are subject to change at any time. Itinerary is subject to change depending on weather and ice conditions.</p> <p>NOTE: A mandatory transfer package (including flight between Copenhagen and Kangerlussuaq, and group transfer between Kangerlussuaq airport and the ship) costing \$650 USD p/p (approximately \$1085 AUD p/p) is payable on top of the cost of the cruise in your chosen cabin.</p>
Price Dependent upon	Departure date, fuel surcharges, cabin category, currency fluctuations, seasonality, and availability	

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SUSTAINABILITY

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