



## AROUND SPITSBERGEN AND NORDAUSTLANDET - FULL SPITSBERGEN CIRCUMNAVIGATION

This cruise around Spitsbergen gives you a great chance to see whales, foxes, reindeer, seals, and polar bears. PLEASE NOTE: N.B. The chances that we can complete a full Svalbard circumnavigation (based on our experiences from 2013--2019) are about 70%. In case we cannot complete a full circumnavigation, we may make a circumnavigation of Spitsbergen through Hinlopen Strait. 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.



### 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 species of plant have been recorded in it. In the early evening the ship sails out of Isfjorden, where you might spot the first



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minke whale of your voyage.

Day 2 - 9: Clockwise circumnavigation of West Spitsbergen

### Krossfjorden and Ny Ålesund

Heading north along the west coast, you arrive by morning in Krossfjorden with great views on glacier fronts. In the afternoon you sail to Ny Ålesund, the northernmost settlement on Earth. Once a mining village served by the world's most northerly railway - you can still see its tracks - Ny Ålesund is now a research center. Close to the community is a breeding ground for barnacle geese, pink-footed geese, and Arctic terns. And if you're interested in the history of Arctic exploration, visit the anchoring mast used by polar explorers Amundsen and Nobile in their airships, Norge (1926) and Italia (1928).

### The massive Monaco Glacier

Depending on the weather, you could sail into Liefdefjorden, land at Texas Bar, and cruise within sight of the 5-kilometer-long (3.1 miles) face of the precipitous Monaco Glacier. The waters in front of this glacier are a favorite feeding spot for thousands of kittiwakes, and the base of the ice is a popular polar bear hunting ground. Another possibility is the mouth of Wijdefjorden with at both sides tundra landscape and the glacier front of Nordbreen. If ice conditions prevent sailing here early in the season, an alternate route along the west coast of Spitsbergen can be implemented.

Sorgfjord, reminder of hard times

You may turn to Sorgfjord, with sunken French and Dutch ships (end 17th century) deep under the surface. You have the chance to find a herd of walrus some way west of the graves of 17th-century whalers at Eolusneset. A nature walk here can bring you close to families of ptarmigans. The opposite side of the fjord at Heclahamna is also a beautiful area for an excursion in a semi desert area.

### Stop at the Seven Islands

The northernmost point of your voyage may be north of Nordaustlandet, at Chermisideøya, and Phippsøya in the Seven Islands. Here you reach 80° north, just 870 km (540 miles) from the geographic North Pole. Polar bears and walrus inhabit this region. The ship sails eastward among the pack ice and sail through the area where the Italian captain Sora tried to rescue the Nobile Expedition in 1928.

### The largest ice-cap in Europe

We sail by the eastside of Austfonna on Nordaustlandet and stop by Isisøya (formerly a Nunatak surrounded by glaciers but now an island in the sea) for a circumnavigation by Zodiac cruise. You then may pass Kapp Mohn, part of the largest ice cap in Europe and famed for its meltwater waterfalls. From there we head for the never visited waters of Kong Karls Land, where we sail at a distance of more than half a kilometer from the shores. It is a famous denning area for polar bears.

Storfjordens many bounties





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We will opt to sail against stream through Heleysundet between West Spitsbergen and Barentsøya, when you arrive in a scenery of nearby glaciers like Negribreen. Later in the day we may land at the mouth of the valley Skjolddalen on West Spitsbergen, four kilometers from an Ivory Gull colony. A landing at Diskobukta on Edgeøya, near a canyon with a large Kittiwake colony is also an option. Other landings like at Kvalhovden near mighty glacier fronts are also possible.

### Land of the Pointed Mountains

You start the day by cruising the side fjords of the Hornsund area of southern Spitsbergen, taking in the spire-like peaks: Hornsundtind rises 1,431 meters (4,695 feet), and Bautaen is a perfect illustration of why early Dutch explorers named this island Spitsbergen, meaning "pointed mountains." There are 14 sizable glaciers in this area as well as opportunities for spotting seals, beluga whales, and polar bears. We may land in Samarinvaagen and Birgerbukta, where we have great opportunities for a long walk.

### Bell Sund's flora, fauna, and haunting history

Today you find yourself in Bell Sund, one of the largest fjord systems in Svalbard. The ocean currents make this area slightly warmer than other areas in the archipelago, which shows in the relatively lush vegetation. Here there are excellent opportunities to enjoy both history and wildlife. A possibility is Ahlstrandhalvøya, at the mouth of Van Keulenfjorden, where piles of beluga skeletons can be found. These remains of

19th-century whale slaughter are a haunting reminder of the consequences of rampant exploitation. Fortunately, belugas were not hunted into extinction, and you have a good chance of coming across a pod. Alternately, while cruising the side fjords of Bellsund, you can explore tundra where reindeer like to feed as well as rock slopes where little auks are breeding, near Vaarsolbukta.

Day 10: 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:

Itineraries are subject to change.

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## YOUR SHIP: HONDIUS

**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

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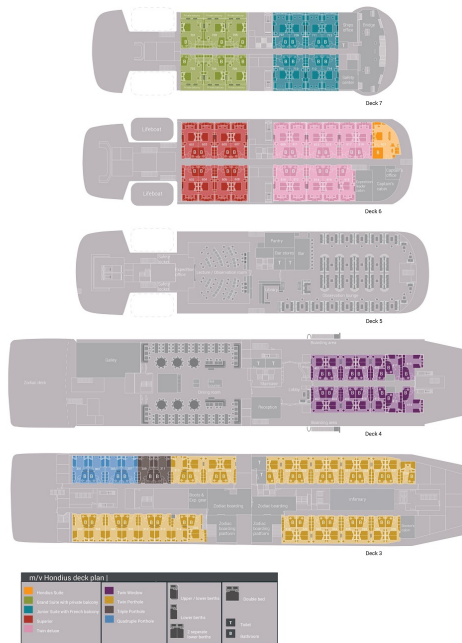
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