Baffin Island – Jewel of the High Arctic

DISCOVER THE STUNNING WILDERNESS OF CANADA’S JEWEL – BAFFIN ISLAND

Baffin Island is one of the last great wilderness regions on the planet and the focus of this outstanding expedition. From Iqaluit, situated at the head of Frobisher Bay, we explore up the wild east coast of Baffin Island discovering the deep fjords, soaring mountains and immense glacial systems.

We are constantly on the lookout for variety of birdlife and marine wildlife - including polar bears - the icon of the north. At this time of the season, we anticipate exciting ice navigation as the pack ice continues to break up during the short period that defines Arctic summer.

Visits to remote Inuit communities provide a fascinating glimpse into the daily life of the people who call this remote wilderness their home. The history of early exploration is ever present and we visit former Hudson’s Bay Company locations and Royal Canadian Mounted Police (RCMP) outposts. A highlight will be a visit to Beechey Island, the final resting place for some of the men of the ill-fated Franklin Expedition in 1845-46. This remote and desolate place is home to several small grave markers, which we see on our shore excursion.

We eventually reach the remote town of Resolute where our adventure comes to an end. This is remote, small ship expedition cruising at its best.
ON THIS TRIP

- Zodiac excursions
- Onshore hiking options
- Wildlife observation
- Photographer-in-Residence
- Sea kayaking available
- Whale watching
- Inuit community visits
- Educational presentations
- Active Cruising & Wellness

IMPORTANT VOYAGE LOGISTICS

This trip commences in Ottawa - Canada’s elegant capital city. We recommend you arrive in Ottawa at least one day prior to the scheduled voyage departure date. This gives you a buffer in the event of any unexpected travel delays between home and trip departure time. From Ottawa we fly north to Iqaluit and after a tour of the town, we transfer to the ship for embarkation via zodiac.

At the conclusion of the trip, we fly from Resolute back to Edmonton (Alberta) via special charter flight. Upon arrival in Edmonton, a transfer is provided from the airport to a central downtown location. This flight arrives in the early evening and we advise staying the night in Edmonton and making your onward travel plans for the following day.

Full joining instructions are provided in your final travel documentation. If you have questions before this time, please ask us.

YOUR DAY-BY-DAY EXPEDITION ITINERARY

DAY 1 / OTTAWA TO IQALUIT, (MONDAY, 22 JULY 2019)

We depart Ottawa this morning on our scheduled flight to Iqaluit, situated on Baffin Island. Upon arrival into Iqaluit we enjoy a walking tour of the town and board our expedition ship, the Akademik Ioffe in the afternoon. After settling into 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 to explore one of the most remote places on Earth – Baffin Island.

DAY 2 / MONUMENTAL ISLAND, FROBISHER BAY

Situated in the Davis Strait, the rocky dome of Monumental Island can be seen from a distance. We explore by zodiac along the rocky shoreline and hope to encounter polar bears in this vicinity. In good weather a complete circumnavigation of the island is possible. We should see our first large icebergs drifting southward towards Labrador and Newfoundland on the currents of the Davis Strait. Throughout the coming days and rest of the voyage, our onboard experts educate us with a series of presentations about the environment, wildlife, history of Baffin Island and the Canadian Arctic and the locations we plan to visit.

DAY 3 / PANGNIQTUUQ (PANGNIRTUNG)

Nested in the heart of Cumberland Sound and the western gateway to Auyuittuq National Park, the village of Pangniqtuuq is beautifully situated between the mountains and the sea. This remote community is a well-known centre for traditional and contemporary arts and crafts – including carvings, prints and textiles. In addition, the Angmarlik Visitor Centre has a wonderful interpretive display featuring the lifestyle and history of the Thule and of the modern Inuit.

DAY 4 / SUNSHINE FJORD

Sunshine Fjord straddles the Arctic Circle at 66° degrees, 33 minutes north of latitude. Depending on the weather, we might cruise across the Circle on the ship, cross it in the zodiac boats or the more active option maybe to cross the circle on foot. Whichever way, it’s a thrill to be above the Arctic Circle at last! Sunshine Fjord offers terrific hiking opportunities and we have a number of great routes in mind. You may wish to take the extended hike, gaining elevation and offering wonderful views of our surroundings. Or choose to take the less strenuous option along the shoreline. For the sea kayakers, the sheltered waters of the fjord provide great conditions for paddling.

DAY 5 / AUYUITTUQ NATIONAL PARK AND QIKIQTARJUAQ

On the eastern coast of Baffin Island, lies one of Canada's most spectacular National Parks – Auyuittuq. The landscape is dominated by steep and rugged mountain scenery, extensive glacial systems and powerful rivers. In partnership with Parks Canada, we venture into the park with skilled local guides who are able to interpret the flora, fauna, geological and glacial systems which can be found here. It’s a fascinating place experienced by only a few fortunate visitors every season. We plan on hiking and cruising the rocky shorelines looking for wildlife. We also plan a visit to Qikiqtarjuaq, a small settlement which is home to several Inuit families. After an inspiring day of exploration, we continue north along the coastline of Baffin Island, venturing deeper into the Arctic wilderness.

DAY 6 / ISABELLA BAY – NIGINGANIQ NATIONAL WILDLIFE AREA

Isabella Bay (Niginganiq) is an important summer habitat and feeding area for endangered bowhead whales. These remarkable marine mammals are able to break sea ice with the crown of their head. Polar bears, ringed seals, Canada geese, snow geese and narwhal are also commonly sighted in this vicinity.

DAY 7 / GIBB FJORD

This morning we enter the spectacular Gibb 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 Gibb Fjord ‘was like something out of Lord of the Rings’ – and we think you’ll agree!
DAY 8 / MITTIMATALIK (POND INLET) AND SIRMILIK NATIONAL PARK

Nearing the far north of Baffin Island, we enter a broad channel which is home to the remote Inuit community of Mittimatalik. A highlight is 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. Mittimatalik is also the main access point to the pristine wilderness of Sirmilik National Park. This jewel in the crown of Canada’s Arctic Park system, features spectacular scenery consisting of rugged mountains, ice fields and glaciers, coastal lowlands and sizeable seabird colonies. Even your widest angle camera lens will seem inadequate to capture the vast scenery.

DAY 9 / DUNDAS HARBOUR AND CROKER BAY

Leaving the wild landscapes of Baffin Island, we cross Lancaster Sound to Devon Island. This broad channel of water has been likened to the wildlife ‘super highway’ of the Arctic. Massive volumes of water from the Atlantic to the east and Pacific to the west, and from the archipelago of islands to the north all mix here, combining to make a rich source of nutrients and food for an abundance of Arctic wildlife. We plan on visiting the old Royal Canadian Mounted Police (RCMP) outpost at Dundas Harbour. In the afternoon we reposition the ship into Crocker Bay, home to a substantial glacial system.

DAY 10 / PRINCE LEOPOLD ISLAND

Prince Leopold Island is important migratory bird sanctuary, home to thick-billed murres, black guillemots, northern fulmars and black-legged kittiwakes. A population of several hundred thousand birds, makes this one of the most significant bird sanctuaries in the entire Arctic ecosystem. Given the abundance of food found in the nutrient-rich waters here, we often sight beluga, narwhal and bowhead whales, several species of seal as well as polar bears.

DAY 11 / BEECHY ISLAND

Our final shore landing - Beechey Island, is a place of great historic significance and suitable finale to our expedition. 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 lasted almost three decades. The mystery of what happened to Franklin was partially solved in September 2014, when a joint Parks Canada and Royal Canadian Geographical Society expedition, found the long-lost Franklin shipwreck, HMS Erebus in the Victoria Strait. One Ocean Expeditions played a vital 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. A trip ashore at Beechey Island to visit the grave markers on a remote windswept beach, is a thrilling experience for history buffs and for many, it will be a highlight of the expedition. We return to the ship and this evening enjoy a special dinner attended by the Captain. It’s a great time to reflect on the wildlife, history and dramatic scenery of the High Arctic.

DAY 12 / RESOLUTE TO EDMONTON (FRIDAY, 02 AUGUST 2019)

Our expedition comes to an end as we arrive into Resolute. The town is named after the British ship HMS Resolute which became trapped in ice and abandoned here in 1850 while searching for the lost Franklin expedition. A weather station and airstrip made Resolute a strategic outpost during the time of the Cold War. After arriving in Resolute we disembark the ship and bid farewell to our crew and fellow passengers. We transfer to the airport for our flight south, to Edmonton. A transfer is also provided from the airport into a central downtown location.

ABOUT OUR ITINERARY: Polar exploration can be unpredictable. Specific sites visited will depend on prevailing weather and ice 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 ice conditions or to maximize our encounters with wildlife. Decades of experience spent exploring these waterways mean we have a large number of outstanding landing sites and zodiac cruising locations to consider, even when the weather conditions may not be ideal or when heavy ice may hinder our a planned route. A flexible approach is something we encourage you to bring to the ship.

ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS FOR BAFFIN ISLAND: This itinerary provides our most comprehensive exploration of Baffin Island in 2019. A classic 12-night Northwest Passage expedition starting in Cambridge Bay and ending in Iqaluit in late August 2019 will also explore many of the areas visited on this voyage. See the website for details.
YOUR EXPEDITION INCLUDES:

- Comprehensive pre-voyage information package including details to help you prepare for your trip in the Canadian Arctic
- Transfers to the ship on embarkation day and from the ship to the airport or local hotel on disembarkation
- Shipboard accommodation in your selected cabin category with daily housekeeping. Cabins feature outside views with windows or portholes that open on each deck
- High quality, eco friendly, Canadian made natural amenities in every cabin
- All breakfasts, lunches and dinners on board throughout your voyage with daily afternoon tea
- 24-hour tea, coffee, hot chocolate in bar lounge plus in-cabin tea, coffee, hot chocolate replenished daily
- Experienced Expedition Leader and professional expedition team of marine biologists, naturalists, historians, adventure guides and photographers
- Daily off-ship excursions by zodiac boat breaking into small groups for shore landings
- Guided hikes and walks on shore of various durations for guests of all abilities
- Visits to wildlife colonies, historic sites, places of outstanding natural beauty and community visits
- Educational presentations and talks by polar experts in their field (ie. marine biologists, naturalists, historians etc). Onboard or on shore
- Resident photography guide available to assist all guests
- Access to computers in the multimedia lab for image downloads, file back up and management
- An emergency trained medical physician onboard every voyage
- Dedicated hospitality team including Hotel Manager, four chefs, professional bar staff and Adventure Concierge staff
- Onboard sauna, plunge pool, jacuzzi and fitness centre including personal trainer and massage options (charge applies for massage and spa treatments)
- Sea Kayaking programme available (additional charge of $695pp) – must be reserved at the time of booking your voyage and you must have some prior paddling experience
- Access to well stocked library full of polar reference books
- End of voyage video, photos and take home USB
- Port fees and all permits to access visited areas

The right gear for your trip – included

When you travel with One Ocean Expeditions, you will have the use of an expedition gear package free of charge. Containing around $US900 worth of essential equipment, this kit includes a quality waterproof/windproof jacket and bib-pants plus insulated rubber boots designed for extended walking. We also include a set of binoculars and a Nordic trekking pole for use when on shore. A waterproof backpack completes your package. This kit saves you buying expensive clothing and equipment you may only ever use once. It also eliminates the need to carry such cumbersome gear to the ship (total weight around 8kg/17lbs).

The Expedition does not include:

- Any international or local airfare unless otherwise specified in the voyage itinerary
- Visa and passport expenses
- Pre or post-cruise hotel accommodation unless otherwise specified in the itinerary (or pre-arranged)
- Pre or post-cruise transfers unless otherwise specified in the itinerary (or pre-arranged)
- Personal expenses on board such as alcoholic beverages, bar charges or laundry expenses
- Telecommunication charges (ie. email, satellite phone)
- Baggage, cancellation or medical travel insurance related expenses (travel insurance is mandatory on all voyages)
- A voluntary gratuity at the end of the voyage for expedition staff and ship crew (suggested amount – $US12-15 per day)
BEFORE YOU BOOK – IMPORTANT VOYAGE DETAILS

FLIGHTS TO JOIN YOUR ARCTIC CRUISE
Flights are required to get to (and from) the ship embarkation locations in the Arctic. These flights are in addition to the voyage price. This flight package must be booked in conjunction with your cruise. Flights are either on scheduled airlines (ie. Ottawa to Iqaluit) or are specially arranged charter flights operating into very remote Arctic locations such as Resolute, Cambridge Bay or Kangerlussuaq. If you have questions about these flights, please discuss these with your booking agent at the time of confirming your voyage.

PASSPORTS AND VISAS
Most nationalities will be required to have an Electronic Travel Authorization (known as an eTA) to enter Canada (except US citizens). This is easily obtained online prior to travel and a fee of $CAD7.00 is payable at the time you lodge your application. The eTA is valid for a period of five years from date of issue. Speak to your booking agent for more information or contact your local Canadian consular authorities for further details.

COMPREHENSIVE PRE-VOYAGE INFORMATION
Upon receipt of your deposit and booking forms, a detailed booklet will be sent to you providing additional information to help you prepare for your voyage. This resource is full of useful facts and covers practicalities such as suggested clothing, life on board the ship, wildlife, geography and history as well as details about the activities available throughout your voyage. Information regarding passports and visas, budgeting, as well as travel insurance requirements are also found in this helpful document.

TRAVEL INSURANCE
On all One Ocean Expeditions’ voyages, you must have comprehensive travel insurance. Your booking agent can recommend a policy designed to cover participants on these voyages. Your policy must provide coverage for your medical costs in case of hospitalization, emergency travel and repatriation.

Please check the terms of your policy carefully, particularly with regard to limits of cover. Also ensure you are familiar with the procedure for making claims. 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 booking terms and conditions). For this reason you should take out travel insurance at the time of paying your deposit, which should then protect you in such a situation. You will be required to send us travel insurance policy details prior to your voyage.

SEA KAYAKING
The sea kayaking program is directed at any passenger with an adventurous spirit and some prior paddling experience. This option MUST be reserved at the time of booking and attracts an additional charge of $US695 per participant. You cannot book sea kayaking on board the ship. You will need to complete a special questionnaire outlining your previous kayaking experience. Ask your agent, or our office for a copy of this document if you are interested in joining the sea kayaking program.

THE ONE CLUB – EXPEDITION ALUMNI
Come as a passenger, leave as a friend. Once you have experienced one voyage with us, it’s likely you will want to experience another. Your commitment to travel with us is rewarded with our commitment to you, our valued guest. As members of the One Club Expedition Alumni, your loyalty is rewarded with a range of great travel benefits when you return for your next voyage — no matter the destination. Ask your booking agent for details.

IMPORTANT: 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. If you have any queries, please contact your voyage booking agent or our office. We are here to help you.

THE RIGHT SHIP = THE BEST EXPERIENCE

The Akademik Ioffe is the perfect ship for exploring Canada’s High Arctic region. Although she is a very spacious expedition vessel, the ship accommodates just 96 passengers. This makes all the difference when we disembark for our shore landings and zodiac excursions. Our fleet of zodiacs enable everyone to get off the ship at the same time. We do not need to operate shuttles to and from the ship or run hurried shore landings. This is the reality of a cruise on larger capacity vessels. Our smaller group sizes mean we are less obtrusive and better able to manage visits to remote coastal communities - a fact not lost on our local hosts in such locations. Our ship features a sophisticated in-built stabilization system which makes for smooth sailing, even on open water crossings between northern Labrador and Baffin Island. This also means we have a great platform for wildlife viewing and photography from the observation decks of the ship. Request a copy of the Ship Fact Sheet containing detailed specifications and additional information.
A true partner in Canada’s North
Social and environmental responsibility is something we take seriously. We are committed to supporting the economic sustainability and unique cultures of northern communities. We employ Inuit guides and traditional artisans on our voyages to share with you their fantastic knowledge, history, rich cultural traditions and talents. For many guests, this deep insight into northern life is the highlight of their voyage.

World Leading - the World Over
For several years One Ocean Expeditions and the Royal Canadian Geographical Society have maintained a collaborative relationship grounded in geographical education, exploration, science, social and economic community development, Canadian national identity and experiential travel. We are proud to be the exclusive marine travel partner of the Royal Canadian Geographical Society and affiliates.

The right team = exceptional service
You will come to appreciate the dedication of our expedition team when onboard the ship. The highest staff to guest ratio in the industry (1:4) allows you to experience the broadest range of activities possible, catering to all interests and abilities. We are committed to providing exceptional service and are renowned for our flexible, yet professional approach and an ability to ‘make things happen’.

INTERESTED IN THIS EXPERIENCE?

When choosing to travel with One Ocean Expeditions we ensure your experience from start to finish is straight forward and well organized.

Start by customizing your journey and mapping out the trip ahead.

If this sounds like the right trip for you, please discuss your ideas and plans with your preferred booking agent. They will reserve a cabin for you on your chosen voyage. This provides time to book flights to the embarkation points of this voyage and to plan other pre or post voyage travel requirements. Please remember that you will require comprehensive travel insurance to join our voyages. This is best arranged at the time of booking. Following confirmation of your reservation, you will need to complete a detailed One Ocean Expeditions Booking Package plus other pre voyage documentation to accompany your deposit. At this point your voyage of discovery is underway.

Take advantage of our experience, which spans decades of expedition travel in the Polar Regions. Should you have any questions, we are here to help at any time.

YOUR NOTES: