Spitsbergen Encounter
(Photography Symposium)

The Norwegian territory of Svalbard and the islands that make up the archipelago offer a tremendous wildlife and birdlife experience, as well as a fascinating lesson in glaciology. The islands were first used as a whaling base in the 17th and 18th centuries and are now celebrated as a breeding ground for many seabirds, along with marine mammals and polar bears.

Our expedition vessel is perfectly suited for remote polar exploration. With her high ice classification, we are able to push further to the north along the edge of the ice pack. It is here we frequently encounter the icon of the Arctic – the polar bear – hunting for seals and other protein sources to sustain them through the Arctic summer.

Throughout our journey we enjoy a comprehensive series of presentations by polar experts, providing an excellent background to the expedition. Days are busy with shore excursions to places of historic interest, visits to wildlife colonies, viewing the exquisite native flora and soaking up the stunning landscapes. Short or long hikes onshore are another feature along with regular cruising in the Zodiacs. Sea kayaking is another popular option. Our voyage focuses on the western and northern coast of Spitsbergen, and as far north as the permanent pack ice. This area has the highest concentration of wildlife and places of historic and scenic interest in the archipelago.

Expedition Highlights

› Fascinating historic locations of early industry and exploration
› Sublime Arctic scenery and endless photographic opportunities
› Exciting ice navigation along the polar pack ice edge searching for wildlife
› Experience the land of the midnight sun
There is significant variability in ice concentration and location from year to year. The itinerary below provides a realistic expectation of places we intend to visit. The day-to-day itinerary will likely change based on the presence/absence of ice and our local knowledge of wildlife hotspots often seasonally dependent on the movement of sea ice.

**DAY 1 / LONGYEARBEN, SVALBARD**
(SUNDAY, 28 JUNE 2020)

Today we embark our expedition ship, the RCGS Resolute in Longyearbyen and as we throw the lines, we sail out of Adventfjorden and into Isfjorden during the early evening. With almost 24 hours of daylight at this time of the year, we enjoy the views from the outer decks of the ship as we depart. We meet our fellow passengers and the expedition team during an introductory briefing and enjoy a welcome dinner as we set sail.

**DAY 2 / BOURBONHAMNA**

Beluga whales are frequently seen as they transit the narrow sound near Bourbonhamna. It is estimated there are approximately five to ten thousand belugas in the Svalbard population. The beluga has no dorsal fin; a diagnostic feature of whale species that live in the High Arctic such as the narwhal and bowhead. It has been postulated that the beluga’s lack of dorsal fin is an adaptation to living in waters that are frequently covered by ice. On our shore excursion, an old hunting cabin and other artefacts are points of interest during our scenic hike to Ingebrigstenbukta. However, it is the huge piles of beluga whalebones that catch everyone’s attention. The bones and all artefacts are protected by the Svalbard Government. While wandering on shore we hope to catch a glimpse of the reindeer that inhabit the area.

**DAY 3 / LILLIEHOOK GLACIER AND KROSSFJORDEN**

Lilliehook Glacier, at the head of the northwestern arm of Krossfjorden is an incredible sight. The glacier face stretches almost seven kilometres and has a height of around 80 metres. Viewed from the ship or on a Zodiac cruise, you come to appreciate the enormous scale of our surroundings. The shores of Krossfjorden are home to numerous bird colonies and a variety of different species. We anchor off one small harbour and cruise in the Zodiacs along the bird cliffs near the 14th July Glacier. As we cruise the dark waters, we are always on the lookout for bearded and ringed seals, both species known to frequent this fjord.

**DAY 4 / LIEFDEFJORDEN AND MONACOBREEN**

No trip along the north coast of Spitsbergen would be complete without a visit to Monacobreen (Monaco Glacier). A wide glacier face at the head of the fjord makes for spectacular kayaking and Zodiac cruising. The coastal plain near the mouth of Liefdefjorden offers superb hiking and is often a great place to spot polar bears that come here to hunt for ringed seals or feed on bird eggs.

**DAY 5 / PHIPPSOYA – NORTHERNMOST POINT**

At 81° north latitude, Phippsoya is just 540 nautical miles from the North Pole. The high ice classification of our ship (Class 1A) allows us to approach the edge of the pack ice in safety and comfort. Because of its proximity to the permanent Arctic ice pack, Phippsoya offers the potential for great polar bear viewings. In recent seasons we have enjoyed excellent encounters with polar bears in this vicinity. Be sure to get up to the ship’s bridge and take a picture of the GPS showing your latitude or, better yet, take your own handheld GPS with you and mark in the waypoint as we are so close to the North Pole!

**DAY 6 – 7 / HINLOPEN STRAIT AND NORDAUSTLANDET**

From the ice edge we enter the main channel separating Svalbard’s two main islands. In Hinlopen Strait the bird cliffs at Alkefjellet are home to more than a hundred thousand breeding Brunnich’s guillemots, as well as thousands of kittiwakes and black guillemots. It is a spectacular site and a challenging one for our Zodiacs as the tidal currents roar through Hinlopen Strait. Nearby Murchison Fjord is a wonderful place to kayak or Zodiac cruise between the islands. There are some excellent hiking routes here, affording us breathtaking views.
DAY 8 / FUGLESANGEN AND SMEERENBURG
As your Zodiac approaches the shore of Fuglesangenoya, it becomes apparent there are thousands of birds nesting on this island. Home to a large dovekie colony, the formation of the island allows for excellent viewing without impacting upon the perimeter of the colony. Just a few miles from Fuglesangen is the old whaling station of Smeerenburg, literally translated as ‘Blubber Town’. As we hike the shoreline of the old station, we learn about the importance of whaling in the discovery and exploration of the Svalbard archipelago. The blubber ovens stand as a reminder to this harsh industry in an equally harsh environment.

DAY 9 / POOLE PYNTEN, PRINS KARLS FORLAND
The sight and sound of a walrus haul-out spells Arctic like nothing else can. We visit the walrus colony on Prince Charles Island and hope to see these odd-looking animals ashore. Approaching from downwind can often confirm that walruses are ashore - the smell of a Walrus-haul out is quite ‘unique’!
Tonight we celebrate our journey with a special dinner attended by the ship’s Captain. It’s a great time to reflect on a wonderful voyage in this wild and remote place.

DAY 10 / LONGYEARBYEN, SVALBARD
(TUESDAY, 07 JULY 2020)
Arriving back into Longyearbyen this morning, we disembark after breakfast and say farewell to our expedition team and fellow passengers. A transfer into town is provided for those choosing to stay a few days. If you are departing today, we have a few hours this morning to explore the town, before transferring to the airport for your onward flight to Tromso or Oslo.

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 planned route. A flexible approach is something we encourage you to bring to the ship.

ABOUT THE ONBOARD PHOTOGRAPHY SYMPOSIUM
An additional highlight of this departure will be the shipboard photography symposium open to all guests. This program runs alongside our regular series of presentations on history, ornithology, geology and the natural world. The members of the photographic team each have a special area of expertise including wildlife photography, landscape and composition, along with technical elements including gear and equipment and computer based processing, file management and storage. We make regular use of our ship-board multi-media studio for breakout sessions and to review and critique our images throughout the voyage. Our photographic goals on this departure will be formed and led by the light available both onshore and on the water. With a varied and diverse itinerary and flexible plans, we aim to make the most out of the beautiful light, even if outside conventional shore landing times. For the photography buffs, this trip is not to be missed!
YOUR EXPEDITION INCLUDES:

- Comprehensive pre-voyage information package including details to help you prepare for your trip
- 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 onboard 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 onshore
- 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 slideshow 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 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 onshore. 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 onboard such as alcoholic beverages, bar charges or laundry expenses
- Telecommunication charges (ie. email, satellite phone)
- Baggage, cancellation or medical travel insurance related expenses (comprehensive travel insurance is mandatory on all One Ocean Expeditions trips)
- 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

THE RIGHT SHIP = THE BEST EXPERIENCE

RCGS Resolute offers exceptional onboard facilities and provides an ideal platform for expedition cruising in remote locations such as the Norwegian High Arctic. Outstanding observation areas both inside and from the outer decks allow you to be completely absorbed by the coastal landscapes along the way. Our priority is to craft specially designed itineraries that provide you with maximum time in the pristine locations we visit. The vessel has capacity of just 146 guests and we break into small, special interest groups. There are wonderful hiking options onshore, visits to small coastal communities, historic sites and we enjoy outstanding wilderness areas. Cruising in the Zodiacs photographing the landscapes, or observing coastal marine and bird life is a highlight for many. For the more adventurous, sea kayaking is another memorable experience. To learn more about this exceptional vessel, request a copy of the Ship Fact Sheet containing detailed technical specifications and additional information about cabins, amenities and inclusions.

BEFORE YOU BOOK – IMPORTANT VOYAGE 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.

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 can not 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.

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.

FAMILY FRIENDLY
The polar regions are fascinating places for young and enquiring minds. These voyages are family friendly and we offer special rates for children and youth (up to 21 years of age at time of travel*) when travelling with parents or a relative. Several voyages are specifically geared towards families. For children younger than 12 years of age at the time of travel, please contact your booking agent, or our office to discuss the options.

*Children between 18-21 years must be a student with valid student identification to be eligible for youth rates

PASSPORTS AND VISAS
Most nationalities do not require a visa to visit Svalbard, which is territory of Norway and falls within the European Union. We advise you to check visa requirements with your travel agent or a Norwegian consular authority well before travelling. You will need a valid passport with you throughout the duration of the journey. Our ship departs from Longyearbyen, the principal settlement in Svalbard, located in Norway. Most people will fly into Oslo, the capital of Norway, where they will clear Customs and Immigration formalities, then fly north to Longyearbyen from where our voyages depart.

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.
INTERESTED IN THIS EXPERIENCE?

When choosing to travel with One Ocean Expeditions we ensure your experience from start to finish is straightforward 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:

Trip Note Updated: 13MAY19 - JM