

Greenland Disko Bay Discovered

6 Days | Starts/Ends: Reykjavik



Discover the icy wonders of Greenland on this 6-day expedition cruise which takes in magical fjords, rumbling glaciers and remote towns. Cruise past giant icebergs in Disko Bay, look out for whales and other marine life breaching the waves and sail up close to the Eqip Sermia Glacier. Explore Ilulissat, the tiny settlement of Itilleq and Greenland's 'second city' of Sisimiut.

HIGHLIGHTS AND INCLUSIONS

Trip Highlights

- Disko Bay - look out for whales and dolphins as we pass giant icebergs which have calved from the Ilulissat Icefjord
- Eqip Sermia Glacier - sail as close as possible to this living wall of ice and watch as colossal icebergs crash into the waves below
- Ilulissat - explore the lively town at your own pace or opt for a thrilling helicopter ride over the sprawling Icefjord
- Sarfannuit - learn about the traditional Inuit way of life and see the hardy villagers who call this isolated settlement home

- Sisimiut - take a guided tour of Greenland's second city, which was founded in 1756 by Count Johan Ludvig Holstein
- Qeqertarsuaq - join a friendly community gathering in this tiny settlement on Disko Island
- Kangerlussuaq - discover the small town which is nestled between Greenland's giant ice sheet, the Fjord and imposing mountains
- Ocean Atlantic - spend your days at sea aboard our expedition cruise ship with amenities including a swimming pool, restaurant, two bars, gym facilities and a library

What's Included

- 5 breakfasts, 4 lunches and 5 dinners
- 5 nights aboard the Ocean Atlantic expedition cruise ship in a shared outside double cabin with private facilities
- Return flights from Keflavik - Kangerlussuaq
- Transfer from Kangerlussuaq airport to the port on day 1
- Services of the ship captain and crew, expedition team and English-speaking guides at sights of interest
- All guided sightseeing and excursions as per itinerary
- Full board on the ship, afternoon snacks, free tea and coffee daily

- Taxes and tariffs

What's Not Included

- International flights and visa
- Tipping - an entirely personal gesture
- Any meals not onboard the ship & any drinks (excluding tea and coffee)
- Pre and post tour accommodation, plus any airport or port transfers
- Optional excursions

DETAILED ITINERARY

Day 1 : Fly to Greenland

We board our charter flight in Reykjavik bound for Kangerlussuaq. Please note your flight time will be confirmed closer to your departure. Your flight will depart from one of the two airports in Reykjavik, either Keflavik Airport (domestic and international airport) or Reykjavik Airport (domestic airport). Please be sure to check the correct airport for your flight and make sure you have arrived at the airport to check in a minimum of 2 hours before your flight departure time.

Upon arrival in Kangerlussuaq, Greenland, we will be transported to the small port located west of the airport, where our ship, Ocean Atlantic, will be anchored. Zodiacs will transfer us the short distance to the ship, where you will be checked in to your outside cabin. After the safety drill, you can enjoy dinner as Ocean Atlantic sets sail through the 160-

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kilometre Kangerlussuaq fjord. **Overnight - Ocean Atlantic ship (D)**

Day 2 : Exploring Sisimiut



After breakfast, we arrive at the colourful town of Sisimiut, where we get an idea of what modern Greenland looks like. With 5,400 inhabitants, it is considered Greenland's second 'city'. People have lived around Sisimiut since 2,500 BC.

In 1756, Count Johan Ludvig Holstein established a colony here and called it "Holsteinsborg". The oldest part of Sisimiut's historic quarter features town houses from this "Holsteinsborg" era, and the oldest house in town dates back to 1756. One of the most culturally significant buildings is the Blue Church, built in 1775.

Nowadays, Sisimiut is an important place for education and industry, and local factories process the bulk of Royal Greenland's fishing. The fish processing plant is one of the largest of its kind in Greenland, and one of the most modern in the world.

Our city tour highlights include the historic colonial quarter, as well as the museum and the beautiful church. Additionally, we will pay a visit to the busy city centre for a glimpse of what daily life is like in 21st century Greenland. In the afternoon, our voyage will continue northward.

As evening falls, we will pass the Sisimiut Isortuat Fjord, the Nordre Strømfjord settlements of Attu and Ikerasaarsuk, and the small town of Kangaatsiaq. During the course of the bright night, we will pass Aasiaat and proceed into the southern waters of Disko Bay. Next, the ship's heading will be set for Disko Island, known for its distinctive 1,000-meter/3,280 feet layered crags.

At this point, we will be north of the Arctic Circle! Here, the nights are bright and early risers can enjoy the sight of the icebergs on Disko Bay as they squeeze out of the Ilulissat Icefjord and dance into the frigid ocean waters. **Overnight - Ocean Atlantic ship (B, L, D)**

Day 3 : Disko Island & Eqip Sermia Glacier



Our next stop is the southern tip of Disko Island, where Ocean Atlantic will anchor in a protected natural harbour named Godhavn ('Good Harbour') in Danish, while its Greenlandic name, Qeqertarsuaq, means 'The Big Island'.

Although topographically quite different from mainland Greenland due to the basalt characteristics of Disko Island's mountains, Qeqertarsuaq maintains a long, rich history and once served as one of the country's important economic centres. From the 16th century, the community was relatively prosperous and was the most important town north of Nuuk until the mid-1900s, due in part to the area's sizeable whale hunting population.

During our visit, we wander through town, paying a visit to the octagonal church, nicknamed "God's Inkpot". We also head to a local community centre that will be hosting a traditional Greenlandic "kaffemik", which can be best described as a friendly gathering with coffee, cake and traditional dances and music.

Musicians from Greenland originally played on a drum (qilaat) made from an oval wooden frame covered with the bladder of a polar bear. Unlike other drums, the qilaat was played by hitting the frame with a stick, not the skin itself. This modest instrument was

used for a variety of purposes, including entertainment, exorcism and witchcraft.

After the missionaries arrived, drum dancing was prohibited and later replaced by part-singing of psalms and choral works, which today are renowned for their particular Greenlandic sound. Today, drum dance is used as entertainment in cultural events and on festive occasions.

Greenlandic music is inspired and influenced by music from other cultures, like the Danish and Inuit cultures, and more specifically, Dutch and Scottish polka, American country and rock 'n' roll and even Hawaiian music, which inspired the so-called Vaigat-musicians in Greenland in the 1950s and 60s.

As the day draws to a close, Ocean Atlantic will set a north-easterly course bound for a magnificent natural highlight – the enormous Eqip Sermia Glacier.

Situated approximately 50 nautical miles north of Ilulissat, the Eqip Sermia Glacier is renowned for its jaw-dropping beauty. Legendary arctic explorers selected this location as a base for their studies. One such explorer, the acclaimed Swiss glaciologist, Alfred de Quervain, used the location as a base for his expeditions onto Greenland's inland ice sheet over a century ago.

We will sail as close as possible to the ice's edge – but at a safe distance to avoid plunging blocks of ice and violent waves that often result from the calving glacier. **Overnight - Ocean Atlantic ship (B, L, D)**

Day 4 : Ilulissat



Ilulissat is one of the most well known towns in Greenland. The name simply means 'icebergs' in Greenlandic, and the town's nickname is rightly 'the Iceberg Capital'.

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In Disko Bay, which is located just off the coast of Ilulissat, gigantic icebergs linger in the freezing waters. These icebergs come from the Icefjord, which is located a half hour's hike south of Ilulissat. These impressive frozen structures are born some 70km deeper into the fjord by the enormous Sermeq Kujalleq glacier. This 10km-wide glacier is the most productive glacier outside of Antarctica. Whereas most glaciers only calve at a rate of approximately a metre a day, the Ilulissat glacier calves at a rate of 25m per day. The icebergs produced by the glacier represent more than 10% of all icebergs in Greenland, corresponding to 20 million tonnes of ice per day!

These facts, together with the fjord's unforgettable scenery, have secured the Icefjord a place on UNESCO's World Heritage List.

During the more than 250 years that have passed since the establishment of Ilulissat, the town has steadily flourished. Today, Ilulissat is Greenland's third largest town, with more than 4,500 inhabitants. The town is very vibrant, welcoming and lively with a wide range of cultural attractions, according to Greenlandic standards.

The legendary polar explorer, Knud Rasmussen, and his good friend, Jørgen Brønlund, were both born in Ilulissat.

On this day, you will also have the opportunity to join a boat trip to the Icefjord (not included). The journey takes about two and a half hours in total, a great opportunity to take a closer look at the amazing ice-sculpted scenery.

The trip is definitely something out of the ordinary and a great natural experience that you will remember for years to come – but be sure to have warm clothing on!

If a hike or a trip by boat does not present enough excitement, there is also an opportunity to arrange a helicopter ride over the Icefjord (not included).

Please note the boat and helicopter excursions to the Icefjord are not included in the general tour price. Furthermore, the

helicopter excursion must be booked in advance.

In the evening, we will cruise southward from "the Iceberg Capital", leaving lovely Disko Bay behind us. **Overnight - Ocean Atlantic ship** (B, L, D)

Day 5 : The tiny settlement of Sarfanguit



Wake up to a picturesque sight — the settlement of Sarfanguit, which translates to 'small streams' in Greenlandic. Sarfanguits roughly 130 residents live off hunting, trapping and fishing, most often in pursuit of caribou, which provides a relatively good income for the residents of this tiny town.

A stroll through the settlement offers insight into rural life in today's Greenland, where modern conveniences and technological advancements, such as internet and smart phones have become commonplace, yet locals still place great value on important customs and preserving their traditions and Inuit heritage.

Before lunch, we will return to Ocean Atlantic and continue our journey toward the fjord of Kangerlussuaq, also known as Sondrestromfjord. Especially the first part of the fjord gives a great opportunity to enjoy an impressive passage with panoramic views of high mountains and deep valleys. **Overnight - Ocean Atlantic ship** (B, L, D)

Day 6 : Kangerlussuaq

During the night, we complete our passage through the 160-kilometre Kangerlussuaq Fjord. After breakfast aboard the ship, we bid farewell to the ship's staff and the Zodiac boats will shuttle us to shore.

As our time in Greenland concludes, after breakfast and checkout, your arctic adventure will have concluded. We hope to see you again soon! There's an included flight from Kangerlussuaq to either Keflavik or Reykjavik Airport, Iceland. (B)

HOTELS

Highlighted below are some of the hotels which we frequently use on this tour, though we reserve the right to substitute these hotels to ones of a similar standard.

Please refer to your Tour Voucher for your confirmed arrival hotel and further arrival information.

Ocean Atlantic

Newly renovated in 2016, the Ocean Atlantic is the perfect vessel for exploring the Atlantic and Arctic Oceans. With an international ice class-rating of 1B, this cruise ship is one of the strongest operating in this region. At 140-metres in length, a total of 198 passengers are accommodated across multiple decks. Each cabin features an ensuite bathroom, individual temperature controls and a TV, with either portholes or windows. Indoor lounges offer large panel windows, where you can easily look out for passing whales and other sights. Passengers can enjoy shore landings, with a fleet of 20 motorized rubber 'Zodiac' boats, taking you to exciting areas that the larger vessel can't reach. Upon your return, perhaps enjoy a dip in the pool or sauna, or curl up with a book in the onboard library. There's also a spacious restaurant serving 4-star international cuisine and a bar offering an assortment of beverages.



KNOW BEFORE YOU GO

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Arrival into Greenland

If your final destination is Ilulissat: Upon arrival, you will be greeted by an Arctic Adventure representative at the airport arrival hall. Please look for the On The Go Tours/Arctic Adventure sign. You will be assisted with the transfer to the hotel and an information meeting will be held as soon as possible after you have checked in – giving you a chance to ask questions and to get the information you need about your stay.

Our partners Arctic Adventure will have a tour desk at the Hotel Arctic, from where the guides can be contacted every day during your stay in Greenland.

If you are flying via Kangerlussuaq to Ilulissat: If your transit is less than 3 hours: Kindly wait in the airport building for your connecting flight. If your transit is more than 3 hours: You may have purchased an excursion in Kangerlussuaq. If that is the case, we ask you to go to the WOGAC Tour Desk in the airport and present your voucher.

If you have NOT pre-booked any excursions, you can do so at the WOGAC Office at the Polar Lodge guesthouse (Tel: +299 841 648)

Flights with Air Greenland

All flights between Greenland and Denmark are included on your tour and are operated by Air Greenland. Please be aware that when departing Copenhagen Airport you need to be there at least 2 hours before your scheduled departure. Baggage allowance is 20kg for checked luggage and 8kg for hand luggage.

Weather

In case of bad weather in Greenland your flight may be delayed or even cancelled. Visitors must keep in mind that weather is very erratic and unpredictable in the Arctic region. You need to factor possible delays that are not under the control of the airline. In such cases please contact the airline service counter at the airport for their advice. Our staff at your destination will be aware of the situation and will immediately take care of all necessary adjustments of your program. When flying with Air Greenland, the airline will keep you informed until the flight can continue and, in some cases, will compensate

accommodation, transfers and meals. When booking with any other airline, they are not bound to pay your expenses until it is possible to continue, hence all extra cost must be paid by yourself on the spot.

For this reason, we strongly advise you take out relevant travel insurance before travelling to Greenland.

Climate & Clothing

Greenland has an Arctic climate, which means that you should be prepared for sunny days, but also for cold, fresh mornings and evenings. The average temperature reaches a max. of +10°C/50°F during the summer months. Nevertheless, you might experience days with temperatures of +15-20°C/59-68°F.

Therefore, it is important to bring warm as well as light clothes. It is advisable to dress in layers. This enables you to make fast and easy adjustments to the temperature. The inner layer keeps the body warm, while the outer layer is for protection against rain and wind.

For sailing trips, you may wish to stay outside and enjoy the scenery. And we recommend that you bring a warm sweater, hat, scarf and gloves for boat excursions.

For hiking and walking in Greenland, solid boots with a profiled sole is essential. A small day-tour rucksack, sunglasses, sun block and a mosquito repellent might prove useful.

Mosquito season runs from mid-June to mid-August; and north of the Arctic Circle the midnight sun can be experienced around the clock during the summer months; therefore, good quality sunglasses and high SPF sun block cream are essential items to pack.

All hotels in Greenland have a casual dress code.

Food in Greenland

The Greenlandic diet consists to a large extent of fish, seafood and meat. The climate doesn't allow for farming on an industrial scale therefore most fruits and vegetables are imported from Europe.

During your stay in Greenland you may experience that whale is on the menu. The

reason for this is that the Inuit – as an indigenous people - are allowed by the International Whaling Commission to hunt a (small) number of certain whale species to support their existence. Some of this meat is also sold to local restaurants who take pride in serving local dishes using local produce.

However, we appreciate that whale may not be everyone's idea of a meal and we kindly request that you tell your agent (before departure) or alternatively your guide at the destination if you would prefer NOT to have this type of meat.

All other dietary needs should also be communicated to us as soon as possible to allow us to make the necessary arrangements – BUT; be aware that due to the remote location and Arctic climate vegetarian and/or vegan meal options are very limited!

Currency

Greenland is an autonomous country within the Kingdom of Denmark and uses Danish Kroner; DKK as currency.

We strongly advise you exchange money before arriving in Greenland. Most hotels and many shops accept all major credit cards, but in several places cash will be more useful. ATMs are available in all larger towns.

As payment for excursions Arctic Adventure guides accept the following major credit cards;

Euro Card, MasterCard, Visa, JCB, Diners and American Express.

Health & Emergency

Emergency Service (Police/Ambulance/ Fire): Dial (+299) 112

Visitors are urged to bring their own prescription drugs for the duration of their stay as certain types of medication may not be available in hospitals in Greenland. However, non-prescription medications like antihistamines or pain killers can be purchased at grocery stores.

Shopping

Tobacco and liquor is extremely expensive in Greenland due to taxation. It is recommended to buy such items duty free in your airport of

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departure or on board your flight. In larger towns shops are typically open Monday - Thursday 10:00 - 17:30, Fridays 10:00 - 18:00 and Saturdays 9:00 - 13:00. However, many towns have convenience stores that have longer opening hours and which are also open on Sundays.

Alcohol cannot be purchased after 13:00 on Saturdays and all day on Sundays.

Contacts

Medical emergencies: (+299) 112

Ilulissat:

On The Go/Arctic Adventure Guide (+299) 54 64 43

Hotel Arctic (+299) 94 41 53

Kangerlussuaq:

Hotel Kangerlussuaq (+299) 84 11 80

Copenhagen:

On The Go/Arctic Adventure Emergency (use only if you can't reach any On The Go/Arctic Adventure guides (+45) 2093 6938