



**OCEANWIDE**  
30 YEARS OF EXPEDITIONS

## Around Spitsbergen and Kvitøya

**9<sup>th</sup> – 18<sup>th</sup> August – 2024**



### **M/V Plancius**

The m/v *Plancius* was named after the Dutch astronomer, cartographer, geographer, and minister Petrus Plancius (1552 - 1622). *Plancius* was built in 1976 as an oceanographic research vessel for the Royal Dutch Navy and was named Hr. Ms. Tydeman. The ship sailed for the Royal Dutch Navy until June 2004, when she was purchased by Oceanwide Expeditions and completely refit in 2007, being converted into a 114-passenger expedition vessel. *Plancius* is 89 m (267 feet) long, 14.5 m (43 feet) wide, and has a maximum draft of 5 m, with an Ice Strength rating of 1D, top speed of 12+ knots, and three diesel engines generating 1230 hp each.

# Captain Evengy Levakov

**and his international crew**

Chief Officer: **Elizbar Kalaria**

2nd Officer: **Nino Stikvoort**

3rd Officer: **Solina Duguay**

Chief Engineer: **Sebastian Alexandru**

Hotel Manager: **Ingrid Van De Loo**

Assist. Hotel Manager: **Lilianna Van Meurs**

Head Chef: **Khabir Moraes**

Ships Doctor: **Elmar Kleimann**

Expedition Leader: **Ali Liddle**

Assist. Expedition Leader: **Laurence Dykes**

Dive Team Leader: **Tanja Bayer**

Dive Guide: **Gonzalo Sabattini**

Expedition Guide: **Ben Frederiks**  
**Hélène de Méringo**  
**John Rogers**  
**Paolo Bellezze**  
**Sabrina Kerth**  
**Ursula Tschertter**

## Day 1 – 9<sup>th</sup> August

### Longyearbyen - Embarkation Day

12:00 GPS Position: 78°15.4'N / 015°31.6'E

Wind: S 1, Sea State: Calm, Weather: Partly Cloudy, Air Temp: 14°C, Sea Temp: 9°C



Today is the day! It is finally time for us to embark upon our Arctic adventure! In the late afternoon, we arrived at our ship, *m/v Plancius*, our new home for the next ten days. She rocked gently against the pier as we climbed the gangway onto the decks. The day was quite remarkably warm, with shorts being seen in the town. We all checked in and were quickly escorted to our respective cabins. We excitedly started exploring the ship and wandering the decks, enjoying the views of the harbor. Puffins were spotted!

Once aboard, we were invited to the lounge to participate in a mandatory briefing and abandon ship drill. Appropriately, we cast off at the very start of the drill and were on our way.



While the crew made sure we left the harbor soundly, our expedition leader, Ali, invited us back to the lounge for the Captain's Cocktails. There, we met Hotel Manager Ingrid Van De Loo, Captain Evengy Levakov, and the expedition team. We celebrated our expedition with bubbles and canapes before we were called for the final activity of the day: dinner!

We all filed down to the restaurant for a delicious buffet and an opportunity to meet all our fellow travelers. Our day was not done yet, however, as after dinner, the scuba divers met in the library, and we located the Boot Room and collected our rubber boots. We were another step closer to being able to start our off-ship activities.

Just as we reached the open sea and were thinking about bed, a call came on the PA system – a whale had been spotted. Very quickly, it was determined that it was a blue whale, and *Plancius* turned in the hope of getting a closer look. Our hopes turned to reality as the whale surfaced very close to the ship. We were thrilled to see the size and power of this magnificent animal as it made two passes alongside. Then, even with the never-ending daylight, it was time to return to our cabins to prepare for tomorrow's adventure.



## Day 2 – 10<sup>th</sup> August

### Fjortende Julibukta and Ny Ålesund

12:00 GPS Position: 79°07.4'N / 011°48.9'E

Wind: W 1, Sea State: Rippled, Weather: Overcast, Air Temp: 7°C, Sea Temp: 8°C



First wake-up call on board! This morning, we were woken by the voice of Ali, our expedition leader. In her gentle way, she gave us the first information about the day. The weather was fine, the temperature pleasant, and we were ready for breakfast.

After a solid breakfast, Ali invited us to the lounge to watch a presentation on Zodiac safety, how to equip ourselves, and the right gestures and reflexes to adopt when embarking.

Then, the activities began, and we were all very excited. *Plancius* stopped and anchored in the morning in the Krossfjorden, opposite the Fjortende Julibukta (14th of July) glacier. Divided into two groups, we started with a landing or a Zodiac cruise, then switched mid-morning to enjoy both activities.

The Zodiac cruise allowed us to get close to the small cliffs on the fjord's edge and see many seabirds nesting or resting there. The Atlantic puffins, with their brightly colored beaks, were easy to identify. Many flew back and forth from the cliffs to the sea to feed. Brunnich's guillemots also gathered in small groups on small ledges. A few black guillemots, easily identifiable with their white wing patches and entirely black bodies, were flying around, sometimes very close to the Zodiacs.

We then approached the glacier. Groups of kittiwakes were resting on small icebergs. The glacier was showing off all its colors—the blue was magnificent with the clouds in the background. What a spectacle!

We swapped places and disembarked on a small beach near the hanging garden. There are some lovely little places with a vast variety of plants. Flowering time is short at these high latitudes.

We spotted an Arctic fox on the heights. An Arctic skua was also flying over the kittiwake colony. We then climbed back aboard *Plancius* for lunch.



In the afternoon, we headed for Ny Ålesund, the most northerly of the towns in Svalbard. This large village is a base for scientists of many different nationalities. This is also a place steeped in history, where miners worked in the 19th and 20th centuries to exploit coal. Life was organized at this end of the world. A museum



recounts the past. Ny Ålvsund was also a key site for launching exploratory activities in the northern Arctic. You can still get close to the airship launch mast, from where several expeditions departed. One was led by Umberto Nobile.

Unfortunately, when they reached the North Pole, this mission crashed on the return trip. Roald Amundsen proposed himself to be part of the safety team, flying north to try to find the

expedition survivors. The plane disappeared on the way, and Amundsen was lost. A large bust to honor him stands in the center of Ny Ålvsund. Nowadays, Ny Ålvsund also offers a chance to send mail from the post office. Many of us posted postcards on this very special site@

Back on board Plancius, Ali gave us a presentation on the next day's program, and Ursula talked to us about the behavior of the whales, revisiting our great sighting of the blue whale the day before. Ben told us about his experience of living and working in Ny Ålvsund a few years ago as a student. All this before Ingrid, our hotel manager, called us for dinner. The first day of activities has fulfilled its promises.

## Day 3 – 11<sup>th</sup> August

### Lomfjorden

**12:00 GPS Position:** 79°32.9'N / 017°41.0'E

**Wind:** E 2, **Sea State:** Calm, **Weather:** Clear/Fog, **Air Temp:** 7°C, **Sea Temp:** 8°C

Last night, we sailed a very long way; we went north around Albert Island, the northwestern tip of the archipelago of Svalbard, then past Woodfjorden and Wijdefjorden before turning south into the Hinlopenstreet. At first, the day didn't look very promising; it was windy and very foggy at the Hinlopen, but things looked brighter when approaching the entrance to Lomfjorden and even better when we arrived at our morning destination, Faksevågen.

This site had a south easterly facing ridge taking in the morning sun and heating up enough to burn off the fog that tried to engulf it. It was very atmospheric, and the fog rolled out as the morning rolled in. We then could scout with good visibility for polar bears and decided to proceed with a landing. We had three different groups - long, medium, and short hikers. We all focused on hiking along a SE to NW running ridge with great views towards Lomfjorden and the



Hinlopenstreet. We could see a mantle of fog running below us over the water and the windier conditions at sea. We were in a beautiful bubble of sunny weather with not-so-happy conditions around us.



During the hike, we saw reindeer and our first sighting of Svalbard's only year-round resident bird, the rock ptarmigan. Trappers have historically hunted these for their great taste and to be used as bait in Arctic fox traps, a practice that continues today.

We also took some time to enjoy the silence and hear the Arctic soundscape; it was beautiful.

Finally on our hike down we had a short section of fog before boarding our Zodiacs for a ride back to Plancius.

After lunch, we intended to check Alkefjellet and see if there was any possibility of a Zodiac cruise at the stunning bird cliffs. On our way there, big surprise! We spotted our first and second polar bears on the trip. One was lying on top of a cliff by the sea, not noticing our presence as it enjoyed a nap under the sun. On the other hand, the second bear was high up on the mountain on a grassy patch in the shade of the peaks. This bear roamed for some time on the steep mountainside, showing us how high and far they move and why our guides are so cautious when scouting possible landings and when on land.



After observing these beauties, we decided to leave and proceed to Alkefjellet. Unfortunately, this Zodiac cruise was not to be today. The wind was powerful, with 40km gusts,, and it was foggy. Ali and Lawrence quickly came up with an alternative, and we landed at a new place, Hingstletta. This was back in Lomfjorden and sheltered from the worst of the wind.

This site was a wide-open plain with a glacier not far behind. Since we had little time, a safe perimeter with armed guards on the outside was organized. We were able to roam freely inside their protective ring. We took in the views and looked around for skeletons. We found whale bones and even a skull we suspected belonged to an orca! The Zodiac shuttle for this landing gave us one of the most exciting moments. The swell was very confusing, with waves coming from all sides. It was a bumpy ride, and we all got sprayed with seawater at least.

After another long and activity-filled day, we were ready for our delicious and well-deserved dinner.

## Day 4 – 12<sup>th</sup> August

### Cruising the Pack Ice

**12:00 GPS Position:** 81°33.1'N / 022°03.6'E

**Wind:** SSE 3, **Sea State:** Slight, **Weather:** Clear, **Air Temp:** 6°C, **Sea Temp:** 7°C

There it is! A sliver of white on the horizon – the polar pack ice. A frozen land is floating at the top of the world. As we sailed closer, the southern winds pushing us north, we passed more and more pieces of ice in the dark blue water. We pressed on and eventually approached the frozen edge. It was colder up here, north of 81°, and the swells rocked the ship gently back and forth. The sun was shining, and the reflection of the ice and snow was intense. Waves crashed into ice flows, and there was a lot of noise at the edge.



Our plan for the day was to scout along the ice's edge to hopefully see one of the many Arctic animals that survive and thrive in this inhospitable environment. And as luck would have it, we didn't need to wait long. At 7:20 in the morning, we received the best wake-up call yet: a polar bear was spotted from the bridge. We rushed outside just in time to observe the large bear eating its breakfast, a seal. The captain steered the ship a few hundred meters into the ice, and we were able to have a great view of the bear. There were fewer waves and wind on the ice, and it was almost

completely silent.

While the bear enjoyed his meal, many of us also ate a quick breakfast. After a quick nap, the bear checked out our ship and wandered closer. We stayed in place for a long while, observing and enjoying this fantastic experience, until the bear decided to move on. Then we headed back out into open water and continued scouting, heading northeast.

After a bit of downtime around lunch, we had the second sighting of the day, this one even more unbelievable than the last: A bowhead whale! These large baleen whales are scarce to see, as only a few hundred are in the North Atlantic. This whale was resting close to the ice edge, and we could observe it for a good while from the ship. The water was so clear that we could even see the fluke and the head shining white under the surface. Even the captain came out to take a picture!





In the afternoon, wind and wave conditions improved, and we were invited on a spontaneous Zodiac cruise among the sea ice. Navigation between the ice flows is not always easy, and the conditions have to be just right to do so safely. We sailed past oddly shaped icebergs and gathered all 11 Zodiacs for a floating group picture.

What a wonderful day on the ice!

## Day 5 – 13<sup>th</sup> August

### Phippsøya and Parryøya

**12:00 GPS Position:** 80°40.8'N / 020°56.5'E

**Wind:** NE 1, **Sea State:** Calm, **Weather:** Low Cloud, **Air Temp:** 10°C, **Sea Temp:** 7°C

A soft voice gently slipped into our ears early in the morning as Ali announced that another day had begun.



Soon followed by the smooth and firm translation by Sabrina, her use of the German language was truly admirable. *Plancius* had found a spot to anchor at Phippsøya, a desolated place with mountains covered by low-hanging clouds. The island seemed to be covered in large boulders and rocks. A hostile, eerie environment and our landing site for the morning!

We got rid of our lifejackets and started to explore the island as soon as we disembarked the Zodiacs on the sandy beach. A tiny hut stood by as a

reminder of what happened here in the past. It was made clear to us that we had to stay close together as it was known to be often visited by bears - the only animal that seems to thrive in these chilling surroundings.

Proof of that was found quickly, as several groups found polar bear skulls, bones, and footprints. Seeing the



thick skull and teeth glistening in the bleak sun that peered through the mist was astonishing. A bit further on, the single tusk of a walrus was found, almost a meter long and quite heavy. The animals were around; we could see them observing us as we sat in the Zodiacs. These walrus were curious and not too shy, following us along the beach as we headed toward the landing site. In turn, we were also very interested in the blubbery animals and observed and photographed them as much as possible.





The afternoon was glowing in golden sunlight. An ideal time to board the Zodiacs for a tour of something we all liked to see: Walruses on a rocky island! Near our earlier landing site was a rocky outcrop sticking out of the ocean filled with hefty ladies. Some juveniles were even spotted as we gently approached the group. It was a great way to finish the day.

In the evening, we learned more about the animals we had seen huddled on the rocks, as Sabrina explained everything during the recap. Ursula invited us into the

world of the Bowhead whale, the gentle giant we saw yesterday. All the while, we sailed south onto new adventures.

## Day 6 – 14<sup>th</sup> August

### Alkefjellet, Wahlbergøya and Bråsvellbreen

**12:00 GPS Position:** 79°18.5'N / 019°07.6'E

**Wind:** WSW 1, **Sea State:** Calm, **Weather:** Light Rain, **Air Temp:** 6°C, **Sea Temp:** 7°C

Breakfast was a buzz of chatter. While Plancius relocated further south during the morning, we had a rare chance for education. We split into our language groups for talks from Ali and Ursula on Polar Bears.



After an early lunch we made a landing at Wahlbergøya.

Our overnight cruise south through the Hinlopenstretet ended with an early morning booking for the bird cliffs at Alkefjellet. We missed our opportunity earlier on the voyage due to wind and fog. Thanks to Ali's foresight and the generosity of our sister ship, *Hondius*, sharing her booking, we snuck in before them. This meant a 6:00 a.m. start and a cruise before breakfast, but

it was so worth it.

The landscape is like something from the Lord of the Rings, with towering basalt cliffs flanked by a glacier at one end and cascading waterfalls at the other. In between are the birds. The experts say that 60,000 pairs of Brunnich guillemots breed here. They make no nests but rather perch on the ledges of the towering cliffs. Most of the chicks had fled this season, but we saw some on the ledges. The air was simply full of birds.

The activity, noise, smell, and energy of the place were amazing. Many times, it seemed certain that a bird would collide with us in the Zodiac as it swooped low going to and fro, but somehow, it never happened. Glaucus gulls took guillemot chicks to feed their chicks and kittiwakes high overhead. Even the light rain that started as we finished was not enough to stop our smiles.

Breakfast was a buzz of chatter. While Plancius relocated further south during the morning, we had a rare chance for education. We split into our language groups for talks from Ali and Ursula on polar bears.



After an early lunch, we made a landing at Wahlbergøya. The landing was near the point of a large, flat plain.

At this point, a large group of male walrus hauled out and into the water. The weather seemed to say, "Remember that you are in the Arctic" with a cold wind and passing heavy rain showers. Each walking group quietly approached in turn and got quite close to the group. They were very active. Several times, walrus in the sea came to the beach and seemed to want to have a look at us. It was interesting to contrast this group of males with the females we had seen yesterday.

The walking groups toured the plain. One attraction was the "graveyard," where the bones of several polar bears and whales had been deposited as the ice retreated. Ultimately, the weather cut the landing short, but not before we had experienced a unique corner of Svalbard.

Our full day of activities started early and continued after dinner as we cruised the enormous glacier front of Bråsvellbreen. We traveled toward the part of the 45-kilometer-long ice edge that streams southwards from the ice dome that covers most of the island of Nordaustlandet, passing a number of icebergs along the way. When we arrived at the ice edge, it was obscured in fog. Too bad, but it didn't detract from our wonderful day.

## Day 7 – 15<sup>th</sup> August

### Kapp Waldburg and Sundneset

**12:00 GPS Position:** 78°15.0'N / 021°55.7'E

**Wind:** N 1, **Sea State:** Calm, **Weather:** Cloudy, **Air Temp:** 12°C, **Sea Temp:** 5°C

During the night, we made good ground southwards, leaving the Hinlopenstraight. In the early morning hours, we reach the Freemansundet, a vast stretch of water separating Barentsøya, the smaller island to the north, and Edgeøya, the larger island to the south. Those standing on deck at around 6 o'clock





hidden places where bears could be.

Fortunately, none of the scouts discovered a furry animal and Ali announced to the gangway: "All good to go. Please board the Zodiacs."

In groups, we walked into the canyon where hundreds of kittiwakes, nesting on small ledges, have raised their chicks during the past months. Quite big, they sit beside the parents on the soft nests built from grass. Their plumage differs greatly from that of the adults. Standing high, we looked at them at the same level, which made this encounter even more special.

Inside the canyon, a little Arctic Fox ran back and forth, its head moving up and down and back and forth, looking for potential food. It hardly took notice of our presence. What a place to be eye to eye with wildlife. Those who hike up to the plateau are gifted with a top-down perspective on the bird colony and an amazing view over the vast Freemansundet. The water surface was as calm as a mirror.

We are all well aware of how lucky we were to have visited this place where wind and bears often hinder a landing. We were back on board by lunchtime while Ali discussed the afternoon plan with Captain Evgeny. Soon, a new plan was presented. Instead of landing at Kapp Lee, where fog reduced visibility to less than a meter, we headed to Sundneset, a beautiful site at the southwestern corner of Barentsøya.



Just when the last Zodiac hit the sandy beach, Tanja announced over the radio, "We divers have seen two polar bears who are feeding on a walrus carcass." Right away, the decision was made to abandon the landing and go and see the King of the Arctic by Zodiacs. The team and crew worked so well together that the transition happened smoothly. No time was wasted, and we were off to see the bears.

In Zodiacs, we enjoyed an exceptional bear encounter. They had climbed from the carcass over the hill to a small hut. A large bear, later identified as the mother, investigated the building, sniffing, searching, and even standing fully upright. Pwoahh... its size is impressive. Later she walked near the shore. She was fully aware of our presence and showed no visual signs of disturbance or curiosity. Her second-year cub also wandered around to explore the surroundings. Walking uphill, it approached two grazing reindeer who hadn't reacted at all. Not until the bear had passed did they suddenly start running downhill. The bear finally found a cozy spot on dark brown rocks to rest, just like its mother a couple hundred meters away.

Soon, it will have to leave its mother to face the challenges of living in the vast Arctic.

We stayed longer to take in the beautiful landscape and the two bears sleeping. What made this encounter very unique was the variety of behaviors we observed. Silently, we wish them all the best when heading back to the ship, where this incredible day ended following our routine.

Falling asleep, the thoughts of many wandered back to the bears who were now all alone in their natural world, without ships, Zodiacs, and humans.

## Day 8 – 16<sup>th</sup> August

### Gnålodden and Burgerbukta

**12:00 GPS Position:** 77°01.5'N / 015°56.0'E

**Wind:** S 3, **Sea State:** Smooth, **Weather:** Cloud/fog, **Air Temp:** 9°C, **Sea Temp:** 6°C

Overnight, *Plancius* had made excellent progress around the southern tip of Spitsbergen (Sørkapp), and those who woke early enjoyed a coffee in the Lounge while enjoying the wild seascapes of the approach to Hornsund. A strong offshore wind was sweeping white caps off the tops of large ground swells rolling into the fjord, a dramatic scene made all the more impressive by the scudding low clouds racing through the large peaks surrounding Hornsund.

Those not yet awake were roused from their slumber by Ali's routine wake-up call, and shortly after, it was time for breakfast. Meanwhile, the Expedition Team scouted Hornsund from the Bridge – checking for Polar Bears and assessing conditions to see if a landing was possible. Captain Evgeny brought our ship deeper into Hornsund, out of the worst of the wind, and we found ourselves anchoring off the eastern side of Gnålodden, our destination for the morning.

The Zodiac ride-in was a little breezy. When we arrived at the beach, we found that there was a bit of a wave surge on the shoreline, so we timed our disembarkation from the Zodiacs carefully, stepping ashore onto a lovely little pebble beach at the foot of the impressive cliffs here. Once ashore, we were free to roam around the perimeter, which included several rocky peninsulas, the hut occupied by Wanny Woldstad (the intrepid Norwegian hunter and trapper), the remains of a Pomor building, and a grave. John was on hand to talk us through the story of Wanny and of the Pomors and to give insight into what it might have been like to live here for years, trying to make a living from this unforgiving landscape.

There was also plenty of wildlife to see; the cliffs above us were crammed with Kittiwakes, and the constant noise, even audible over the strong gusts of wind, was a





lovely background to our landing (Gnålodden gets its name from this sound as it is Norwegian for murmur). We saw Arctic skua on the tundra close to the hut, several large flocks of barnacle geese, purple sandpipers foraging along the small shingle beaches, and several glaucous gulls patrolling the cliffs on the look-out for an unguarded chick to pounce upon.

Several times, we saw glaucous gulls descending to the sea with their kittiwake prey. They found prominent rocks to settle on and devour their kills – gruesome, but

fascinating. Many of us climbed the large grassy slopes at the back of the landing site, earning an incredible view over the mouth of Hornsund, and a closer encounter with the large flocks of kittiwakes circling overhead.

After a glorious morning ashore, we returned to Plancius for another excellent lunch. Suitably recharged, we headed out again, boarding the Zodiacs for a cruise into West Burgerbukta, a steep-sided fjord that cuts into the northern side of Hornsund. Almost as soon as we boarded the Zodiacs, we heard that Tanya and the divers had spotted a small pod of beluga whales, so we headed to the fjord wall to watch these lovely white whales. We kept our distance to avoid disturbing them, but we got good views of their backs as they surfaced and could see their small blows backlit by the bright light against the steep, dark fjord walls.

After 10 minutes, we carried on, deeper into the fjord, and found ourselves marveling at the incredible deep blues of recently-calved icebergs and gazing up into the monstrous hanging glaciers towering hundreds of meters above us on the fjord walls. We also found a spectacular waterfall emerging from a conduit cut by the water into the soluble limestone walls. At the head of the fjord, we found the mighty Paierbreen, a large marine-terminating glacier with an impressive calving front some 30 meters above sea level. As we cruised



past the front, taking care not to get too close, we saw several small chunks of ice fall off.

Conditions were excellent in the fjord; it was mostly flat and calm, only interrupted occasionally by a brief blast of cold air gusting down from the surrounding glaciers – a nice example of a katabatic wind. Finally, it was time to head back to Plancius, but not before we encountered several groups of curious puffins on the water; these beautiful little birds added a welcome splash of color to the otherwise largely

monochrome seascape near the mouth of Burgerbukta.

The weather deteriorated rapidly, showing us just how lucky we had been today, and over a quarter of an hour, the wind strengthened, and the rain started to pour down. However, this wouldn't dampen our enthusiasm, and after the recap, we dressed warmly and made our way to the aft deck for an Arctic barbecue! The food was excellent, the company even better, and a free bar seemed to unlock a trove of hidden dancing talent.

Before long, most of us were gyrating to Ingrid's tunes, and the evening finished up with an epic conga, weaving through the mooring stations and into the restaurant once the music finally finished. A lovely bookend to another beautiful day of expedition cruising.

## Day 9 – 17<sup>th</sup> August

### Snatcherpynten and Recherchefjorden

12:00 GPS Position: 77°30.9'N / 014°35.3'E

Wind: SSW 3, Sea State: Calm, Weather: Overcast, Air Temp: 9°C, Sea Temp: 6°C

Polar winds blew against the ship, and foamy waves splashed *Plancius's* deck as we neared Bamsebu, the landing site for this morning. Nobody noticed, as only the bridge team and Ali were awake at 05:30 this



morning. Thirty knots of wind and gusts even stronger made this landing impossible. So, Ali started plan B: A landing at Snatcherpynten.

In the lee of a mountain range lay our destination for the morning. A lovely beach surrounded by a beautiful landscape. A big two-story hut stood at the beach, leaning like Ali before her first coffee. Incredibly, the thing has not collapsed completely. The hut was once meant to boost local tourism in the early 1900s. It involved reindeer hunting. It

never proved successful. Surrounding the hut, we found mining carts, another activity that had never gotten to a start in the area.

Some graves were found from the mining era. Snatcherpynten is sure a place full of history. The groups dispersed into walking groups, some reaching the top of the mountain while the others explored the mountains.

In the afternoon, we made landfall for one last time. This time at Recherchebreen. Or rather, the moraine peninsula in front of the glacier, we could walk around in a wide perimeter to explore what once was below the glacier's ice. A lagoon separated us from the eternal ice, and we could watch from a safe distance the fifty shades of blue it threw at us. What a great way to end our polar voyage on this last day.



Back on the ship, we needed to start packing. But not until we had our farewell drink with the captain and a moving review of the past few days in the form of a slideshow. To top it all off, we had our final supper from Khabir. We will truly miss his culinary exploits when we get back home. The extra kilos on our bodies will remind us of those better days.

## Day 10 – 18<sup>th</sup> August

### Disembarkation

8:00 GPS Position: 78°13.8'N / 015°36.8'E

Wind: E 2, Sea State: Calm, Weather: P. Cloudy, Air Temp: 9°C, Sea Temp: 10°C

All too soon we arrived back in Longyearbyen and it was time to say our goodbyes. The staff and crew took care of our luggage, placing it carefully on the dock. We had our last breakfast aboard *Plancius* then gathered the last of our things and headed for the gangway. We said goodbye to the whole team onboard and alighted the bus waiting for us to start the long journey home or to our next adventure.

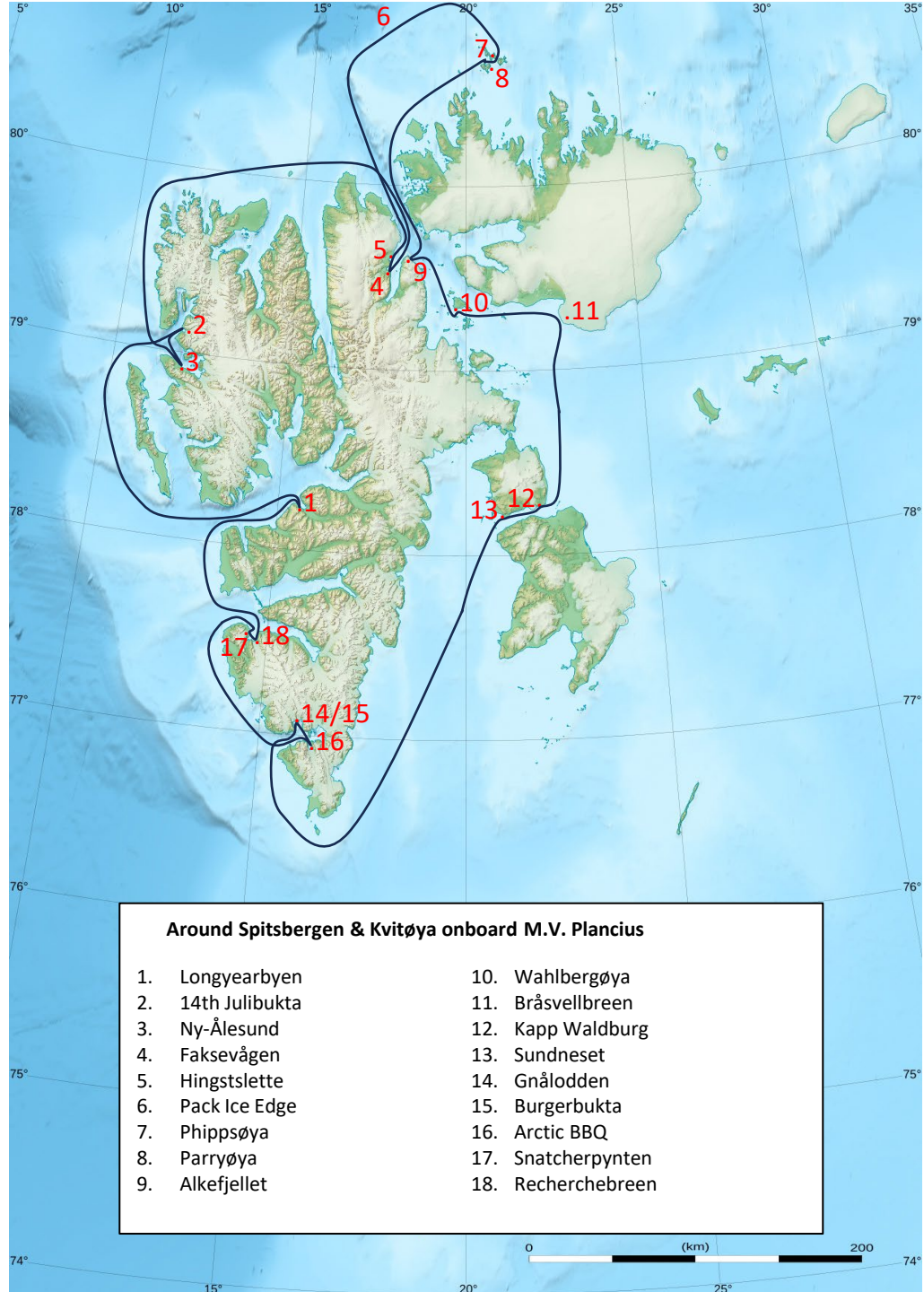


Thank you for your enthusiasm and support, but most of all for joining us on this exploratory North Atlantic voyage. We hope to see you again in the future, wherever that might be!

**Total distance sailed: 1205.0 nautical miles**

**Farthest north: 81°43.5'N / 022°54.3'E**

On behalf of Oceanwide Expeditions, Captain Evengy Levakov, Expedition Leader Ali Liddle, Hotel Manager Ingrid Van De Loo, and all the crew and staff of M/V *Plancius*, it has been a pleasure travelling with you!



**Around Spitsbergen & Kvitøya onboard M.V. Plancius**

- |                   |                    |
|-------------------|--------------------|
| 1. Longyearbyen   | 10. Wahlbergøya    |
| 2. 14th Julibukta | 11. Bråsvellbreen  |
| 3. Ny-Ålesund     | 12. Kapp Waldburg  |
| 4. Faksevågen     | 13. Sundneset      |
| 5. Hingstlette    | 14. Gnålodden      |
| 6. Pack Ice Edge  | 15. Burgerbukta    |
| 7. Phippsøya      | 16. Arctic BBQ     |
| 8. Parryøya       | 17. Snatcherpynten |
| 9. Alkefjellet    | 18. Recherchebreen |



Birds and Mammals of Svalbard and Franz Josph Land - PLA10-24

English Name	Latin	German	Dutch	Breeding / Transient / Vagrant	09.08	10.08	11.08	12.08	13.08	14.08	15.08	16.08	17.08	18.08
Great Northern Diver	<i>Gavia immer</i>	Eistaucher	Ijsduiker	V										
Red-throated diver	<i>Gavia stellata</i>	Sterntaucher	Roodkeelduiker	B		X								
Northern Fulmar	<i>Fulmarus glacialis</i>	Eissturmvogel	Noordse stormvogel	B	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	
Northern Gannet	<i>Morus bassanus</i>	Basstöpel	Jan-van-gent	T										
Whooper Swan	<i>Cygnus cygnus</i>	Singschwan	Wilde zwaan	T										
Breant Goose	<i>Anser fabalis</i>	Saalgans	Taigarietgans	V										
Pink-footed Goose	<i>Anser brachyrhynchus</i>	Kurzschnabelgans	Kleine rietgans	B		X								
Barnacle Goose	<i>Branta leucopsis</i>	Weisswangengans	Brandgans	B	X	X						X		
White-fronted Goose	<i>Anser albifrons</i>	Blässgans	Kolgans	V										
Greylag Goose	<i>Anser anser</i>	Graugans	Grauwe gans	V										
Brent Goose	<i>Branta bernicla</i>	Ringelgans	Rotgans	B										
Snow Goose	<i>Chen caerulescens</i>	Schneegans	Sneeuwgans	V										
Eurasian Wigeon	<i>Anas penelope</i>	Pfeifente	Smient	T										
Eurasian Teal	<i>Anas crecca</i>	Krickente	Wintertaling	B										
Mallard	<i>Anas platyrhynchos</i>	Stockente	Wilde eend	T										
Northern Pintail	<i>Anas acuta</i>	Spielente	Pijlstaart	B										
Tufted Duck	<i>Aythya fuligula</i>	Reiherente	Kuifeend	T										
Common Eider	<i>Somateria mollissima</i>	Eiderente	Eidereend	B		X			X		X			X
King Eider	<i>Somateria spectabilis</i>	Prachteiderente	Konings eider	B										
Steller's Eider	<i>Polysticta stelleri</i>	Scheckente	Stellers eider	V										
Long-tailed Duck	<i>Clangula hyemalis</i>	Eisente	Ilseend	B										
Black Scoter	<i>Melanitta nigra</i>	Trauerente	Zwarte zee-eend	B/T										
Common Goldeneye	<i>Bucephala clangula</i>	Schellente	Brilduiker	V										
Rock Ptarmigan	<i>Lagopus mutus hyperboreus</i>	Alpensneehuhn	Alpensneeuwoen	B			X							
Eurasian Oystercatcher	<i>Haematopus ostralegus</i>	Austermischer	Scholekster	V										
Ringed Plover	<i>Charadrius hiaticula</i>	Sandregenpfeifer	Bontbekplevier	B		X								
European Golden Plover	<i>Pluvialis apricaria</i>	Goldregenpfeifer	Goudplevier	B										
Sanderling	<i>Calidris alba</i>	Sanderling	Drietenstrandloper	B	X									
Pectoral Sandpiper	<i>Calidris melanotos</i>	Graubruststrandläufer	Gestreepte strandloper	V										
Purple Sandpiper	<i>Calidris maritima</i>	Meerstrandläufer	Paarse strandloper	B		X	X			X	X	X	X	
Red Knut	<i>Calidris canutus</i>	Knut	Kanoetstrandloper	B										
Dunlin	<i>Calidris alpina</i>	Alpenstrandläufer	Bonte strandloper	B										
Whimbrel	<i>Numenius phaeopus</i>	Regenbrachvogel	Regenwulp	T										
Common Redshank	<i>Tringa totanus</i>	Rotschenkel	Tureluur	V										
Ruddy Turnstone	<i>Arenaria interpres</i>	Steinwälder	Steenloper	B										
Grey Phalarope	<i>Phalaropus fulicarius</i>	Thorshühnchen	Rosse franjepoot	B										
Red-necked Phalarope	<i>Phalaropus lobatus</i>	Odinshühnchen	Grauwe franjepoot	B										
Pomarine Skua	<i>Stercorarius pomarinus</i>	Spatelraubmöwe	Middelste jager	T				X						
Arctic Skua	<i>Stercorarius parasiticus</i>	Schmarotzeraub-möwe	Kleine jager	B	X	X		X	X			X	X	
Long-tailed Skua	<i>Stercorarius longicaudus</i>	Falkenraubmöwe	Kleinste jager	B		X		X						
Great Skua	<i>Stercorarius skua</i>	Skua	Grote jager	B										
Sabine's Gull	<i>Xema sabini</i>	Schwalbenmöwe	Vorkstaartmeeuw	B										
Black-headed Gull	<i>Larus ridibundus</i>	Lachmöwe	Kokmeeuw	V										
Common/Mew Gull	<i>Larus canus</i>	Sturmmöwe	Stormmeeuw	V										
Glaucous Gull	<i>Larus hyperboreus</i>	Eismöwe	Grote Burgemeester	B	X	X			X	X	X	X	X	
Iceland gull	<i>Larus glaucoides</i>	Polarmöwe	Kleine burgemeester	T										
Herring Gull	<i>Larus argentatus</i>	Silbermöwe	Zilvermeeuw	V										
Lesser black-backed Gull	<i>Larus fuscus</i>	Heringsmöwe	Kleine mantelmeeuw	V										
Great black-backed Gull	<i>Larus marinus</i>	Mantelmöwe	Grote mantelmeeuw	B										
Kittiwake	<i>Rissa tridactyla</i>	Dreizehenmöwe	Drietenmeeuw	B	X	X		X		X	X	X	X	
Ross' Gull	<i>Rhodostethia rosea</i>	Rosenmöwe	Rossmeeuw	T										
Ivory Gull	<i>Pagophila eburnea</i>	Elfenbeinmöwe	Ivoormeeuw	B				X						
Arctic Tern	<i>Sterna paradisaea</i>	Küstenseeschwalbe	Noordse stern	B	X	X		X	X	X				X



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# Ali Liddle – Expedition Leader

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Originally from the UK, Ali spent 15 years living in the Falkland Islands where she worked as a Primary school teacher both teaching out in 'camp' and at the school in Stanley. Latterly, she was employed as Education Officer for Falklands Conservation and shared her time between classroom teaching and conservation. In 1997, she spent 9 months living on South Georgia where she ran the Post Office and took every opportunity to hike, ski and explore the surrounding peaks and coastline. She has published three books to date: *Plants of the Falkland Islands* and two art and craft books for children using penguins and albatross as the inspiration. Ali is a keen runner, having completed three marathons in the Falkland Islands and two in the UK, and she also enjoys cycling, hiking and camping. Ali has been working on Antarctic and Arctic expedition cruises with Oceanwide for more years than she cares to remember and works on all of the Oceanwide vessels at some point during the year. She has recently relocated from Northumberland to the Isle of Skye where she is renovating a cottage and enjoying the hiking opportunities of the island. Her particular interest is

natural history and the wildlife, and she enjoys sharing her knowledge of and passion for the polar regions.

## Deutsch

Ali kommt ursprünglich aus Großbritannien und hat 15 Jahre lang auf den Falklandinseln gelebt. Dort arbeitete sie als Grundschullehrerin im sogenannten "Camp" wie auch in der Schule von Stanley. Später war sie zuständig für den Bereich Bildung des Umweltamtes und teilte ihre Zeit zwischen Klassenzimmer und Naturschutz. 1997 verbrachte sie neun Monate in Südgeorgien, wo sie das Postamt betrieb. Gleichzeitig nutzte sie jede Gelegenheit, um zu wandern, Ski zu laufen und die umliegenden Gipfel und Küstenlinien zu erkunden. Sie hat drei Bücher veröffentlicht: *Pflanzen der Falklandinseln* und zwei Kunst- und Handwerksbücher für Kinder, die von Pinguinen und Albatrossen inspiriert sind. Sie ist eine leidenschaftliche Läuferin und hat bereits drei Marathons auf den Falklandinseln und zwei in Großbritannien absolviert. Außerdem fährt sie gerne Rad und liebt das Wandern und Zelten.

Ali arbeitet bereits seit vielen Jahren auf allen Schiffen der Oceanwide-Flotte, sowohl in der Antarktis wie auch der Arktis. Sie ist vor kurzem von Northumberland in England auf die Isle of Skye in Schottland gezogen, wo sie zur Zeit eine alte Kate renoviert. In ihrer Freizeit genießt sie die unglaublichen Wandermöglichkeiten der Insel.

Ihr besonderes Interesse gilt der Natur und der Tierwelt: dieses Wissen und ihre Leidenschaft für die Polarregionen teilt sie gerne mit Euch.

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# Laurence Dyke - Assistant Expedition Leader

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Laurence is from Cornwall in the far southwest of the UK and grew up on the coast, never far from the water and boats.

Laurence has a background as a geographer with a special focus in glaciology, a choice inspired by seeing a glacier up close for the first time in the Austrian Alps.

For the last 7 years he has worked in science, both in the UK and Denmark, working to understand how and why huge glacier systems in Greenland have changed in the past. Understanding how the cryosphere has changed is crucial for predicting what will happen in the future.

Laurence first visited the Arctic in 2010 whilst undertaking research for his PhD and was immediately captivated by the wild landscapes of the high latitudes. His subsequent research has taken him on numerous expeditions to remote areas of Greenland, Svalbard, and Arctic Canada.

Laurence is also a passionate advocate for polar science, when time allows he produces videos and articles about research from Greenland and the wider Arctic. Laurence lectures in glaciology and geography.

## Deutsch

Laurence stammt aus dem Cornwall im äußersten Südwesten Großbritanniens und ist direkt an der Küste aufgewachsen also nie weit von Wasser und Booten entfernt.

Laurence hat einen Hintergrund als Geograph mit besonderem Schwerpunkt in der Glaziologie, eine Wahl, die von der erstmaligen Beobachtung eines Gletschers in den österreichischen Alpen aus der Nähe inspiriert wurde.

In den letzten 7 Jahren hat er in der Wissenschaft sowohl in Großbritannien wie auch in Dänemark gearbeitet, um zu begreifen, wie und warum sich riesige Gletschersysteme in Grönland in der Vergangenheit verändert haben. Zu begreifen, wie sich die Kryosphäre verändert hat, ist entscheidend für die Vorhersage wie sich die Gletscher in der Zukunft entwickeln.

Laurence besuchte 2010 während seiner Doktorarbeit zum ersten Mal die Arktis und war sofort von den wilden Landschaften der hohen Breiten gefesselt. Seine anschließende Forschung führte ihn auf zahlreiche Expeditionen in entlegene Gebiete Grönlands, Spitzbergens und der kanadischen Arktis. Laurence ist auch ein leidenschaftlicher Verfechter der Polarwissenschaften, wenn es die Zeit erlaubt, produziert er Videos und Artikel über Forschungen aus Grönland und der weiteren Arktis. Laurence hält Lesungen über Glaziologie und Geographie.

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# Tanja Bayer - Dive Team Leader

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Tanja is at home in Oberursel, which is near Frankfurt / Main in Germany.

She has been diving since 1990 and has more than 5000 dives. In Oberursel she is running her own Diving Center "TaWo Diving" since 1996.

As a Master Instructor and Course Director she teaches Diving and also trains Diving Instructors.

Her 'second' profession is being a Doctor in General Practice, Accident & Emergency and Diving Medicine.

She has been working as a ships doctor, dive guide and expedition guide since 2009 in Antarctica and since 2015 also in the Arctic with Oceanwide Expeditions.

As a Dive Guide and Diving Expedition Leader she takes divers all around the world.

Asked for her favourite dive sites, she mentions 'Planeau Bay' in Antarctica. Cold water diving is really something

special and challenging.

You have to be experienced and always aware of hypothermia. But it is a great feeling to touch an iceberg or to see all these colorful animals surviving in these harsh regions.

## Deutsch

Tanja ist geboren in Deutschland und zu Hause in Oberursel, einem kleinen Ort in der Nähe von Frankfurt am Main.

Sie taucht seit 1990 und hat mehr als 5000 Tauchgänge in den verschiedensten Gewässern dieser Welt gemacht.

In Oberursel betreibt sie, zusammen mit ihrem Mann, seit 1996 ein Tauchcenter. Als Master Instructor und Course Director bildet sie Taucher und Tauchlehrer aus. Das Training für Kaltwassertauchen und Eistauchen mag sie besonders.

Ihr '2. Beruf' ist Ärztin für Allgemeinmedizin und Unfallchirurgin. Seit 2009 arbeitet sie auch als Schiffsärztin, Tauchguide und Expeditionsguide in der Antarktis und seit 2015 an beiden Polen.

Als Tauchguide und Reiseleiter führt sie Taucher zu den Tauchgebieten weltweit und wenn man sie nach ihrem Lieblingstauchplatz fragt, sagt sie Planeau Bay' in der Antarktis.

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# Gonzalo Sabattini – Dive Guide

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Gonzalo was born in Córdoba, Argentina in 1987. Son of Cecilia and Juan and brother to Matias and Marcos. Since a young kid his life was connected to water because his family owns fishing boats in Los Molinos Lake in Córdoba. Summers and weekends were endless among friends and family, swimming, and fishing.

As time passed by, swimming in the lake evolved into diving; Gonzalo received his first diving certification as a Argentinian Federation of Subaquatic Activities (FAAS\_CMAS)-One Star Diver at the age of 16. During his twenty's Gonzalo was an active member of the local diving school collaborating as a volunteer as he continued his formation as a diver.

In 2013 he was invited to work to Cozumel, Mexico as a dive guide guiding certificate and first-time divers. At the island, he gained a lot of experience working with international tourism and he spent more than a year diving daily. When he came back to his country, he set sails to a new adventure. Decided to move to Ushuaia, Tierra del Fuego, where diving and weather conditions are a challenge. For the

last 6 years he has become a cold-water diver, mastering the dry suit and the rest of cold-water equipment. On 2018 he was certified as a dive instructor (FAAS – CMAS) and since then, works at a diving school lecturing new cold-water divers and guiding national and international divers who marvel with the kelp forests that characterize dives in the Beagle Channel. On top off diving Gonzalo has always been as sportive person, he loves snowboarding, fishing, and spending time in nature and wilderness, and he found in Ushuaia a perfect playground.

## Français

Gonzalo est né à Córdoba, en Argentine, en 1987. Fils de Cecilia et Juan et frère de Matias et Marcos. Depuis tout petit, sa vie est liée à l'eau car sa famille possède des bateaux de pêche dans le lac Los Molinos à Córdoba. Les étés et les week-ends étaient interminables entre amis et famille, à nager et à pêcher.

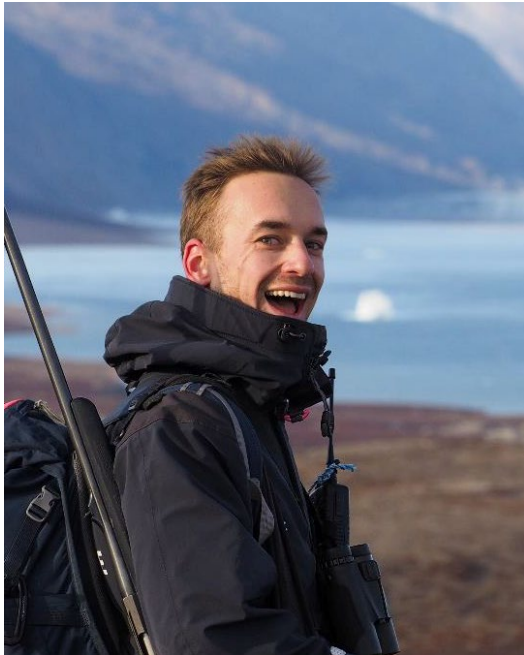
Au fil du temps, la baignade dans le lac s'est transformée en plongée ; Gonzalo a obtenu son premier brevet de plongée en tant que plongeur étoile de la Fédération argentine des activités subaquatiques (FAAS\_CMAS) à l'âge de 16 ans. Pendant sa vingtaine, Gonzalo a été un membre actif de l'école de plongée locale, collaborant comme bénévole tout en poursuivant sa formation de plongeur.

En 2013, il a été invité à travailler à Cozumel, au Mexique, en tant que guide de plongée guidant les plongeurs certifiés et les plongeurs débutants. Sur l'île, il a acquis beaucoup d'expérience en travaillant avec le tourisme international et il a passé plus d'un an à plonger quotidiennement. Lorsqu'il est rentré dans son pays, il a mis les voiles vers une nouvelle aventure. Il a décidé de s'installer à Ushuaia, en Terre de Feu, où la plongée et les conditions météorologiques sont un défi. Au cours des 6 dernières années, il est devenu un plongeur en eau froide, maîtrisant la combinaison étanche et le reste de l'équipement pour l'eau froide. En 2018, il a été certifié comme instructeur de plongée (FAAS - CMAS) et depuis, il travaille dans une école de plongée où il donne des cours aux nouveaux plongeurs en eau froide et guide les plongeurs nationaux et internationaux qui s'émerveillent devant les forêts de varechs qui caractérisent les plongées dans le canal de Beagle. En plus de la plongée, Gonzalo a toujours été une personne sportive, il aime le snowboard, la pêche et passer du temps dans la nature et les espaces sauvages, et il a trouvé à Ushuaia un terrain de jeu parfait.

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# Ben Fredriks - Expedition Guide

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Discovering Spitsbergen in 2013 was like a dream coming true for Ben. During his studies in marine biology he conducted fieldwork which took him to the world's most Northern settlement: Ny-Ålesund. Here he fell in love with the Arctic Archipelago, and he has been returning to the Arctic ever since.

In the past, Ben worked on different scientific topics: Arctic shipping and the effect of oil spills in Arctic Regions. Ben is very interested in the Arctic biology/ecology and history, which makes Spitsbergen a perfect place for him to work, because it is filled with all of it!

Since 2015 Ben works as a hydrographic surveyor on the North sea, but since his first visit to Spitsbergen he has caught the "Arctic virus" and is always looking forward to another adventure in the polar regions!

## Deutsch

2013 hat Ben Spitzbergen zum ersten Mal besucht, und für ihn wurde damit ein Traum wahr. Während seines Studiums der Meeresbiologie hat er mehrfach Feldarbeiten im nördlichsten Dorf der Welt Ny-Ålesund durchgeführt. Seitdem kommt er regelmäßig nach Spitzbergen und freut sich darauf seine hocharktischen Erfahrungen mit Euch teilen.

Ben hat sich mit den verschiedenen Effekten des Schiffverkehrs auf die arktischen Regionen; inklusive des Problems der Ölverschmutzung beschäftigt. Er ist sehr interessiert an der Biologie/Ökologie und Geschichte der Arktis. Für Ben ist Spitzbergen der perfekte Ort um zu arbeiten, denn hier gibt es all dies auf engstem Raum!

Seit 2015 arbeitet Ben zu Hause als Hydrographischer Vermesser an der Nordsee. Trotzdem hat ihn, seit seinem ersten Besuch, der "Arktisvirus" nicht mehr losgelassen und er freut sich immer auf ein weiteres Abenteuer in diesen polarregionen!

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# Hélène de Méringo - Expedition Guide

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Native from Brittany in France, Hélène quickly developed a passion for nature and wildlife.

After studying biology and ecology, she multiplied missions in various latitudes, working for conservation programs in Guinea, Quebec, and research programs in New Zealand and Indonesia.

In 2008, she winters in the Kerguelen Archipelago as a volunteer biologist for the French Polar Institute and develops a real interest for island ecosystems and the polar world. A grandiose and decisive experience. She continues her experience in the Great South as an agent of the French Southern and Antarctic Natural Reserve.

Since 2012, she works as an engineer in a research team focus in island ecology. This work leads her to regularly participate in on-board missions to study seabirds nesting in remote islands, particularly in the Pacific.

Since January 2019, she has been participating in cruises to the Antarctic Peninsula and the Arctic on expedition ships with Oceanwide Expedition.

## Deutsch

Gebürtig aus der Bretagne in Frankreich entwickelte Helene schnell eine Leidenschaft für Natur und Tierwelt.

Nach ihrem Studium der Biologie und Ökologie vervielfachte sie Missionen in verschiedenen Breitengraden und arbeitete für Naturschutzprogramme in Guinea, Quebec und Forschungsprogramme in Neuseeland und Indonesien.

2008 überwintert sie als ehrenamtliche Biologin für das Französische Polarinstitut im Kerguelen-Archipel und entwickelt ein echtes Interesse für Inselökosysteme und die Polarwelt. Eine grandiose und entscheidende Erfahrung. Sie setzt ihre Erfahrungen im großen Süden als Agentin des französischen Süd- und Antarktis-Naturresevats fort.

Seit 2012 arbeitet sie als Ingenieurin in einem Forschungsteam mit dem Schwerpunkt Inselökologie. Diese Arbeit führt dazu, dass sie regelmäßig an Bordmissionen teilnimmt, um Seevögel zu studieren die auf abgelegenen Inseln insbesondere im Pazifik nisten.

Seit Januar 2019 ist sie Teil des Teams von Oceanwide Expeditions.



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# John Rogers - Expedition Guide

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History came early to John as his home town of Concord, Massachusetts, is famous as the site of the first battle of the American Revolution and much early American literary culture. He learned to swim in Walden Pond, of Thoreau fame. His love of the outdoors started with family holidays to lakes and mountains.

His first career was in computer software development which allowed for numerous extended travelling holidays in the USA and then to New Zealand – where he still lives. The travelling continued with visits to every continent – the final one being Antarctica in 2001 as a passenger and then for several seasons as a guide.

Along the way John has managed several trips north of the Arctic Circle backpacking, river rafting and exploring in Alaska, Norway and Iceland.

John's approach to the history is to concentrate on the stories of the places and people who inhabit and have explored to the extremes of the earth. Polar history is filled with remarkable stories of adventures, perseverance, triumph and defeat. He encourages

anyone on this voyage with specialized knowledge, or with a family connection, to help him others share in this fantastic legacy.

## Deutsch

Das Interesse in Geschichte wurde mir in die Wiege gelegt da meine Heimatstadt, Concord, Massachusetts, als Ort der ersten Schlacht der Amerikanischen Revolution und der frühen amerikanischen Literaturkultur berühmt ist. Ich lernte in den Wäldern von Pond schwimmen und die Liebe zur Natur begann mit Familienurlaube an Seen und in den Bergen.

Nach dem Umzug nach Los Angeles, um einen Bachelor of Science vom California Institute of Technology zu machen, begann ich eine Karriere in der Entwicklung von Computersoftware. Ein unerwarteter 3-monatiger bezahlter Urlaub, welcher ein Arbeitgeber finanzierte, verbrachte ich mit Wandern und Erkundigungen in den kanadischen Rockies. Damit hat das Reisefieber begonnen und ist nicht mehr geendet. Ein weiterer Wanderurlaub führte mich 1980 über den Pazifik nach Neuseeland mit als Endziel, außerhalb der USA zu leben. Meine große Liebe Jill habe ich dort kennengelernt und diese Urlaubsromanze dauert noch immer an.

Mehrere lange unbezahlte Urlaube haben es mir ermöglicht, alle Kontinente zu besuchen – das letzte war die Antarktis auf einer Schiffsexpedition im Jahr 2001. Damit ist die die Antarktis-Sucht begonnen und begleitet mich bis heute. Als Mitglied und Offizier der New Zealand Antarctic Society und durch den Abschluss des Postgraduiertenzertifikats für Antarktisstudien an der Universität Canterbury nach dem Ruhestand, war ich in der Lage die erstaunlichen Geschichten der Antarktis-Exploration, Vergangenheit und Gegenwart zu verfolgen. Ich hoffe, dass jeder, der auf dieser Reise mit speziellem Wissen mir helfen wird um anderen an diesem fantastischen Vermächtnis teilzuhaben.

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# Paolo Bellezze – Expedition Guide

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Born in Argentina (Dec 80') and raised in Italy, Paolo finally moved to Scotland where he settled in 2006. Nowadays, when not at sea, he splits his time between Argentina and Scotland.

Before expedition cruises Paolo spent 12 years working shoreside in merchant shipping. He was a Product Manager for a Norwegian company developing Voyage Planning and Marine Weather Forecasting Systems for merchant ships.

He also started Paragliding at the age of 14 and has been very involved in the sport as a school owner instructing both beginners and advanced courses for over 20 years. When not paragliding, Paolo likes to sea kayak and he mixes Field Guide with Kayak Guide roles onboard.

In 2021 he started working full time in expedition cruises, since then he has guide in several expeditions such as Antarctica, South Georgia, Falklands, Greenland West coast, Greenland East coast, Iceland, Faroes Islands and British Isles.

Aside from sea kayaking and flying he is into hiking, motorbikes and spending time with friends. He is passionate about polar regions and sharing the experience with our guests.

“Happiness is only real when shared” (Chris McCandless)

Languages: English, Spanish, Italian.

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# Sabrina Kerth - Guide

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Sabrina is originally from Germany and has always loved to travel. She moved abroad for her bachelor's and came to Norway in 2017 to study Tourism in the far north as an exchange semester. She fell in love with the Norwegian nature and lifestyle and decided to move to Svalbard to work for a local tour operator in Longyearbyen.

She has lived on the island fulltime for a few years, experiencing both the long polar night and midnight sun. Working both as a guide and in support operations, she has been showing this incredible place to guests from all over

the world. Her favourite time of the year is February, when the light returns and it is possible to go on snowmobile trips all over Svalbard.

But after some seasons of total darkness, she now spends her winters a little further south in Lapland, Sweden, managing a wilderness lodge and working as a dogsledding guide. She is particularly interested in the history of Svalbard and loves to read stories about life back in the days.

In the winter, she goes cross-country skiing with her Alaskan husky and in the summertime, she likes to camp, hike and kayak.

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# Ursula Tschertter - Expedition Guide

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I grew up far from the oceans in landlocked Switzerland when in the 70s, when exploitative whaling was still happening, the dream of my childhood evolved; to meet whales in their natural environment. It came true in 1993 and changed my life radically. I gave up my original profession as a teacher for Craft and Art and spent the next 20 summers in Eastern Canada studying whales. As the director of the Swiss-Canadian ORES Foundation I combined scientific research and education for international audiences leaving deep imprints in many peoples' lives.

I am a true minke whale enthusiast. I thousands of hours I observed these mind-blowing whales and studied their habitat use, hunting and breathing ecology using photo-identification. At 50 years I obtained my Master in Marine Mammal Science at the University of St Andrews (Scotland). I nourished my urge to learn more from the oceans and whales in various research projects in Australia, New Zealand or South Africa. In 2008 I started to work as an expedition guide and lecturer in Antarctica and later in the Arctic. When at home I produce life-sized

foldable animals, which I carry to schools and ships. Visit my lectures to meet some of them.

Just as strong as my urge to learn and explore is my need to share my knowledge and fascination with others to raise environmental awareness. Please join or approach me at any time, as I love to answer questions and to be on deck on the lookout for wildlife.

## Deutsch

Ich bin weit weg von den Ozeanen in der Schweiz aufgewachsen, als in den 70er Jahren der Hoch-Zeit des Walfanges, der Traum von meiner Kindheit entstand; Wale in ihrer natürlichen Umgebung zu sehen. Dieser wurde 1993 wahr und veränderte mein Leben radikal. Ich gab meinen ursprünglichen Beruf als Lehrerin für Handwerk und Kunst auf und verbrachte die nächsten 20 Sommer in Ostkanada, um Wale zu studieren. Als Direktor der schweizerisch-kanadischen ORES Foundation kombinierte ich wissenschaftliche Forschung und Bildung für internationales Publikum und hinterließ tiefe Spuren im Leben vieler Menschen.

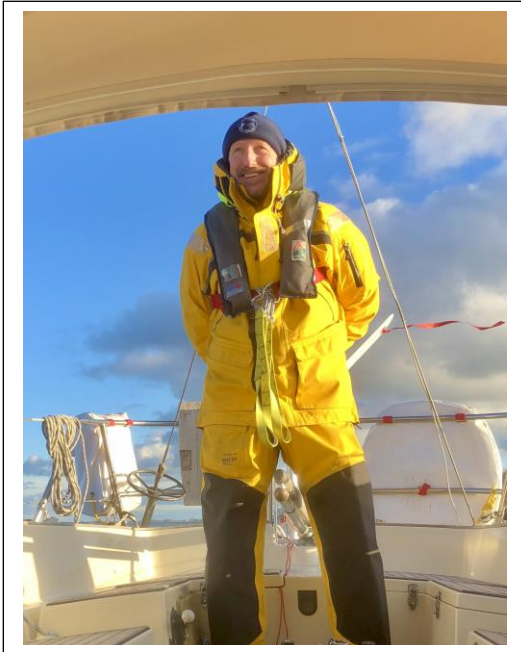
Ich bin ein echter Zwergwal-Enthusiast. Ich beobachtete tausenden von Stunden diese geistesreichen Wale und untersuchte ihre Lebensraumnutzung, Jagd und Atemökologie mittels Foto Identifikation. Mit 50 Jahren erwarb ich meinen Master in Marine Mammal Science an der University of St Andrews (Schottland). Ich nährte meinen Drang, in verschiedenen Forschungsprojekten in Australien, Neuseeland oder Südafrika mehr von den Ozeanen und Walen zu lernen. 2008 begann ich als Expeditionsführer und Dozent in der Antarktis und später in der Arktis zu arbeiten. Zu Hause produziere ich lebensgroße faltbare Tiere, die ich zu Schulen und Schiffen mitbringe. Besuchen Sie meine Vorträge, um einige von ihnen zu treffen.

Genauso stark wie mein Drang zu lernen und zu erforschen ist mein Bedürfnis, mein Wissen und meine Faszination mit anderen zu teilen, um das Umweltbewusstsein zu schärfen. Bitte kommen sie zu mir bei Fragen oder Schließen sie sich an, ich liebe es Fragen zu beantworten und an Deck auf der Suche nach Wildtieren zu sein.

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# Dr. Elmar Kleimann- Ship's doctor

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Dr. med. Elmar Kleimann, a specialist in surgery with a focus on visceral surgery and emergency medicine, began his medical career after completing his medical studies at the universities of Marburg and Aachen. His professional journey initially led him to work as a resident physician at the Clinic for General and Visceral Surgery at the University Hospital in Oldenburg. Dr. Kleimann acquired numerous additional qualifications, including specialist titles in surgery, visceral surgery, and specialized visceral surgery. During his clinical work, he gained experience as an emergency physician in the city of

Oldenburg, earning him the additional qualification in emergency medicine.

As a senior physician at the Ev. Hospital "Bethesda" in Mönchengladbach, and later as Consultant Surgeon and Head of the department of General and Visceral Surgery at St. Franziskus-Hospital in Cologne, he significantly shaped the further development of these medical institutions. His expertise extends beyond surgery to include sonography, radiation protection, and maritime medicine.

Outside of his medical activities, Dr. Kleimann is an avid sailor and has undertaken numerous voyages on the North Sea, Baltic Sea, English Channel, Irish Sea, Mediterranean, and North Atlantic, including an Atlantic crossing, and has successfully completed challenging regattas such as the Rolex Fastnet Race. He shares his expertise also as a lecturer for "Medicine at Sea".

Away from the sea, Dr. Kleimann is a passionate globetrotter. He has traveled to many places in Europe, the USA, Central America, Africa, the Indian Ocean, and Australia. Additionally, he dedicates himself to endurance sports, particularly road cycling.

As a ship's doctor on expedition trips, Dr. Kleimann combines his extensive medical expertise with his deep connection to the sea. His experience as a specialist in surgery and emergency medicine, as well as his knowledge in maritime medicine, enables him to ensure the health and safety of crew members and passengers.



# Around Spitsbergen and Kvitøya

Embarkation  
Friday 9<sup>th</sup> August 2024

- 1600      **Welcome on board!** Your luggage should be in your cabin when you arrive. Please check carefully if you are missing any luggage and if there is luggage in your cabin that does not belong to you then please let one of the staff know. Please feel free to look around the ship.  
Tea and coffee is available in the Lounge on Deck 5.
- >1715      **Mandatory Safety and Lifeboat Instruction** in the Lounge. **ALL PASSENGERS** are required to participate in this very important instruction.
- 1800      Departure from the pier.
- 1845      Please join us in the Lounge for an **introduction to the ship** from your Hotel Manager Ingrid van de Loo  
This will be followed by **Captain's Cocktails**, a chance to meet your Captain, Evgeny Levakov and then you will meet with your Expedition Leader Ali Liddle. She will explain the plans for the coming days, and it will be a chance to meet with your Expedition Team.
- 1930      **Dinner** is served in the Restaurant on Deck 3 behind the reception desk.  
Enjoy your meal.
- 2045      **Boots.** We will hand out your rubber boots from the Boot Room on Deck 3. We will call you by deck so please wait for announcements.



# Around Spitsbergen and Kvitøya

14 Julibukta and Ny Alesund  
Saturday 10<sup>th</sup> August 2024

- 0715 Wake up call from your Expedition Leader Ali.
- 0730 **Breakfast buffet** will be available in the Dining Room for 1 hour.
- 0830 Mandatory Zodiac Briefing and Polar Bear Safety Briefing in the Lounge
- 0930 **14 Julibukta.** This morning we hope to take you ashore and also on a zodiac cruise at 14 Julibukta. There will be a chance to maybe see some reindeer and Arctic foxes. We will cruise towards the glacier and along some small bird cliffs.
- Red Group please come to the gangway at 0930. You will go to shore first.**
- Blue Group please come to the gangway at 0945. You will go on a zodiac cruise first.**
- We will swap during the morning so both groups will do both activities**
- 1230 **Lunch** is served in the Dining Room.
- 1400 **Ny Alesund.** During the afternoon we will visit the scientific research settlement of Ny Alesund. **Please remember to switch all of your wifi and Bluetooth off when we are on shore.**
- There is a small museum and a post office and souvenir store on shore. Please bring your credit cards! We will offer a walk through the settlement and out to the historic mast used by Amundsen and Nobile.
- Please stay on the roads and do not enter any buildings apart from the museum and shop.**
- 1900 **Re-cap and Briefing.** Please join the expedition team in the Lounge for a re-cap of the day and to learn of our plans for tomorrow.
- 1930 **Dinner** is served in the Restaurant on Deck. Enjoy your meal.



# Around Spitsbergen and Kvitøya

Faksevågen and Alkefjellet  
Sunday 11<sup>th</sup> August 2024

- 0745 Wake up call from your Expedition Leader Ali.
- 0800 **Breakfast buffet** will be available in the Dining Room for 1 hour.
- ~0900 **Faksevågen.** This morning, we hope to take you ashore at Faksevågen – Faks bay named after a horse in Norse mythology. Here we will find rich tundra – hopefully some reindeer and some ptarmigan. We will go in guided groups for walks up onto the hills.  
**Long hikers please come to the gangway first at 09:00**  
**Everyone else please come to the gangway at 09:15**
- 1300 **Lunch** is served in the Dining Room.
- 1500 **Alkefjellet.** This afternoon we hope to take you out in the zodiacs for a cruise along the bird cliffs of Alkefjellet. These basalt cliffs are over 100m high and are home to over 60,000 breeding pairs of guillemots. We will do the cruise in 2 groups.  
Blue Group please come to the gangway at 1500.  
Red Group please come to the gangway at 1630.
- 1900 **Re-cap and Briefing.** Please join the expedition team in the Lounge for a re-cap of the day and to learn of our plans for tomorrow.
- 1930 **Dinner** is served in the Restaurant on Deck. Enjoy your meal.





# Around Spitsbergen and Kvitøya

North in the Pack Ice  
Monday 12<sup>th</sup> August 2024

0745 Wake up call from your Expedition Leader Ali.

0800 **Breakfast buffet** will be available in the Dining Room for 1 hour.

This morning, we will sail into the polar pack ice and experience a unique environment. We will spend the morning searching the ice for the wildlife that lives in this frozen world. Enjoy the experience and see what we can find.

1230 **Lunch** is served in the Dining Room.

During the afternoon we will continue to navigate the pack ice. Please listen for announcements regarding any afternoon activities.

1830 **Re-cap and Briefing.** Please join the expedition team in the Lounge for a re-cap of the day and to learn of our plans for tomorrow.

1900 **Dinner** is served in the Restaurant on Deck. Enjoy your meal.



# Around Spitsbergen and Kvitøya

Phippsøya and Expedition afternoon  
Tuesday 13<sup>th</sup> August 2024

- 0715 Wake up call from your Expedition Leader Ali.
- 0730 **Breakfast buffet** will be available in the Dining Room for 1 hour.
- 0830 **Phippsøya.** This morning, we hope to land on the island of Phippsøya which is one of the Seven Islands. There is a long sand beach leading up to some rocky hills. We will offer walks on shore and if there are any walrus on the beach, we will view these in our hiking groups to limit the disturbance.  
**Long hikers please come to the gangway first at 08:30**  
**Medium and leisurely walkers please come to the gangway at 08:45**
- 1230 **Lunch** is served in the Dining Room.
- 1430 **Expedition Afternoon.**  
This afternoon we will explore some of the other islands in the Seven Islands group and see what we can find. Please listen for announcements regarding our activities in the afternoon.
- 1900 **Re-cap and Briefing.** Please join the expedition team in the Lounge for a re-cap of the day and to learn of our plans for tomorrow.
- 1930 **Dinner** is served in the Restaurant on Deck. Enjoy your meal.



# Around Spitsbergen and Kvitøya

Alkefjellet and Wahlbergøya  
Wednesday 14<sup>th</sup> August 2024

- 0600 Wake up call from your Expedition Leader Ali.  
**Pastries and juice will be available in the Lounge.**
- 0630 **Alkefjellet.** This morning, we hope to take you on a zodiac cruise along the bird cliffs of Alkefjellet. These basalt cliffs are over 100m high and are home to over 60,000 breeding pairs of guillemots. We will do the cruise in 2 groups.  
**Blue Group please come to the gangway at 0630**  
**Red Group please come to the gangway at 0645**
- 0830 **Breakfast buffet** will be available in the Dining Room for 1 hour.  
  
During the morning, we will sail south down Hinlopen Strait. Please listen for announcements regarding any activities on board
- 1200 **Lunch** is served in the Dining Room.
- 1315 **Wahlbergøya.** This afternoon we hope to take you ashore on the island of Wahlbergøya where we sometimes find walrus on the beach. We will offer our regular hikes on the island and everyone will have some time with the walrus during their time on shore.  
  
**Long Hikers please come to the gangway first at 1315.**  
**Medium and Leisurely hikers please come to the gangway at 1330**
- 1830 **Re-cap and Briefing.** Please join the expedition team in the Lounge for a re-cap of the day and to learn of our plans for tomorrow.
- 1900 **Dinner** is served in the Restaurant on Deck. Enjoy your meal.  
  
After dinner we will ship cruise along Bråsvellbreen.



# Around Spitsbergen and Kvitøya

Kapp Waldburg and Kapp Lee  
Thursday 15<sup>th</sup> August 2024

- 0745 Wake up call from your Expedition Leader Ali.
- 0800 **Breakfast buffet** will be available in the Dining Room for 1 hour.
- 0900 **Kapp Waldburg.** This morning, we hope to be able to take you ashore at Kapp Waldburg where there is a large Kittiwake colony in a steep canyon. We will offer walking groups around the area, possibly above the cliffs and also into the canyon to view the Kittiwakes nesting on the cliffs.
- 1230 **Lunch** is served in the Dining Room.
- TBA **Kapp Lee.** This afternoon we hope to land at Kapp Lee where there is rich tundra where we often find reindeer. There are historic Pomor remains and sometimes there are walrus on the beach near the landing site. We will offer hikes in the area and, if the walrus are home we will view the walrus in our groups.  
**Long Hikers please come to the gangway first.**
- 1830 **Re-cap and Briefing.** Please join the expedition team in the Lounge for a re-cap of the day and to learn of our plans for tomorrow.
- 1900 **Dinner** is served in the Restaurant on Deck. Enjoy your meal.

- 0745 Wake up call from your Expedition Leader Ali.
- 0800 **Breakfast buffet** will be available in the Dining Room for 1 hour.
- TBA **Gnållodden.** This morning, we hope to be able to take you ashore at Gnållodden. The scenery here is spectacular with the peak of Gnålberget rising 770 metres above the landing beach. There are bird cliffs above the beach. We will also find Pomor remains, a whaler's grave and a trapper's hut that belonged to Wanny Wolstad, a woman who lived here in the 1930's. Please listen for announcements about our gangway times in the morning.
- 1230 **Lunch** is served in the Dining Room.
- TBA **Burgerbukta.** After lunch we hope to take you on a zodiac cruise into Burgerbukta to Paierlbreen, the large glacier at the end of the fjord. The mountain scenery is beautiful and we should find some icebergs as we cruise into the fjord.  
Red Group please come to the gangway first. We will tell you the time.  
Blue Group will follow.
- 1830 **Re-cap and Briefing.** Please join the expedition team in the Lounge for a re-cap of the day and to learn of our plans for tomorrow.
- 1900 **Arctic Dinner** is served on Deck 3 aft. Dress warmly!

- 0745 Wake up call from your Expedition Leader Ali.
- 0800 **Breakfast buffet** will be available in the Dining Room for 1 hour.
- 0900 **Bamsebu.** This morning we will be in the fjord of Bellsund and we hope to be able to take you ashore at the landing site of Bamsebu. This area has rich tundra and we hope to see some reindeer on shore when we are out in our hiking groups. The walks will be on flat ground and soft grassy tundra.  
**Long Hikers Please come to the gangway first at 0900**  
**Medium and Leisurely hikers Please come to the gangway at 0910**
- 1230 **Lunch** is served in the Dining Room.
- TBA **Recherchefjord.** For our final landing we hope to go ashore near the Recherchebreen. We will offer a perimeter landing on the moraines where you can walk to have views of the glacier front and enjoy some Arctic solitude on the beach.  
**Please do not walk beyond the guides on the edge of the perimeter.**
- At the end of the landing we will offer you the chance to do a Polar Plunge! A swim in the Arctic waters of Svalbard!
- 1815 **Captain's Cocktails.** Please join the Expedition team and Captain Levakov in the Lounge to toast our voyage around Svalbard.
- 1900 **Dinner** is served. Enjoy your meal.



# Around Spitsbergen and

# Kvitøya

Longyearbyen

Sunday 18<sup>th</sup> August 2024

0530 Guests on the early morning flight SK4499 it is time to leave the ship. There will a packed breakfast available in the Lounge before you leave.

0715 Your final wake up call from Ali! Good Morning everyone, Good Morning!

**Before breakfast at 0730 please could you put your large check in luggage outside your cabin so that we can get it onto the pier for you.**

**If you are on the afternoon flight SK4425 at 14:35 we will take your luggage to the airport for you to collect.**

**If you have other arrangements to stay in Longyearbyen, please attach a **BLUE** label to your luggage so we make sure it goes on the bus to town.**

**Keep your hand luggage in your cabin or take it to the Lounge.**

0730 **Breakfast buffet** will be available in the Dining Room for 1 hour.

0830/0900 It is time to leave the Little Blue Ship, Plancius. Please make sure you have all your belongings with you and that you have taken your key card holder back to Reception.

**The bus will take you to town and then leave the Butikken at 1300 to go to the airport.**

1230 A light lunch will be available in the Lounge for those passengers staying on board for the next trip.

**On behalf of Oceanwide Expeditions the Captain, Crew and Expedition staff would like to thank you for travelling with us and wish you a very safe journey home.**