



Iceland
Greenland
Fjords
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Expedition Details

Expedition Details
Ship/Deck Plan
Need More Info?

More than a thousand years ago, Erik the Red set sail from Iceland to explore a stark and spectacular land of endless ice, rocky pinnacles, and countless islands and fjords. Follow the route of Erik the Red from Iceland’s beautiful western coast across the Denmark Strait to the rugged, ice-sculpted shores of eastern Greenland. Trace the coast northwards to seek out the big ice—from towering tidewater glaciers to huge icebergs calved from Greenland’s ice sheet—and venture into magnificent fjords to search for polar bears, whales, and other wildlife. As we

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Itinerary - 16 Days

Days 1 & 2 — Reykjavík, Iceland

Depart on an overnight flight to Reykjavík, the world's northernmost capital, which lies just south of the Arctic Circle. Take a walking tour of the Old Town, and venture into Hallgrimskirkja, a modern, Nordic-style church whose steeple soars to 210 feet, making it the tallest building in Iceland. Learn about Norse culture at the National Museum, and browse a collection of unusual whalebone carvings and Viking treasures and artifacts. In the afternoon, settle into your cabin on the *National Geographic Explorer*.

(L,D)

Day 3 — Exploring Iceland's Western Coast

Navigate Iceland's wild western frontier, sailing past the soaring

Latrabjarg cliffs, the westernmost point of Iceland and home to a huge population of razorbills. Continue to Flatey Island, a trading post for many centuries, and take walks around the charming hamlet that sprung up here. Explore the coast by Zodiac this afternoon.

(B,L,D)

Day 4 — Scoresby Sund, Greenland

Today we make our way across the Denmark Strait to Greenland's eastern coast, which is etched with thousands of fjords. Arrive at the mouth of Scoresby Sund, a deep, branching inlet with numerous fjords that extend all the way to the edge of the inland icecap. This area is marked by mountains that rise straight out of the sea, glistening tidewater glaciers, and rich fauna and bird life. With luck, we will experience the dramatic spectacle of ice calving off the east side of the Greenland ice cap; and, depending on ice conditions, we'll explore the area by foot and by Zodiac, searching for whales, seals, and other marine life.

(B,L,D)

Days 5 & 6 — King Oscar Fjord

The Greenland ice sheet is the second largest body of ice in the world after Antarctica, and covers roughly 80 percent of Greenland's surface. Head north to spend the next two days exploring remote inlets along Greenland's eastern coast, setting out on foot and using our underwater cameras and Remotely Operated Vehicle to discover marine life and fascinating underwater geology. Search for polar bears as we venture into King Oscar Fjord, and take a Zodiac or a kayak for a foray among the icebergs. If ice conditions are unrelenting, we will explore a bit further south, where there are spectacular fjords that are generally ice-free at this time of year.

(B,L,D)

Days 7 & 8 — At Sea

Enjoy the ship's amenities as we set a southern course, tracing the path of Eric the Red and Brendan the Navigator. Listen to

talks by our experts, relax with a book in the library or on deck, and keep an eye out for whales.

(B,L,D)

Day 9 — Skjoldungen Fjord

Arrive on Greenland's southeastern coast for a day of exploration in and around the stunning Skjoldungen Fjord, a U-shaped inlet framed by glaciers fed directly from the Greenland ice cap. Take a Zodiac ride to look for humpback whales, or hop in a kayak to paddle amid ice floes and waterfalls. On shore, choose from a variety of hikes with our naturalists, encountering hardy Arctic flora, ice-strewn lakes, and thriving bird life.

(B,L,D)

Day 10 — Prins Christian Sund/Nanortalik

Sail into Prins Christian Sund—a fjord which cuts far into the southern tip of Greenland—passing between soaring pinnacles and glaciers. Anchor off Nanortalik, the “place of polar bears,” so called for the polar bears that often pass through here in the summer. Go ashore to explore Greenland's most southerly town.

(B,L,D)

Day 11 — Hvalsey Church/Qaqortoq

Today, explore a remarkable site on the Viking Trail. On the shores of Qaqortukuloq fjord lies the evocative Hvalsey Church, one of the best-preserved Nordic sites in the world. Part of the settlement founded by Erik the Red's cousins in 986 A.D., Hvalsey has yielded fascinating clues to the daily life of the Vikings and their mysterious disappearance. Later, we dock in Qaqortoq, the largest town in South Greenland—with just over 3,200 residents. The Scandinavian influence is apparent in the wooden houses painted primary colors and scattered on the hillside, and colonial architecture dating back to the late 1700s can be found in the town center. Stroll through the town square and visit the museum, where Greenlandic kayaks, hunting equipment, and local art and handicrafts are on display.

(B,L,D)

Day 12 — Brattahlíð/Eriksford

Continue to Brattahlíð, where Erik the Red established his farm in 982 A.D. Erik's wife, Tjodhilde, built the first Christian church in the western hemisphere here, and from here his son, Leif Eriksson, launched the first voyages to North America—500 years before Columbus.

(B,L,D)

Day 13 — Nuuk

Perched on the seaside in the shadow of ice-capped Sermitsiaq Mountain, Nuuk is one of the world's smallest capital cities by population, with some 15,500 inhabitants. At the National Museum, examine 15th-century Qilakitsoq mummies found near Uummannatsiaq—a discovery that was featured in the February 1985 *National Geographic* magazine cover story.

(B,L,D)

Day 14 — Exploring Greenland's West Coast

Spend a day among the islands and fjords along Greenland's wild western coast, discovering natural wonders far off the beaten path. Take a Zodiac cruise, go kayaking, search for humpback or minke whales, or hike across the tundra.

(B,L,D)

Day 15 — Kangerlussuaq/Reykjavík, Iceland

Disembark in Kangerlussuaq. After a tour of the city, fly by charter to Reykjavík and check into our hotel.

(B,L,D)

Day 16 — Reykjavík/U.S.

Enjoy a guided tour of Reykjanes Peninsula, home to an array of dramatic volcanic features. Then transfer to Keflavík International Airport for your flight home.

(B,L)

