

# ESSENTIAL INFORMATION ARCTIC CRUISE ADVENTURE: IN SEARCH OF THE POLAR BEAR

## PASSPORT AND VISA INFORMATION

Your passport needs to be valid for **at least six (6) months** after your journey and should have a minimum of five (5) blank visa pages for entry and exit stamps.

Holders of U.S. and Canadian passports are not required to obtain a tourist visa for entry into Norway, Greenland or Iceland.

Our partner VisaCentral offers easy, efficient U.S. passport and visa processing. Visit them online at [visacentral.com/abercrombiekent](https://visacentral.com/abercrombiekent) or call 844 823 1224 and reference A&K's account number 73001. Service fees apply.

Citizens of other countries should contact the appropriate consular office for entry requirements pertaining to your journey.

## REQUIREMENTS RELATED TO COVID-19

There are currently no COVID-19 requirements for entry into Norway, Greenland or Iceland for U.S. and Canadian residents. Visit the U.S. Department of State at [travel.state.gov](https://travel.state.gov) or the Government of Canada at [travel.gc.ca/travelling/advisories](https://travel.gc.ca/travelling/advisories) for up-to-date information.

Prior to boarding, all guests must complete Ponant's **Mandatory Health Declaration** form, provided to you in Oslo.

## LOCAL HEALTH & SAFETY PROTOCOLS

**Special Note on Quarantine Requirements:** During the group journey, any guest that tests positive for COVID-19 will be required to isolate for a minimum of 5 days.

Wearing a mask is recommended in vehicles, Zodiacs, indoor spaces and any outdoor spaces where physical distancing is not possible. We encourage you to bring your own masks; a supply will be on hand where needed.

Note all protocols are subject to change in accordance with relevant guidelines, local regulations and conditions.

## SPECIAL CONSIDERATIONS FOR EXPEDITION CRUISES

This cruise travels to remote destinations far removed from medical facilities, and major medical care is not available. There is a medical center on board, staffed with a physician and nurse to offer immediate medical care to guests; fees may apply. A minimum level of fitness is required to enjoy this journey as intended, with active elements that include navigating stairs and gangplanks, entering and exiting Zodiacs, and walking over uneven terrain with steep slopes and slippery footing during shore excursions.

Please ensure that we are aware of any physical, medical or other condition that might affect your ability to participate on this journey. You may be required to produce a doctor's certificate prior to travel. Due to ship restrictions, women who will be six (6) months or more pregnant at any time during the cruise are not permitted to travel on Expedition Cruises. The ship owner's medical staff and Captain reserve the right to refuse passage to anyone who is deemed unfit for travel either before or during the journey.

### Emergency Evacuation Repatriation Insurance

Due to the remote locations, A&K requires proof of a minimum of \$100,000 per person in emergency evacuation/repatriation insurance for this journey. This minimum amount is included in A&K's Guest Protection Program; upgrades can be purchased for higher coverage on request. If you do not purchase A&K's Guest Protection Program, we require proof of alternative coverage. Please include your insurance carrier's name and telephone number when completing your guest information online. Additionally, carry proof of coverage with you on the cruise.

Please note emergency evacuation insurance provides for covering the cost associated with emergency evacuation and repatriation up to the limits of the respective policy; however, it does not guarantee the timing, method or mode of such evacuation and repatriation, which is subject to weather, location and other conditions or variables outside of A&K's control.

### CASH & CREDIT CARDS

Major credit cards are widely accepted in the areas visited on this journey. ATMs are common in larger cities and towns.

The euro is the official currency on board. Personal expenses incurred on board can be charged to your shipboard account and paid at the end of the expedition by major credit card or cash, including U.S. dollars. There is no currency exchange facility on board.

All onboard transactions made by bank or credit card are processed via the ship owner's home office in Marseille, France, and charges from your onboard account may not be processed until one month after your cruise. Call your bank or credit card company to advise about your travel plans.

### COMMUNICATIONS

Cell phones will not work in the remote areas visited by the ship, which will be cruising at latitudes that range outside of cell phone networks. If remaining in contact is of critical importance to you, you may consider carrying an iridium satellite phone which operates on a different satellite system and is more effective in these regions.

### BAGGAGE RESTRICTIONS & PACKING LIST

**Baggage Restrictions:** On the flight from Oslo to Longyearbyen, each passenger is limited to one (1) piece of checked luggage with a maximum weight of approximately 50 pounds (23 kilograms). For carry-on baggage, each passenger is limited to 1 piece of luggage with a maximum weight of approximately 15 pounds (7 kilograms). Baggage restrictions may vary from the airlines' stated policy on contracted charter flights and are subject to change at the discretion of the air carrier.

**Photography Equipment:** It is important to be mindful of baggage size and weight restrictions when planning for lenses and equipment you intend to carry on. Air carriers may require you to check your carry-on if it does not meet specific size and weight limits.

Please use the provided A&K luggage tags, even if your bags already have ID tags. This makes it easier for A&K staff to find and manage your luggage for you.

### Complimentary Expedition Gear

A&K provides each guest with an A&K parka designed for polar climates, along with a water-resistant backpack to use for carrying items ashore on Zodiac excursions. The parka and backpack are yours to keep. Complimentary use of waterproof pants and boots is also provided. These items will be valet-delivered to your stateroom and collected prior to disembarkation. Please visit [akexpeditiongear.com](http://akexpeditiongear.com) to place your order at least 90 days prior to departure. Trekking poles will be available for onshore excursions.

Refer to the online sizing charts when ordering items to ensure a proper fit. It will not be possible to exchange boots for a different size on board the ship. While A&K will make every effort to provide a parka based on your size request, exact fit cannot be guaranteed. For harder-to-fit sizes, it is recommended that you bring your own parka or boots to ensure a proper fit.

Should you choose to bring your own boots on the cruise, keep in mind that boots should be mid-calf to knee-high (12-16 inches high), waterproof, rigid and with high-traction soles. These are necessary when splashing through icy shallows during Zodiac landings or negotiating icy or rough terrain. Be sure to try your boots out in advance to ensure they are comfortable and allow enough space to layer one or two pairs of socks.

### Clothing

Casual comfortable clothing is appropriate on board. A jacket and tie for men and smart casual dress for women are suggested (although optional, given baggage weight restrictions) for the Captain's Welcome Cocktail Party and the Farewell Party on board ship and for dining at better restaurants during your leisure time.

As a general rule, pack clothing you can layer, as temperatures and conditions are likely to vary during your trip. Wearing several medium-weight layers of clothing under your parka allows you to adjust your personal temperature at will.

### PACKING CHECKLIST

#### Non-Expedition wear

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| <input type="checkbox"/> Casual slacks                               | <input type="checkbox"/> Personal garments                              |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Polo shirts, short-sleeve shirts or blouses | <input type="checkbox"/> Socks  |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Long sleeve shirts or blouses               | <input type="checkbox"/> Sleepwear                                      |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Lightweight rain jacket                     | <input type="checkbox"/> Comfortable walking shoes with low/no heels    |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Sweater or fleece jacket                    | <input type="checkbox"/> Lightweight waterproof hiking boots (optional) |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Brimmed hat for sun protection              | <input type="checkbox"/> Swimwear/cover-up (optional)                   |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Welcome & Farewell attire (optional)        |   |

#### Expedition Wear

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|---|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> 2-3 pairs of warm, casual trousers to wear under waterproof pants (preferably Expedition Stretch fabric; wool or corduroy fabrics work well) | <input type="checkbox"/> 3-4 pairs of tall warm wool or wool-blend socks. If you are prone to cold feet, pack an equal number of pairs of thin socks (such as silk or polypropylene sock liners) to wear with them. |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 2-3 warm turtlenecks or long-sleeved tops/shirts (preferably Expedition Stretch fabric; wool or corduroy fabrics work well)                  | <input type="checkbox"/> 1 polypropylene or wool ski cap that covers ears and a scarf or neck gaiter  |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 1 full set of thermal or silk long underwear   | <input type="checkbox"/> Heat-treated foot warming insoles and hand warmers (optional)  |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 2-3 warm, woolen sweaters, loft jacket or a medium-weight polar fleece jacket  | <input type="checkbox"/> 1-2 pair of ski mittens or ski gloves & thin glove liners (optional)   |

#### Other Recommended Items

- Face masks and hand sanitizer
- Extra eyeglasses/contact lenses
- Prescriptions and medications (in their original bottles and/or packaging)
- 1-2 pair and a spare of sturdy sunglasses or goggles with 100% UV protection
- Simple first-aid kit
- Charging cables for electronics
- Sunblock SPF 30 or higher
- Global travel adapter
- Heavy-duty, zip-close plastic bags for storing items in backpack
- Lightweight binoculars (10x42) for wildlife viewing
- Small LED flashlight

Laundry service is available at your hotel for a fee. Check costs and return times before using this service.

Traveller's Valet: A&K's complimentary laundry service for 8 articles of clothing per person will be once during cruises fewer than 12 nights and twice on cruises twelve nights or longer. Additional laundry can be done for a charge. Dry cleaning is not available.

## PHOTOGRAPHY TIPS FOR POLAR CRUISES

Your expedition cruise will provide photo opportunities any professional would envy, and with a dedicated photography coach travelling with you, you'll want to arrive on board prepared to capture the best images possible. It is recommended to bring plenty of memory or a computer or some other storage device to periodically download images. Memory cards are not available on board and many guests underestimate the number of photos they will take during the voyage.

While the ideal lens depends on your photographic style, in general, a telephoto zoom lens in the range of 70-300mm is the most useful. The second most useful focal length is 28-70mm. Wider lenses are practical for specialty shots only.

Battery life is greatly reduced in cold weather. Be sure to bring two sets of rechargeable batteries and a charger. During outings, carry a set of spare batteries in an inside pocket to keep them as warm as possible.

Salt-spray, rain, and snow can disable a camera. If you have a small camera, attach it to a lanyard so you can carry it under your parka. It also helps to keep it in a waterproof bag when not taking pictures. If you have a larger camera, consider a specialized waterproof covering. A shower-cap can also protect an SLR body in misting rain. Also be sure to bring lens-cleaning materials such as a micro-cloth.

A monopod can be helpful when using a telephoto lens. It can also do double-duty as a walking stick. Some photographers bring a tripod instead, but it can limit your on-land mobility. Remember that all monopods and tripods need to be sterilized at the gangway before going ashore on any landing.

Extreme care should be used when photographing wildlife in order not to cause any disturbance to a single animal, or group of animals. Do not harass wildlife for the sake of a photograph. Approach slowly, leaving a distance of 15-20 feet from nesting seabirds and at least 50 feet from wildlife. Remember, photography is not over when your shutter clicks. Retreat from your subject in the same way you approached.

## SHORE EXCURSIONS

Your ship is equipped with a fleet of Zodiacs (inflatable motorized rubber boats), each with 10 seats, that are used to transfer guests ashore for landings as well as to enjoy intimate guided tours of the coastlines we visit. While guests are assisted on to and out of Zodiac craft, some landings are wet and require wading through shallow water to shore. Once ashore, landings usually last for one and a half to two hours each.

Guests are briefed in advance to prepare the appropriate clothing and other gear. If early morning excursions are planned, your Expedition Team will make a general wake-up call over the ship's public-address system. (Individual wake-up calls on board can also be programmed by using your stateroom telephone.)

Before going ashore, you will receive a briefing on the guidelines and code of conduct established by Arctic Expedition Cruise Operators Guidelines (AECO). Relevant to the remote regions we visit, these guidelines ensure the utmost consideration for the fragile, natural environment, local cultures and cultural remains, while also ensuring the safety of our operations at sea and on land. It is recommended that you always follow the instructions of your Expedition Team and polar guides, who are well versed in these guidelines. To view the complete set of guidelines for visitors to the Arctic, visit [aeco.no/guidelines/visitor-guidelines](http://aeco.no/guidelines/visitor-guidelines).

Additionally, AECO's Clean Seas Guidelines offer tips on how to reduce our waste and plastic footprint in the locations we visit. To view these guidelines, visit [aeco.no/guidelines-2/clean-seas-guidelines-for-visitors-to-the-arctic](http://aeco.no/guidelines-2/clean-seas-guidelines-for-visitors-to-the-arctic).

Due to the nature of luxury expedition cruising as well as the remote areas we visit, a certain degree of flexibility and spontaneity is required. Scheduled sightseeing events and timings on board may be altered to accommodate ideal opportunities to explore ashore. Itineraries are for guidance purposes only and may be adjusted due to unforeseen circumstances — including weather, wildlife, ice, medical emergencies and other conditions beyond A&K's control — at the sole discretion of the Captain on board.

### TIPPING GUIDELINES

On A&K Luxury Expedition Cruises, all gratuities, including for the ship's crew and guides, are included in the cost of the program and group extensions.

For extra nights or Tailor Made services pre- or post-cruise, we suggest the following gratuities for these days only (noted in U.S. dollars):

	<b>Extra Nights/Tailor Made Services</b>
Local Guides	\$25 per person, per day (full day)
Drivers	\$15 per person, per day (full day)
Airport Transfer Drivers	\$5 per person, per transfer
Hotel Porters	\$2 per bag
Housekeepers	\$2 per person, per night
Included Meals	Included
Restaurants or Room Service on Own	10-15% unless already added

## LIFE ON BOARD 'LE BOREAL'

### SHIP AMENITIES

On board your exclusively-chartered ship, A&K limits occupancy to a maximum of 199 guests. The ship has three elevators and ramps accessing all passenger decks.

Each stateroom features individual climate control, 110V American/220V European plugs, Wi-Fi, stocked minibar, Nespresso coffee maker and tea kettle, small electronic safe, direct line telephone, Bose Bluetooth speaker, flat-screen TV with video on demand, wardrobe, vanity with mirror, robe, slippers, hairdryer and luxury bath products. Nightly turndown is provided.

All suites feature butler service - an A&K exclusive feature - which includes nightly canapes, personalized welcome, unpacking and packing upon request, room service, shoe polishing, expedited laundry, as well as spa and salon priority booking.

Deck 3 features a variety of guest services and public spaces. The reception area includes a 24-hour front desk and a boutique with a selection of clothing and jewelry. The spacious Main lounge offers a bar with live music on most evenings. The outdoor heated swimming pool is open if conditions permit. Lectures are held in the Theater with comfortable seating for all guests, as well as audio/visual equipment and an LED wall for projecting high-resolution images and videos. Finally, medical facilities with a doctor and nurse are available 24 hours a day.

On Deck 6, the Panoramic lounge offers a small library with a selection of books and board games and direct access to the panoramic terrace.

The Wellness area on Deck 5 features a fitness center offering guests complimentary use of equipment including stationary bikes, treadmills, Kinesis Wall and other exercise equipment. Due to safety reasons, there are no free weights on board the ship. Sea conditions may affect the fitness center's opening hours. There is a hair salon as well as a full-service spa equipped with a sauna and steam room, and which offers a range of beauty treatments and massage services. All spa and salon services are charged to your shipboard account.

A daily program features the following day's events, excursions, and hours for the restaurants, boutique and spa and is delivered to your stateroom each evening.

### ONBOARD CULINARY AND BEVERAGE PROGRAM

Dining is a special treat on board. International cuisine is available in two restaurants. The main dining room, on Deck 2, accommodates all guests in one seating. Another restaurant on Deck 6 offers indoor and outdoor seating (weather and sea conditions permitting) for breakfast, lunch and dinner served buffet style.

Complimentary 24-hour room service is also available. Early riser coffee and breakfast pastries, afternoon tea and late-night snacks are offered daily. Meals on board are scheduled around the day's sightseeing and shipboard activities. Please consult your daily program for mealtimes and opening hours.

Complimentary bar drinks, beer, house wine, soft drinks, coffee drinks, juices and water (excluding premium wines, Champagne and spirits) are provided while on board.

If you have special dietary requirements (vegetarian or vegan menus, food allergies, etc.) please advise Abercrombie & Kent at least six weeks prior to the beginning of your journey. In addition, please take the opportunity early in the cruise to meet with the Maître D' and Cruise Director to discuss your special requests and inform your server prior to dining. Chefs on board will make every effort to accommodate your needs. Kosher meals are not available on board.

## LANGUAGE & COMMUNICATIONS

English is the language used by staff on board A&K charters.

Complimentary Wi-Fi Internet is featured on A&K charters. Internet access at sea is made possible by satellite, and speed and connectivity are dependent on latitude, weather and atmospheric conditions as well as the number of guests using their computers or mobile devices. Do not rely on the ship's Internet service for applications such as social media sites, downloading files or streaming movies. Internet service may not always be available, and your patience and understanding are appreciated when this situation occurs.

Direct-dial telephone access is available in your stateroom. Charges for maritime satellite connections are significantly higher than those for land services and the cost of the call will be added your shipboard account.

## OF SPECIAL NOTE

The ship is nonsmoking except in a designated outside area of the ship.

Maritime law does not permit unrestricted access to the bridge. At the Captain's discretion, guests may be offered the opportunity to visit the bridge during scheduled times in accordance with security protocols.

Access to outdoor areas may be restricted during inclement weather and ship maneuvers. The ship's daily scheduled sightseeing events and timings may be altered, and flexibility is required.