

Expedition to the Thule Region

From **30/7/2021**
to **15/8/2021**

Ship: **L'AUSTRAL**

From **Kangerlussuaq**
to **Kangerlussuaq**



Flight Paris/Kangerlussuaq + transfers + flight
Kangerlussuaq/Paris

In partnership with GEO.

Discover a **PONANT** itinerary along the coastline of Baffin Bay, discovering the **region of Thule**, the mythical territory of the Far North.

From **Kangerlussuaq**, set off aboard *L'Austral* on a **17-day new expedition cruise** to the far reaches of the planet.

From the ice cap to the **ice floes**, via **glaciers, icebergs** and brash ice, you will sail among the Northern hemisphere's largest ice producers.

North of the Baffin Sea, in the **region of Thule**, guided by your Captain and your Expedition Leader, you will experience a tricky but spectacular sail between drifting **icebergs** and **sheets of ice floe**. If you are lucky enough you will perhaps observe one of the many **polar bears** that roam this favourable environment.

From Greenland's west coast with its mountains softened by glaciers to the Arctic mountain range's steep slopes and Thule's high Arctic tundra, you will be sailing through the **polar region's most spectacular landscapes**.

Polar bears, musk ox and Arctic wolves: journey to see this **amazingly rich fauna**.

We are privileged guests in these remote lands where we are at the mercy of weather, ice, tidal and current conditions. Landings on certain sites and the observation of certain wildlife cannot be guaranteed. They vary from day to day, making each PONANT cruise a unique experience. The Captain and the Expedition Leader will make every effort to ensure that your experience is as rich as possible, while complying with the safety rules and instructions imposed by the AECO.



The information in this document is valid as of 11/8/2020

Expedition to the Thule Region

YOUR STOPOVERS :

KANGERLUSSUAQ

Embarkation 30/7/2021 from 16h00 to 17h00

Departure 30/7/2021 at 18h00

From 1941 to 1992, the town of **Kangerlussuaq** in Greenland was home to an American military base. Nowadays, thanks to its international airport, it has become a transit point for travellers seeking adventure in the Far North. Located to the north of the Arctic Circle, this town is the starting point of magnificent discoveries surrounded by **unspoiled nature**. Indeed, just a few dozen kilometres from there it is possible to get close to the Greenland ice sheet, the largest **body of ice in the Northern Hemisphere**. From Kangerlussuaq, admire also the superb landscapes of tundra in autumnal colours, where Arctic hares, musk oxen, Arctic foxes, reindeer, falcons and eagles live.

SISIMIUT

Arrival 31/7/2021

Departure 31/7/2021

During your cruise, we invite you to discover **Sisimiut**, founded in 1756 and the second largest town in Greenland. This small town is typical of Greenland, boasting bewitching panoramas: here and there, **colourful stilt houses** dot the **undulating landscape**, and the small fishing port stands as the gateway to an icy realm. As for the town centre, it is home to a number of historic buildings, a small church and a museum which retraces the history of the Inuit people, as well as many craft shops. When your ship drops anchor here, you will set out to meet the locals in a typically arctic atmosphere.

DISKO BAY

Arrival 1/8/2021

Departure 1/8/2021

To the east of Baffin Bay, discover Disko Bay, scattered with countless icebergs produced by the Ilulissat Icefjord, a UNESCO World Heritage Site. From your ship, admire the majestic ballet of these ice giants as they slowly drift across the dark waters. This site is a natural marvel of Greenland, and is also renowned as an observation point for the region's many humpback whales. The encounters with wild fauna and stunning landscapes in the heart of this spectacular and fragile nature will be pure moments of wonder for you.

PAUL-ÉMILE VICTOR BASE CAMP, EQI GLACIER

Arrival 2/8/2021

Departure 2/8/2021

"The most beautiful place in the Arctic" is how Paul-Émile Victor described Greenland, a land of great icebergs and of towering ice formations calved by the giant glaciers of the polar ice cap. **The Eqi Glacier** is one of the region's most impressive sights. Here, the silence is broken only by the roaring and cracking of the ice. It is impossible to know if one is shivering from cold or from the sheer thrill of being here... Imagine the vast outline of a glacier, its **translucent crystals** glowing with an ice-blue fire in the sunlight. Paul-Émile **Victor's shelter** cannot be overlooked; it was from here that the French Polar Expeditions' anthropological and geographic explorations set off in the 1950s.

KUANNIT COAST

Arrival 3/8/2021

Departure 3/8/2021

Opposite Ilulissat, sailing for a few hours between the majestic icebergs of Disko Bay will allow you to reach the southern coast of the large Disko Island and admire the fields of angelica and the spectacular sculptures formed by the **huge volcanic cliffs** of Kuannit, where numerous sea birds find refuge. Combining glaciers, snow-capped peaks, flowery valleys, lakes, beaches and volcanic formations, the island's exceptionally lush environment has inspired local beliefs. The island is believed to have a **legendary and distant origin**: it is said to have been towed back from the country's south by fishermen in kayaks, fastened to "the hair of a child".

AKULLEQ

Arrival 4/8/2021

Departure 4/8/2021

In the curve of Uummannaq Bay, opposite a narrow passage between two islands, you will discover the **moonscape** of the small desert island of Akulleq. The **ochre yellow and orange** of this mineral site look ablaze under the sunshine of the polar summer. From the island's summit you will be able to contemplate a panoramic view of the bay's magical landscape and its huge icebergs with surprising shapes.

KARRAT FJORD

Arrival 4/8/2021

Departure 4/8/2021

During your cruise along the Greenland coast, we invite you to discover the **Karrat Fjord**. Located in the north of the famous **Uummannaq Bay**, it stretches out towards the ice sheet. As you sail in this exceptional setting, take the time to admire the beautiful **icebergs** that surround you, as well as the **sheer cliffs** that tower along the fjord.

KULLORSUAQ

Arrival 5/8/2021
Departure 5/8/2021

Well beyond the Arctic Circle, in the majestic landscapes of Greenland's Northwest, you will find the village of **Kullorsuaq**, the last bastion of Greenland's traditional hunters. Here is where you will find Greenland's true character... Vast mineral expanses, **sumptuous mountains**, impressive glaciers and, above all, the local population which still lives off fishing and seal or bear hunting. Hospitality and respect for nature are essential elements in the daily lives of these men, who live an austere life. When we drop anchor in this remote part of the world, set off to discover these friendly people who are also **talented craftsmen**, deftly sewing the furs and skins of marine mammals. This will be a unique and authentic experience.

SAVISSIVIK

Arrival 6/8/2021
Departure 6/8/2021

Some places in this world are so magical that their beauty cannot be described in words... **Savissivik**, a small Inuit village with less than a hundred inhabitants, is one such place. Rightly considered to be **the biggest iceberg graveyard in Greenland**, it is a stunning sight to behold. During your Zodiac[®] outing, you will sail between these icy giants. Once on land, you can hike to a viewpoint from which to enjoy breathtaking views over these icebergs, which come in an incredibly diverse range of shapes and colours. Photographers will love it. Savissivik Bay attracts many **bears** and is also known for having been the home of one of the world's biggest **meteorites**, but the latter has now been moved to a museum in New York.

THULE REGION

Arrival 7/8/2021
Departure 8/8/2021

Thule, the region located to the northwest of Greenland, is the **mythical name used to designate the Far North**. The presence of many drifting icebergs calved from the glaciers of Greenland and sheets of ice floe can make sailing tricky - but spectacular - in this region. You will attempt to sail as far north as possible and if you are lucky enough you will perhaps observe one of the many polar bears that roam this favourable environment. You'll perhaps visit **traditional villages** such as Dundas ("old Thule") and Siorapaluk, Greenland's northernmost native settlement, where you will probably be greeted by a joyous group of children, who are always happy to welcome visitors.

POND INLET, NUNAVUT

Arrival 9/8/2021
Departure 9/8/2021

On **Baffin Island**, located in northern Canada at the mouth of the famous NorthWest Passage, there is a small Inuit settlement at the very bounds of infinity. To get there, cross the **Arctic Circle**, the imaginary line that separates man from lands of mystery and wonder. It's not so much the way of life that sets Pond Inlet's inhabitants apart, so much as

the setting. Snow-capped mountains, **fjords** and **glaciers** combine in a dazzling natural environment that fills space and expands time. Some discoveries change you forever: this is one of them.

ICY ARM FJORD

Arrival 10/8/2021

Departure 10/8/2021

The east coast of Baffin Island is a real lacework of fjords. Among them, in the north, is the spectacular **Icy Arm fjord**. As you sail these parts, you'll be dazzled by the immense cliffs that are sometimes over 1,000 metres high. This is a paradise for **base jumping** (parachute jumping from the top of the cliffs). During your stop here, you will have the opportunity to hike at the feet of these mountains and within the **glacial valleys**. Keep your eyes open when you get back on your boat: you'll probably get the chance to observe marine mammals, such as **whales, orcas** and even **narwhals**.

ISABELLA BAY, NINGINGANIQ WILDLIFE AREA

Arrival 11/8/2021

Departure 11/8/2021

Welcome to the kingdom of the cetaceans! Here, those who love the giants of the Arctic won't know where to look. **Isabella Bay** is in fact part of the Ninginganiq National Wildlife Area, one of the finest places to observe **bowhead whales**. From your ship, watch the sumptuous ballet performed by these impressive mammals. With undersea faults over 300 metres deep, Isabella Bay, located on the north-east coast of Baffin Island, attracts cetaceans which come here to feed. In addition to the bowhead whales, the uncontested stars of these parts, the **Ninginganiq Wildlife Area** is also home to ringed seals, narwhals, polar bears, king eiders, little auks and northern fulmars.

SAM FORD FJORD, NUNAVUT

Arrival 12/8/2021

Departure 12/8/2021

All around you is a raw landscape of spectacular beauty. Nothing seems to want to disturb the silence. You are in the **Sam Ford Fjord**, on the east coast of Baffin Island. Located only a few kilometres away from the Inuit community of Clyde River, this fjord has the kind of **world's end** appearance that only the Arctic lands can offer. From your ship, allow yourself to be dazzled by the series of **vertiginous cliffs** plunging into the waters of the fjord. These impressively high walls of rock, known worldwide to climbing enthusiasts, are reflected in the waters of the fjord, as though to completely shift perspectives and blur the lines between land and sea.

AT SEA

Arrival 13/8/2021

Departure 13/8/2021

During your day at sea, make the most of the many services and activities on board. Treat yourself to a moment of relaxation in the spa or stay in shape in the fitness centre. Depending on the season, let yourself be tempted by the swimming pool or a spot of sunbathing. This day without a port of call will also be an opportunity to enjoy the conferences or shows proposed on board, to do some shopping in the boutique or to meet the PONANT photographers in their dedicated space. As for lovers of the open sea, they will be able to visit the ship's upper deck to admire the spectacle of the waves and perhaps be lucky enough to observe marine species. A truly enchanted interlude, combining comfort, rest and entertainment.

EVIGHEDSFJORDEN

Arrival 14/8/2021

Departure 14/8/2021

Your ship glides slowly along the water towards the west coast of Greenland, to enter **Evighedsfjorden**, just a few kilometres south of Kangerlussuaq. Evighedsfjorden means "**the fjord of Eternity**", and for good reason: just when you think you've reached the end of this stretch of sea measuring over 100 kilometres in length, it seems to go on forever, as though to bring even more pleasure to those sailing in it. The spectacular scenery ranges from glaciers to **tundra** with an abundant flora, and jagged cliffs where **numerous bird species** have taken up residence. Take the time to observe the white-tailed eagles and the colonies of seagulls and black-legged kittiwakes flying overhead in the area.

KANGERLUSSUAQ

Arrival 15/8/2021 at night

Disembarkation 15/8/2021 at 07h00

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