

Fire and Ice in the Arctic

From **4/9/2021**
to **20/9/2021**

Ship: **LE SOLEAL**

From **Seward, Alaska**
to **Nome, Alaska**

Embark with **Ponant** aboard *Le Soléal* for an unforgettable **expedition cruise** to discover the wonders of Arctic Alaska.

Over **17 days**, cruising **between Russia and the United States** from **Seward** to **Nome**, you will have the chance to sail in the **Bering Strait** and discover extraordinary landscapes combining ice, volcanoes, and tundra dotted with the ephemeral flowers that bloom during the Arctic summer.

You'll first reach **Geographic Harbor**, situated in the heart of the stunning **Katmai** National Park and Reserve. There is a strong chance you'll be able to observe grizzlies, as they reign supreme here.

Le Soléal will then make its way along the Alaska Peninsula, an emerged part of the Pacific Ring of Fire. Here, each island is a **volcano** crowned with ice. The **Aleutian Islands** form a barrier between the Bering Sea and the Pacific Ocean, so the marine wildlife here is particularly abundant.

Listed with UNESCO, the **nature reserve on Wrangel Island** is a unique ecosystem where the greatest biodiversity in the Arctic can be found. It is home to a large population of walruses, countless sea birds, and of course the lord of the Arctic: the **polar bear**.

At the end of your cruise, you will disembark in the small city of **Nome** for your return flight to Seattle.

Subject to ice and weather conditions. The expedition highlights and itineraries described above illustrate possible experiences only and cannot be guaranteed.

Visits to Wrangel Island are subject to permission being granted by the Russian authorities. This part of calls can only be confirmed once this authorisation has been received, six months before the cruise departure date.



Flight Seattle/Anchorage + transfers +
Flight Nome/Seattle



The information in this document is valid as of 1/6/2020

Fire and Ice in the Arctic

YOUR STOPOVERS :

SEWARD, ALASKA

Embarkation 4/9/2021 from 16h00 to 17h00

Departure 4/9/2021 at 18h00

Seward is located on the **Kenai peninsula**, south of Anchorage. This bustling port, built for the fishing and shipbuilding industries, will show you just how vibrant it is, with its shops and galleries. The entrance gate for the sublime **Kenai Fjords National Park**, Seward nestles in the heart of very beautiful scenery, between **glaciers**, mountains and very rich **marine life** (whales, sea otters, orcas, seals...).

GEOGRAPHIC HARBOR, ALASKA

Arrival 5/9/2021

Departure 5/9/2021

Here you are in the heart of **Katmai National Park and Preserve**. Here, the rocky cliffs are punctuated with white marks. These are the remains of ash deposits that accumulated following a volcanic eruption in the past. A little further south, you will explore every part of **Geographic Harbor** and its tall cliffs covered in vegetation and plunging into the sea.

CHANKLIUT ISLAND, ALASKA

Arrival 6/9/2021

Departure 6/9/2021

Off the Alaska Peninsula hides a small gem: **Chankliut**. From mountainous terrain to flowery moors and valleys covered in sea lyme-grass, this island, which is part of **the Aleutian archipelago**, offers landscapes with a unique charm. During your walk around a lake, you will cross a sumptuous meadow where beautiful aconite and willowherb vie for attention. The more courageous will venture onward to the neighbouring valley and its **ancient calderas** to admire the splendour of the scenery. This totally uninhabited island bears no trace of any past settlement. Small, curious heads will catch your attention, however: crested puffins and horned puffins bask on the water near spotted seals...

DUTCH HARBOR, UNALASKA

Arrival 7/9/2021

Departure 7/9/2021

During your cruise, discover an exceptional site: **Unalaska Island** and its port, **Dutch Harbor**. Located between the Pacific Ocean and the Bering Sea, on the Aleutian Islands, Dutch Harbor is the only deep water port in the archipelago. As for the island itself, it offers you unique landscapes: volcanic summits swept by the wind and surrounded by the sea, lush green valleys, sometimes covered with bright summer flowers, sometimes with deep winter snow... Unalaska is not only an island with astonishing nature and very varied wildlife, it is also rich in history, where ancient **indigenous cultures** and remains from World War II can be seen and their tales be told.

SAINT PAUL ISLAND, PRIBILOF ISLANDS

Arrival 8/9/2021

Departure 8/9/2021

Part of the Earth's History was written between Alaska and Russia. We invite you to discover a unique environment that seems to stretch out to infinity. Lost in the middle of the Bering Sea, **the Pribilof archipelago** is made up of four volcanic islands where nature has crafted exquisitely beautiful landscapes. Here, on the islands of **Saint Paul and Saint George**, you will find **majestic volcanoes**, lava deserts and crater lakes, offering travelers a magnificent vantage point from which to observe a fauna composed almost exclusively of fur seals. The archipelago is also renowned as a paradise for birds, especially on Saint Paul, as more than 240 different species of seabirds take flight from the top of its majestic cliff.

ST MATTHEW ISLAND

Arrival 9/9/2021

Departure 9/9/2021

Saint Matthew island is right in the middle of the Bering Sea, between Siberia and Alaska. Classified as a National Wildlife Refuge by the United States, this island covered in **wet tundra** corresponds to the northern boundary of the polar bear's range during winter. It is home to many birds, including the **McKay's bunting**, an endemic species whose population is estimated at 6,000 individuals. We can also find **Arctic foxes** there. Although populated by the Aleut during prehistoric times Saint Matthew Island is **uninhabited** today.

AT SEA

Arrival 10/9/2021

Departure 11/9/2021

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.

WHALE BONE ALLEY, YTTYGRAN ISLAND

Arrival 12/9/2021

Departure 12/9/2021

Your ship nears the wild coast of Yttygran Island at the first light of dawn; discovered by Jean Malaurie in 1976, it is a holy place shrouded in mystery. On the silent beaches, bathed in a surreal light, lies Whale Bone Alley, the revered and sacred shamanic grounds of the Chukchi people. Along a 400 m stretch of beach, the Chukchi have carefully arranged hundreds of whale bones, skulls and jawbones in accordance with ancient rites and there they stand, proud and reaching for the astral sky. With each passing year a little more of our ancient history is lost, and this site bears valuable witness to humankind's eternal search for a harmonious co-existence with the Spirits and with Nature and the rituals we've employed along the way.

AT SEA

Arrival 13/9/2021

Departure 13/9/2021

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.

WRANGEL ISLAND RESERVE

Arrival 14/9/2021

Departure 17/9/2021

Imagine a natural island that is mostly mountainous and, for the rest of its landscapes, alternates between vast tundra plains and areas of great lakes, lagoons and cliffs. Welcome to **Wrangel**, the most important hotspot of Arctic biodiversity. Situated between the East Siberian Sea and the Chukchi Sea, the island was named after the Russian explorer Ferdinand von Wrangel. Listed as a **UNESCO World Heritage Site**, the island is a rare, **precious** and very ancient **ecosystem** with unique vegetation, as well as an exceptional fauna: it is home to the majestic polar bear and the vast majority of the Russian Arctic's walrus population. The island also holds traces of the last mammoths and is home to several endemic species.

BIG DIOMEDE

Arrival 18/9/2021

Departure 18/9/2021

From your Zodiac[®], discover **Big Diomede**, between Siberia and Alaska. This island, measuring approximately 30 km² and located in the middle of the Bering Strait, is Russia's most easterly point. Although it was once inhabited by the Inuit, it is now home to just a handful of Russian soldiers on a military base. Just a few kilometres further east, on the other side of **the International Date Line**, lies **Little Diomede**, an American island which Russia sold to the United States in 1867.

PROVIDENIYA

Arrival 19/9/2021

Departure 19/9/2021

Across the Bering Strait from Alaska, which it almost touches and can be glimpsed when the weather is fine, the town of **Provideniya** seems to keep a watchful eye over ships heading for the East Siberian Sea. Nestled against mountains with peaks of up to 2,000 m, Provideniya is the gateway to the **Chukotka Peninsula**, a polar region as yet unknown to the general public, with striking landscapes and a primitive beauty like no other.

AT SEA

Arrival 19/9/2021

Departure 19/9/2021

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.

NOME, ALASKA

Arrival 20/9/2021 early morning

Disembarkation 20/9/2021 at 07h00

Located along the Bering Strait at the westernmost point of Alaska, **Nome** offers the rustic charm of a former gold-mining town, set in the middle of magnificent wilderness. As you weave in and out of the brightly coloured houses, you will discover the pioneering legacy that still marks local traditions. Fishing, **reindeer rearing**, sledge-racing... People here live from their manual labour. The surrounding plains provide stunning vantage points for observing Arctic

fauna.