

# Wild Landscapes of West Greenland

Toronto, Canada, North America

## Day 1 Toronto

Having made your way to Toronto, check in at our group hotel located near the airport for an overnight stay. At our welcome briefing this evening, enjoy a drink and meet fellow expeditioners. Please visit the Aurora Expeditions hospitality desk to collect your luggage cabin tags and to speak with our ground operations team, who may have information to share with you about pre-embarkation procedures and also the charter flight to Nuuk tomorrow. You will receive Aurora Expeditions cabin tags for your luggage. Please clearly label the tags with your name and ship cabin number. Accommodation: Westin Toronto Airport Hotel



## Day 2 Embarkation, Nuuk

Please ensure that your luggage is fitted with cabin tags clearly labelled with your name and cabin number. Any valuables or personal items should be kept on you throughout the day. Your luggage will be delivered to your cabin ahead of your arrival on board. After breakfast at the hotel, board our charter flight to Nuuk, where the Sylvia Earle awaits. After boarding, there is time to settle into your cabin before our important safety briefings. This evening, meet your expedition team and crew.

## Day 3 Sisimiut

Greenland's second largest town, Sisimiut is located approximately 54 kilometres (33.5 miles) north of the Arctic Circle, meaning that during

summer, you can experience the midnight sun here. The town is famous for the old blue church with the gate made of whale bone. In the cosy museum next door to the church, you will find an excellent reconstruction of an Inuit turf house as well as exhibits of local history and early life in Greenland. Sisimiut offers hiking trails with various degrees of difficulty. The easier trails take you through the town itself, its outskirts and into the mountains, where you will find spectacular vantage points. Some 4,500 years ago, the Saqqaq culture arrived from Canada and settled in the area. They lived here for approximately 2,000 years, after which they mysteriously disappeared from the area. The Dorset culture arrived around 500 CE and stayed until the 1200s until they were replaced by the Thule culture, and today, most of the population of Sisimiut are descendants of the Thule culture.

## **Day 4 Qeqertarsuaq, Godhavn, Disko Island**

This compelling island seems to have more in common with Iceland than Greenland. While most of the interior is mountainous and glaciated, its beautiful shorelines boast black sandy beaches, unusual basalt columns, hot springs and dramatic lava formations. We plan to appreciate the colourful flowers on the Kuannit Hike, where you can walk stunning landscapes, see ancient basalt columns and perhaps spot whales in Disko Bay.

## **Days 5-7 Expedition cruising**

Note: In genuine expeditionary style, our itinerary for the following days is heavily dependent on weather conditions and unpredictable sea ice. The following places are some that we hope to visit. Uummannaq Set on an island of the same name, Uummannaq is located 600 km (373 mi) above the Arctic Circle and is famous for its heart-shaped mountain. It's also well-known for the Qilakitsoq mummies, Greenland's oldest, that were discovered in nearby. Kayakers can enjoy paddling among the icebergs and keeping watch for whales that frequent the area. Upernavik Set amid a labyrinth of small islands, Upernavik is home to traditional settlements and enormous icebergs that Greenland is famous for. Kayakers can paddle in the serene bay among the glittering icebergs while other expeditioners can discover the town on walks or hike in the surrounding area. Upernavik is the world's northernmost open-air museum. A walk through the old part of town, which encompasses the original colonial buildings, tells the cultural

history of the area, including the colonial and Viking periods. Keep a look out for a traditional old kayak and umiaq boat, which highlights the main mode of transport used by locals to navigate the archipelago during summer.

## **Day 8 At Sea**

Find a spot in one of our many observation lounges and enjoy the spectacular surrounding landscapes. Our talented and knowledgeable expedition members will present informative and entertaining talks about the region that you're travelling through.

## **Day 9 Qeqertarsuaq, Disko Island**

In Qeqertarsuaq, we enjoy a Zodiac excursion in Disko Bay that's often filled with icebergs and is a hotspot for marine life including humpback, fin, minke and bowhead whales. Enjoy a walk through the settlement, perhaps try some local tea made from fresh local herbs, learn about the history of Qeqertarsuaq at the museum before walking along the black sand beach towards the colourful colonial buildings.

## **Days 10-11 Ataa Sund, Ilulissat**

Known as the 'birthplace of icebergs', this region produces some of the most dazzling icebergs found anywhere on earth. We explore ice-filled Ataa Sund and hope to experience a few of the active glaciers from a safe distance. In Ilulissat, we visit the UNESCO World Heritage-listed Icefjord and stand in awe at its immensity. Sermeq Kujalleq, also known as Jakobshavn Glacier, is the most productive glacier – not only in Greenland but the entire Northern Hemisphere. It produces 20 million tonnes of ice each day, all floating into the Ilulissat Icefjord and Disko Bay.

## **Day 12 Aasivissuit- Nipisat UNESCO World Heritage site**

We hope to visit a Greenlandic settlement located near the Aasivissuit-Nipisat UNESCO World Heritage Site, a place where the local inhabitants

live a traditional fishing and hunting lifestyle that dates back 4,000 years. The settlement also features the remarkable Qaammat Pavilion, built on the ridge at the top overlooking the Ikeertoq fjord. This stunning architecturally designed and award-winning crystal structure was created by Swedish architect, Konstantin Ikonmidis, in cooperation with the local community and the UNESCO team. It is a tribute to nature, the land and cultural traditions of the indigenous Inuit people.

## **Day 13 Eternity Fjord**

Eivghedsfjorden, or Eternity Fjord, is one of the more spectacular fjord complexes in west Greenland due to its forested landscape. Hike through a forested valley, witness hills become towering snow-capped mountains as countless glaciers pour down from sheer cliff walls. Occasionally, the thunderous sound of a calving glacier breaks the silence in a place where you are unlikely to see another soul.

## **Day 14 Disembark in Nuuk, Fly to Toronto**

During the early morning, we cruise into Nuuk and disembark at approximately 8.00 am. Farewell your Expedition Team before transfer to the airport for a charter flight to Toronto for an overnight stay. Accommodation: Westin Toronto Airport Hotel

## **Day 15 Depart Toronto**

After breakfast, check out of your room and continue your journey with a transfer to the airport.