

SMALL-SHIP EXPEDITION CRUISE

High Arctic Expedition: Where Art Meets Land

September 03–16, 2028

From **\$12,295** to **\$23,300** USD

Aboard the *Ocean Nova*

Starts: Ottawa, ON, Canada

Ends: Toronto, ON, Canada

Charter Flights:

Northbound Charter Flight: \$1,300 USD

Ottawa, ON, Canada to Resolute, Nunavut, Canada.

Southbound Charter Flight: \$1,300 USD

Kangerlussuaq, Greenland to Toronto, ON, Canada.



Expedition Summary

Seeing the North Anew

Across Greenland and the Canadian High Arctic, familiar measures of scale begin to shift. Mountains rise directly from narrow fjords, glaciers descend toward the sea, and changing ice transforms the passage from one day to the next. Light moves across these landscapes in ways that have long drawn artists, scientists, navigators, and travellers north.

Yet the Arctic is not scenery waiting to be interpreted. It is an Inuit homeland, known through place names, travel routes, hunting grounds, family histories, and creative traditions carried across generations. Encounters with Inuit artists and cultural voices bring these relationships into view, revealing art not simply as a representation of the North, but as an expression of life within it.

The living systems of the Arctic offer another way of reading the landscape. Whales surface among ice, walrus and seals gather in productive waters, and seabirds trace connections between sea and sky. In Sarvarjuaq/Pikialasorsuaq, the North Water Polynya, recurring open water sustains one of the Arctic's richest marine ecosystems. What may first appear stark or still gradually reveals itself as intricate, connected, and alive.

Art remains an important current throughout the voyage. A.Y. Jackson, Frederick Banting, and Lawren Harris were among the artists whose northern journeys shaped how generations of people in southern Canada imagined the Arctic. Their work forms one chapter in a much larger story of observation and expression. Presented in partnership with the McMichael Canadian Art Collection, the expedition places that artistic legacy within a broader conversation that includes Inuit knowledge, contemporary creativity, natural history, and direct experience.

From Greenland's glacier-carved coast through Smith Sound and Kane Basin to Ellesmere Island, Tallurutiup Imanga, and Devon Island, places previously encountered through paintings, photographs, maps, or stories take on physical scale. The angle of light, movement of ice, sound of wildlife, and presence of community reveal what no single image can contain.

This voyage explores how the North has been seen, how it is known by those who live there, and how direct experience can deepen and expand those understandings. Where art meets land, looking closely opens a richer relationship with a radiant, inhabited, and profoundly living North.

Expedition Summary

Seeing the North Anew

Journey through Greenland and the Canadian High Arctic, where glaciers, shifting ice, wildlife, and endless summer light have inspired generations of artists and travellers. In partnership with the McMichael Canadian Art Collection, explore how art shapes perceptions of the North while Inuit artists and cultural voices reveal a living homeland known through place, memory, and knowledge. From Sarvarjuaq/Pikialasorsuaq to Ellesmere Island and Devon Island, encounter landscapes whose scale and vitality no single image can contain in all its living complexity.

Highlights

Journey into the High Arctic

Follow Greenland's glacier-carved coast into Kane Basin, pressing north as far as ice and weather allow. With Ellesmere Island to the west and Greenland to the east, the route leads toward some of the highest latitudes Adventure Canada has ever explored. Sea ice determines the passage, and every mile north is earned. This is expedition travel in its truest form, shaped by changing conditions, careful decisions, and the exhilarating question of just how far north the journey can reach.

Experience Inuit homelands

Travel through Kalaallit Nunaat (Greenland) and Nunavut in the company of Inuit guides, whose knowledge brings the coast, ice, wildlife, and communities into view as parts of living homelands. Generations of travel, hunting, observation, and story remain present in the names and meanings held across these places. In Ausittuq (Grise Fiord), Canada's northernmost civilian community, life unfolds beneath the mountains of Ellesmere Island. Time shared in these homelands is a privilege and an opportunity to get to know the North through those who call it home.

Step beyond the frame

For many, the Arctic is first known through paintings, photographs, and stories. In partnership with the McMichael Canadian Art Collection, this voyage brings those representations into conversation with the place itself. Experience the scale, movement, and life of the Arctic

firsthand while exploring what art can reveal and how direct experience can deepen understanding.

Discover the living waters of the North

Enter Sarvarjuaq, the newly protected Canadian waters of Pikialasorsuaq, the North Water Polynya shared by Canada and Greenland. Recurring open water and nutrient-rich currents sustain one of the Arctic's greatest concentrations of life, including millions of seabirds and important habitat for narwhal, bowhead and beluga whales, walrus, seals, and polar bears. For Inuit, these waters have long been hunting grounds, travel routes, and a connection between communities. Their protection recognizes both extraordinary ecological abundance and generations of Inuit knowledge and stewardship.

Step into the Franklin mystery

Set foot on windswept Beechey Island, one of the most storied places in Arctic exploration. Here, Franklin's expedition spent the winter of 1845–46 before sailing south and disappearing. Three graves, stone cairns, and remains of the camp still mark the stark shoreline, offering a tangible connection to a mystery that has drawn searchers and travellers north for nearly two centuries.

Highlights at a Glance

- Press north through Smith Sound and Kane Basin toward some of the highest latitudes Adventure Canada has explored, travelling as far as ice and weather allow.
- Travel through Inuit homelands in Kalaallit Nunaat and Nunavut with Inuit guides who know these lands and waters.
- Go beyond paintings, photographs, and stories to experience the Arctic firsthand, in partnership with the McMichael Canadian Art Collection.
- Enter Sarvarjuaq, the newly protected Canadian side of Pikialasorsuaq, where recurring open water sustains one of the Arctic's richest marine ecosystems.
- Set foot on Beechey Island and encounter the graves, cairns, and camp remains at the heart of the Franklin mystery.

Itinerary

September 03–16, 2028

Day 1: Qausuittuq (Resolute), NU, Canada

Day 2: Beechey Island

Day 3: Tallurutiup Imanga (Lancaster Sound) & Devon Island

Day 4: Ausuittuq (Grise Fjord)

Day 5: Ellesmere Island

Day 6: Kane Basin

Day 7-8: Smith Sound

Day 9: At Sea

Day 10: Upernavik, Greenland

Day 11: Western Greenland

Day 12: Ilulissat

Day 13: Sisimiut Coast

Day 14: Kangerlussuaq, Greenland

Itinerary

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In the High Arctic, weather, ice, and community priorities guide every journey. Flexibility leads to the best discoveries.

Day 1: Qausuittuq (Resolute), NU, Canada

The North Beckons

Arrive by charter flight from Ottawa and step into Qausuittuq, set on gravel flats and moraine beneath the glow of continuous summer light. The community's history of relocation in 1953 intertwines with its present role as a hub for Arctic research and travel. As you prepare to embark aboard the *Ocean Nova*, take time to orient yourself to the stories and landscapes that shape this place.

Day 2: Beechey Island**In the Wake of Franklin**

Beechey Island holds one of the most tangible chapters in the Franklin mystery. HMS *Erebus* and HMS *Terror* spent the winter of 1845–46 here before sailing south and disappearing. The graves of three crew members, remains of the winter camp, stone cairns, and traces left by later search expeditions still mark its narrow, windswept shore.

Protected as part of Beechey Island Sites National Historic Site, these remains capture the expedition at the threshold of mystery. The island later became a base for the vast search effort that helped map much of the Canadian Arctic Archipelago.

Day 3: Tallurutiup Imanga (Lancaster Sound) & Devon Island**Whales, Ice, and Vast Horizons**

Sail through Tallurutiup Imanga, one of Canada's largest marine protected areas, alive with whales, seals, and seabirds. Beneath towering cliffs and drifting ice, the sea glimmers with shifting light. Step ashore on Devon Island, the world's largest uninhabited island, where glaciers meet the sea and tundra unfolds in broad, glacial valleys. Here, light and silence create their own compositions, inviting stillness, reflection, and a deep sense of the Arctic's living beauty.

Day 4: Ausuittuq (Grise Fiord)**Life in the Place That Never Thaws**

Set between the mountains of southern Ellesmere Island and the waters of Jones Sound, Ausuittuq (Grise Fiord) is Canada's northernmost civilian community. Its Inuktitut name means "the place that never thaws," a reference to the enduring ice above the community.

Ausuittuq was established through the High Arctic Relocations of 1953 and 1955, when the Canadian government moved Inuit families from Inukjuak and Mittimatalik, in part to reinforce Canadian sovereignty. The hardship and injustice of that history remain part of the community's story, commemorated by a monument overlooking the shore. Today, family, language, harvesting, and community life give this small and remarkable Inuit hamlet its enduring character.

Day 5: Ellesmere Island**Mountains at the Edge of the World**

Explore the rugged coastline of Ellesmere, Canada's northernmost island. Towering mountains, vast ice caps, and deep fjords define a landscape of extraordinary scale. Here, the High Arctic exceeds the images that first inspired us, revealing a world more intricate, dynamic, and alive than any single representation can capture.

Day 6: Kane Basin**Where Continents Nearly Touch**

Sail into Kane Basin, where Ellesmere Island and Greenland nearly meet. Glaciers tower above drifting sea ice, and the shifting Arctic light continually transforms the passage. Long travelled by Inuit, these waters later became a route for expeditions seeking both the lost Franklin expedition and a way to the North Pole. The basin bears the name of American explorer Elisha Kent Kane, who crossed it in 1854 during his search for Franklin.

Days 7-8: Smith Sound**Gateway to the Great Upwelling**

Venture through Smith Sound, the dramatic channel connecting Baffin Bay with Kane Basin and part of the greater Pikiyasorsuaq region. Pikiyasorsuaq means "great upwelling" in Kalaallisut and is known in Nunavut as Sarvarjuaq.

Recurring open water within the surrounding sea ice makes this the Arctic's largest polynya and one of the most biologically productive regions north of the Arctic Circle. Nutrient-rich waters sustain an extraordinary abundance of life, drawing whales, seals, and millions of seabirds to this vital Arctic ecosystem.

Day 9: At Sea**A Passage Shaped by Ice**

From Smith Sound, follow Greenland's coast south through waters shaped by ice, current, and weather. Icebergs drift past in an ever-changing procession, while distant mountains, seabirds, and the possibility of marine wildlife keep attention fixed beyond the decks.

A day aboard creates time to look more closely at the region unfolding around us. Presentations, workshops, and informal conversations with educators explore the wildlife, geography, history, and living cultures of the High Arctic. Between sessions, the decks and observation spaces invite shared discoveries as the journey continues south.

Day 10: Upernavik, Greenland**Archipelago of Islands and Ice**

Greenland's coast breaks apart here into a vast maze of islands, narrow channels, and drifting ice. Upernavik, meaning "the springtime place," rises from this intricate seascape in a bright sweep of colourful houses and a working harbour.

Fishing and hunting remain central to life across the archipelago, connecting Upernavik with the smaller communities scattered along the coast. Its historic quarter forms the world's northernmost open-air museum, preserving the church, trading buildings, boats, and tools of an earlier era. Surrounded by rock, sea, and ice, Upernavik reveals the remarkable character of life along Greenland's northern coast.

Day 11: Western Greenland**Cathedrals of Ice**

Sail among towering glaciers and drifting bergs, each one a shifting sculpture in white and blue. Fjords echo with the sound of calving ice, and mountains rise sheer above waters crowded with floes. The scale and geometry here—immense, elemental, ever-changing—recall the stark forms the Group of Seven once sought to capture in paint.

Day 12: Ilulissat**Where Icebergs Are Born**

Ilulissat means "icebergs," a fitting name for a city beside one of the world's great moving ice systems. At the head of the UNESCO-listed Ilulissat Icefjord, Sermeq Kujalleq ranks among the fastest and most active glaciers on Earth. Its immense icebergs travel slowly through the fjord before entering Disko Bay, continually transforming the seascape.

The icefjord has shaped human life here for more than four thousand years. That relationship continues in contemporary Ilulissat, a lively Greenlandic city where fishing boats crowd the harbour and the streets bustle with residents and travellers. Restaurants showcase Greenlandic ingredients, while cafés, shops, and the striking Ilulissat Icefjord Centre reflect the city's growing cultural and creative energy.

Here, deep human history, vibrant city life, and constant environmental change come together at the edge of the ice.

Day 13: Sisimiut Coast**Greenland's Rugged Western Shore**

Cruise along the dramatic Sisimiut coast, where mountains rise sharply from the sea and small settlements cling to the shoreline. This region reflects Greenland's seafaring traditions, with communities deeply tied to land and water. As you sail, the shifting light across jagged peaks creates endless new scenes—each one a masterpiece of Arctic colour and form.

Day 14: Kangerlussuaq, Greenland**At the Head of the Great Fjord**

Overnight, the journey continues through the long reaches of Kangerlussuaq Fjord, whose Kalaallisut name means "big fjord." Conditions permitting, portions of this dramatic passage may come into view as the waterway extends inland between rounded mountains and slopes shaped by glacial sediment.

At its head lies Kangerlussuaq, an unusual inland community established around an American airbase built during the Second World War. Its sheltered location is known for comparatively stable flying conditions, one reason the site was selected for the airbase and later became Greenland's principal aviation gateway for decades. That same geographic advantage makes Kangerlussuaq particularly well suited to the transition between ship and charter aircraft. Beyond the runway, the landscape stretches toward the Greenland Ice Sheet through a region shaped by ancient Inuit travel and caribou-hunting routes.

Time ashore is limited to disembarkation and the transfer to the airport for the charter flight.

Kangerlussuaq marks a fitting final threshold, where a journey completed by sea gives way to the flight home.