



Adventure
Canada

SMALL-SHIP EXPEDITION CRUISE

Into the Northwest Passage

August 17–September 02, 2028

From **\$18,995** to **\$37,495** USD

Aboard the *Ocean Victory*

Starts: Toronto, ON, Canada

Ends: Yellowknife, NT, Canada

Charter Flights:

Northbound Charter Flight: \$1,700 USD

Toronto, ON, Canada to Kangerlussuaq, Greenland.

Southbound Charter Flight: \$1,150 USD

Kugluktuk (Coppermine), NU, Canada to Yellowknife, NT, Canada.



Expedition Summary

The Passage in Full Light

Travel westward from Kalaallit Nunaat (Greenland) into the waterways of Inuit Nunangat, the Inuit homeland encompassing the land, water, and ice of Arctic Canada. Beneath the long light of late Arctic summer, the Northwest Passage unfolds as a vast cultural landscape, an extraordinary marine ecosystem, and one of the world's most storied maritime routes.

August brings colour and movement to the North. Tundra plants brighten the land, seabirds remain active around nesting cliffs, and whales, seals, walrus, and polar bears may be encountered along the coast and among the ice. From Greenland's glacier-carved shores to Tallurutiup Imanga and the channels of the western Arctic, each region reveals another expression of a season still alive with possibility.

The east-to-west route follows the direction pursued by many early European expeditions, including Franklin's, and later navigated successfully by Roald Amundsen. Their histories remain visible at archaeological sites and in the names carried across maps. Yet these voyages entered lands and waters known, travelled, and named by Inuit for generations. Inuit knowledge proved essential to those who survived here and later helped reveal what had happened to those who did not.

Inuit guides and cultural educators bring these homelands into view through perspectives shaped by lived experience. Community visits, archaeological sites, wildlife encounters, and time on the nuna reveal how history, knowledge, language, and contemporary life remain inseparable across the Passage.

As the route carries west, ice, weather, and distance continue to determine the way forward. Each changing channel reveals another dimension of the Northwest Passage as a maritime journey, a living Arctic ecosystem, and an enduring Inuit homeland.

Expedition Summary

Website & brochure copy · 80 words

The Passage in Full Light

Travel westward through the Northwest Passage beneath the long light of late Arctic summer. From Greenland's glacier-carved coast to the sweeping tundra of the western Arctic, journey



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through Inuit Nunangat, where land, water, and ice sustain communities and iconic wildlife. Following the east-to-west course sought by generations of explorers, Inuit educators and expert guides illuminate the Passage's layered history and ecosystems supporting seabirds, marine mammals, and tundra wildlife. This is one of the world's great maritime journeys.

Itinerary

Day 1: Kangerlussuaq, Greenland

Day 2 & 3: Sisimiut Coast

Day 4: Ilulissat

Day 5 & 6: Northwest Greenland

Day 7: At Sea

Day 8: Smith Sound

Day 9: Ausuittuq (Grise Fiord), NU, Canada

Day 10 & 11: Tallurutiup Imanga (Lancaster Sound) and Devon Island

Day 12: Beechey Island

Day 13: Ikirahaq (Bellot Strait)

Day 14–16: Kitikmeot Region

Day 17: Kugluktuk, NU, Canada

Highlights

Discover Inuit Nunangat through Inuit perspectives

Move through Inuit Nunangat with Inuit who share knowledge, stories, and perspectives rooted in the places through which we travel. Exchanges aboard and ashore provide context for what surrounds us, revealing the Arctic as homeland and helping us understand how relationships among people, *nuna* (the land), sea, and community continue to shape life across the region.

Consider exploration history at Beechey Island

On the windswept shores of Beechey Island National Historic Site, encounter one of the most tangible chapters in the story of the Franklin Expedition. Graves and archaeological traces evoke

the experiences of those who wintered here, while Inuit knowledge and history broaden the familiar exploration narrative and our understanding of the Northwest Passage itself.

Stay alert for the wildlife of the Arctic

Wildlife can appear unexpectedly in the High Arctic: a seabird colony filling the air with sound, marine mammals surfacing alongside the ship, or animals glimpsed across the tundra. Rather than pursuing a checklist, we watch patiently and let each encounter reveal something about the habitats and relationships that make life possible here.

Witness a river of ice at Ilulissat

At Ilulissat, follow the journey of ice from the Greenland Ice Sheet toward the sea. Sermeq Kujalleq feeds the UNESCO-listed Ilulissat Icefjord, where immense icebergs gather, drift, fracture, and change. Trails and viewpoints ashore—and opportunities on the water when conditions permit—bring the scale and movement of this remarkable landscape into view.

Enter the waters of Tallurutiup Imanga

Explore Tallurutiup Imanga, where dramatic geology, glaciers, productive waters, and abundant birdlife come together in a High Arctic marine environment of exceptional richness. Its importance extends beyond wildlife and scenery: this is part of Inuit Nunangat, shaped by longstanding Inuit relationships with the land, sea, and their resources.

Highlights at a Glance

- Journey through Inuit Nunangat alongside Inuit and experience the Northwest Passage as a homeland shaped by enduring knowledge, culture, and connection.
- Follow the Northwest Passage west beneath the long light of late Arctic summer, navigating storied channels from Greenland to the Kitikmeot Region.
- Stand among immense icebergs at Ilulissat Icefjord, where Sermeq Kujalleq sends extraordinary forms of ancient ice into Disko Bay.
- Encounter the wildlife of Tallurutiup Imanga, an exceptionally rich marine ecosystem supporting whales, walrus, seals, polar bears, and seabirds.
- Step into the Franklin mystery at Beechey Island, where graves and expedition remains connect its windswept shoreline to one of exploration's most enduring stories.

Itinerary

Day 1: Kangerlussuaq, Greenland

Cross the Arctic Circle

Kangerlussuaq lies within a broad glacial valley between the Greenland Ice Sheet and the sea. Its dry climate and unusually stable weather led to the establishment of an American air base here during the Second World War and continue to make it one of Greenland's most important aviation gateways. The surrounding region has a much longer history as a place of Inuit travel and hunting.

After arriving by charter flight from Toronto, board the expedition vessel and begin the long passage through Kangerlussuaq Fjord. Mountains, glacial valleys, and pale meltwater mark the transition from Greenland's interior to its western coast. Crossing the Arctic Circle, the route opens towards the long light and expansive waters of late Arctic summer.

Day 2 & 3: Sisimiut Coast

A Coast of Fjords and Human History

Greenland's west coast unfolds as a complex meeting of islands, mountains, sheltered waterways, and deep fjords. Late summer brings colour to the tundra, with Arctic cotton, crowberry, dwarf birch, and willow spreading across slopes beneath dark rock. Seabirds are active along the coast, while whales may be encountered in the waters offshore.

Human history here reaches back more than 4,500 years. Archaeological traces left by successive cultures, including Saqqaq, Dorset, and Thule peoples, speak to generations of movement and adaptation along this coast. Zodiac cruises, hikes, and time ashore offer different ways to encounter a landscape where the sea has long connected hunting grounds, settlements, and travel routes.

Day 4: Ilulissat



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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 5 & 6: Northwest Greenland

Through a Coast of Islands and Ice

Northwest Greenland is a far-reaching world of islands, narrow channels, sheltered bays, and deep fjords enclosed by steep mountains. Glaciers descend from the ice sheet, while the West Greenland Current carries immense icebergs north along the coast. Many began their journeys in Disko Bay, joining bergs released by glaciers farther north to form a great moving flotilla of towers, arches, and fractured blue faces.

Small communities occupy rocky islands and natural harbours throughout this intricate seascape. Fishing and hunting remain central to life, while boats connect settlements separated by water and rugged terrain. Explore the coast by ship, Zodiac, and on foot, following shorelines alive with seabirds and walking across tundra brightened by Arctic cotton, crowberry, and late-summer wildflowers. Long hours of daylight reveal a landscape of immense scale, where every channel offers a different arrangement of rock, water, and drifting ice.

Day 7: At Sea

Across the Great Northern Bay



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Baffin Bay extends between Greenland and the Canadian Arctic, carrying currents, wildlife, and immense drifting ice between its coasts. Icebergs moving north along Greenland may turn west through these waters before joining the southbound current along Baffin Island. Whales, seals, northern fulmars, kittiwakes, murre, and dovekies also travel and feed across this vast marine ecosystem.

A day aboard offers time to watch the bay unfold from the decks and observation spaces. Presentations, workshops, and conversations with Inuit cultural educators, naturalists, historians, and other expedition team members explore the wildlife, geography, cultures, and exploration history of the region. Ahead lies Smith Sound and the entrance to the waterways of the High Arctic.

Day 8: Smith Sound

Between Greenland and Ellesmere

Smith Sound forms a dramatic channel between Greenland and Ellesmere Island. Mountains and glaciers rise on either side, while drifting ice moves through waters connecting Baffin Bay with the waterways farther north. The scale of the passage is heightened by the clear, extended light of late summer.

Inuit have long travelled and hunted throughout this region. During the nineteenth century, Smith Sound also became a route for expeditions searching for Franklin and attempting to reach the North Pole. These histories meet within a landscape still governed by ice, currents, weather, and distance.

Day 9: Ausuittuq (Grise Fiord), NU, Canada

Life in the Place That Never Thaws

Set between the mountains and sea of southern Ellesmere Island, Ausuittuq means “the place that never thaws.” Canada’s northernmost civilian community occupies a landscape of glaciers, vast tundra, and waters that remain covered by sea ice through much of the year.

The community was established in 1953 through the Canadian government’s relocation of Inuit families from Inukjuak and Mittimatalik. That difficult history remains an important part of Ausuittuq’s story, alongside more than seventy years of community life shaped by family,



ingenuity, and cultural continuity. Hunting, travel on the *nuna* (land), artistic expression, and the rhythms of the seasons remain closely woven into life here. Time with local hosts offers a view of contemporary High Arctic community life within the immense landscape of Ellesmere Island.

Day 10 & 11: Tallurutiup Imanga (Lancaster Sound) and Devon Island

Where Life Gathers in the High Arctic

Tallurutiup Imanga is the ecological engine of the eastern Canadian Arctic. Nutrient-rich waters and recurring areas of open water support narwhal, beluga and bowhead whales, walrus, seals, polar bears, and some of the Canadian Arctic's largest seabird colonies. In late summer, marine mammals continue to move through the channels while birds gather along cliffs and shorelines before migration.

This National Marine Conservation Area is also an Inuit homeland used for travel, harvesting, and cultural practice for millennia. Inuit stewardship and *Inuit Qaujimajatuqangit*, or Inuit knowledge, play an essential role in its protection. Inuit expedition team members and naturalists bring the relationships among currents, ice, wildlife, and human life into focus.

To the north, Devon Island rises in broad plateaus, glacial valleys, gravel plains, and open tundra. It is the world's largest uninhabited island, although archaeological sites attest to centuries of Inuit and earlier human presence. Walks and Zodiac explorations reveal delicate late-summer vegetation, immense geological scale, and coastlines approached most naturally from the sea.

Day 12: Beechey Island

In the Wake of Franklin

Beechey Island holds one of the most tangible chapters in the history of Northwest Passage exploration. Franklin's expedition spent the winter of 1845–46 here before sailing onward and disappearing. Three graves, remains of the camp, and stone structures left by later search expeditions still mark its stark shoreline.



Beechey became a gathering point for those who came north in search of Franklin, leaving supplies, messages, and traces of their own journeys. A fourth grave belongs to Thomas Morgan of HMS *Investigator*, who died during one of these searches. In the decades following Franklin's disappearance, dozens of expeditions entered the Arctic, charting extensive areas and extending European scientific and imperial attention across Inuit Nunangat.

Inuit testimony proved essential to tracing the expedition's final movements and, generations later, locating its lost ships. Beechey Island connects Franklin's failed voyage with its wider legacy, including expanded geographical knowledge, growing colonial ambitions, and an increasingly sustained southern presence in Inuit homelands.

Day 13: Ikirahaq (Bellot Strait)

Where Two Arctic Waters Meet

Ikirahaq is a narrow, twenty-five-kilometre passage separating Somerset Island from the Boothia Peninsula. At its narrowest, little more than a kilometre divides the shores. Strong tidal currents move through the channel as the waters of the eastern and western Arctic meet.

Granite walls rise close to the route, while seals, whales, seabirds, and occasionally polar bears may be seen along the shore or among the moving ice. On the southern side lies Murchison Promontory, the northernmost point of mainland North America.

Ikirahaq has long been travelled by Inuit. It later became important to expeditions searching for Franklin and attempting to navigate the Northwest Passage. The English name honours French naval officer Joseph René Bellot, who joined two Franklin searches before his death in the Arctic in 1853. Passage through this confined and powerful waterway remains shaped by current, ice, weather, and careful navigation.

Day 14–16: Kitikmeot Region

Sail Through the Heart of the Northwest Passage

The Northwest Passage opens westward into the low tundra, scattered islands, and distant horizons of the Kitikmeot Region. Wide sounds narrow into channels that weave among gravel coastlines, wetlands, and archaeological sites. Muskoxen and caribou move across the land,



seals and whales travel the surrounding waters, and migratory birds gather before beginning their journeys south.

The western Kitikmeot is the homeland of Inuinait, a distinct regional group of Inuit whose language, Inuinnaqtun, carries the place names, stories, and knowledge of this region. Generations of harvesting caribou, muskoxen, seals, and fish have shaped distinctive clothing, tools, food traditions, and patterns of travel. Today, Inuinait communities are strengthening the transmission of their language and culture while sustaining close relationships with the land and sea.

These waters also form part of the route navigated by Roald Amundsen during the first complete transit of the Northwest Passage. His success drew heavily upon skills learned from Netsilik Inuit while overwintering near present-day Uqsuqtuuq (Gjoa Haven) in the eastern Kitikmeot. Over three days, landings, tundra walks, Zodiac explorations, and time along the coast bring the wildlife, cultural depth, and open geography of the western Arctic into view.

Day 17: Kugluktuk (Coppermine), NU, Canada

Where River and Passage Meet

Kugluktuk stands where the Coppermine River enters Coronation Gulf. Its Inuinnaqtun name means “place of moving waters,” reflecting the currents and rapids that have long defined this meeting of river, tundra, and sea.

The Coppermine has supported travel, fishing, and life on the land for generations. Today, Kugluktuk is a close-knit community known for its artists, strong connections to the surrounding country, and position at the western edge of Nunavut.

Here, the east-to-west passage reaches its conclusion at the mouth of one of the Arctic’s great rivers. After disembarkation, a charter flight carries guests to Yellowknife, completing the journey from Greenland’s glacier-carved coast across the waterways of Inuit Nunangat.