

TEXAS BAR

A truly remarkable expedition in the lands north of Spitsbergen. A place where few humans venture, an arctic paradise where polar bears reign and silence dominates, a land of icebergs, glaciers and rocky outcrops..

 Region	Spitsbergen
 Activity	Kayaking Svalbard in the Summer
 Duration	24 days
 Group	6 to 10 people
 Code	ENSPTEXA
 Price	From €5,995
 Level	5/5
 Comfort	1/5
 Language(s)	English

ITINERARY

Day 1 Evening flight to Longyearbyen



Welcome to Longyearbyen, we will greet you at the airport and escort you to your accommodation in the city under the light of the midnight sun.

Transport: Private vehicle and aeroplane

Accommodation: Guesthouse or private apartment

Day 2 Longyearbyen



Your guide will join you at your accommodation this morning for an official briefing - this morning is a chance to meet the group, prepare for our adventure and deal with logistics like equipment, the weather forecast and safety procedures. We should also have time to explore Longyearbyen before our afternoon departure by boat for the North via Isfjord.

Activities: Explore Longyearbyen & prepare for expedition

Transport: Boat

Accommodation: On board

Day 3 Navigating the North of the Svalbard Archipelago



Today we cruise along the west coast to the north of the archipelago. It is a top start to a great expedition, cruising through the ice-filled waters. The boat will drop us on a beach during the night depending on the weather conditions.

Transport: Boat

Accommodation: Camping

Days 4 to 21 The Great Northern Expedition



Over the next 17 days we will spend each night camping, discovering different sheltered spots and immersing ourselves completely in these northern lands. We can expect a new adventure each day in this varied remote wilderness where polar bears reign supreme - the northernmost kayaking destination!

To begin, we will most likely head to Smeerenburg Fjord in the northwest of the island, just opposite the island of Amsterdam. It is one of the most spectacular places of the archipelago with its distinctive, sharp peaks.

In these untouched remote northern lands we will observe white and blue glaciers tumbling abruptly into the sea and thousands of islands which are home to a surprising variety of wildlife. We will weave around islands of black rock (the last rocks before the North Pole), and imposing icebergs which drift through the seas, battered by the winds...

We will find ourselves in an area where few humans have ventured before and explore coves and cliffs sheltering thousands of birds - our own private spectacle. Here, on the beaches, it is not uncommon to find seals or walrus basking in the sun...

Then we will explore the great ochre red flat lands where reindeer roam. This is the kingdom of the mighty polar bear, we are likely to come across these breathtaking mammals often and are able to observe them in their natural environment.

We will then head to Wood Fiord and Leifst where we find the hut of Texas Bar, opposite the huge glacier of Monaco that gave its name to this magnificent expedition. The Glacier Front stretches for more than 3 miles (+5kms) and carries tons of icebergs which are scattered across the bay. It is in this magical place, where in 2006 we were graced with the presence of a female polar bear with her two cubs who had taken up residence near our camp for three days.

Our remote wilderness adventure comes to an end at the secret hot springs of Woodfjorden where we will be picked up by the boat that will take us back to civilisation.

Return to Longyearbyen by boat.

Activities: Sea-kayaking expedition

Accommodation: Camping each night & guesthouse in Longyearbyen day 21

📍 Day 22 Longyearbyen



A day to relax and explore Longyearbyen with its edge-of-the-world atmosphere. We recommend visiting Svalbard museum and you can also choose from a variety of optional activities like summer dog-sledding or a cruise to the abandoned Russian city of Pyramidene... Please note that today also acts as a 'safety day' in case of delays in our itinerary.

Activities: Various optional activities

Transport: Airport transfer late this evening

Accommodation: Not included

📍 Day 23 Farewell Svalbard



Transfer to the airport for your flights home

📍 Day 24

Please note that this itinerary, including distances and times, is indicative. Our guides aim to provide the adventure that is best suited to the weather, your interests and the demands of the group. Please be aware that in order to achieve this, changes to the programme may be made.

Other trips you may like

DATES & PRICES

International departures:

No departure for now

Trip code: ENSPTEXA

Included

- Airport transfers
- Two nights guesthouse accommodation in Longyearbyen
- Free walking tour of Longyearbyen
- All technical camping gear
- All sea-kayaking equipment
- Full supervision by an experienced professional guide
- Full board except a final evening meal in Longyearbyen (day 22)
- Overnight boat trip across Isfjord to expedition start
- Boat trip back to Longyearbyen after expedition

Not included

- Registration fee: €18 per person (free for under 12s)
- Flights
- Accommodation on day 22 - late evening departure for flights
- Evening meal on day 22 in Longyearbyen

Additional Options

Please let us know if you would like to reserve any of the following optional activities:

- Meal in a local restaurant: from €30
- Svalbard museum: from €9
- Day cruise to Nordenskjöll Glacier via the abandoned Russian settlement of Pyramiden: from €200
- Summer dog-sledding: from €110 for a half day excursion

Notes

Comfort 1/5: Camping

This trip includes two nights guesthouse accommodation in Longyearbyen, one night on a boat and all other nights in tents. Normally we provide a 3 man dome tent per 2 people for maximum space and comfort. For our basecamps we usually set up a fully equipped mess tent for meal times, including a table and stools. We are proud of our high quality camping equipment and take care to monitor and store everything correctly.

Level 5/5: Extreme

Our extreme adventures are only for those in in very good physical shape. Experience in the chosen activity/activities is mandatory as is a positive attitude. Please note that our difficulty ratings may vary depending on the weather.

Terms and conditions

Inscription

Booking a trip with Altai Svalbard implies acceptance of the terms and conditions of sale. Each customer is required to complete a registration form and, subject to availability at the time of registration, travellers are expected to pay a deposit of 30% of the total price to complete their booking. Payments can be made online or by bank transfer. You will receive an e-mail with your booking confirmation.

Facturation

Once your booking is confirmed you will receive an invoice by e-mail. The full balance of the trip must be received at least 30 days before your departure date. We reserve the right to cancel your booking, free of charge, if this deadline is not respected.

Annulation

If for any reason you have to cancel your trip, Altai Svalbard requires written confirmation of your decision. The money you have paid will then be refunded according to the following deductions:

- Cancellation received more than 30 days prior to the departure date: a sum of €50 per person will be retained
- Cancellation received 30 to 21 days before the departure date: your deposit, 30% of the total trip price will be retained
- Cancellation received 20 to 14 days before the departure date: 50% of the total trip price will be retained
- Cancellation received 13 to 7 days before the departure date: 75% of the total trip price will be retained
- Cancellation received less than 7 days before the departure date: 100% of the total trip price will be retained

Special cases:

Please note that, regardless of the date of cancellation or modification if you have agreed to pay for services such as hotel reservations, flights or additional activities, these services are usually non-refundable so additional fees may apply.

Fixed airfares: if your airline ticket was issued in advance, often done to avoid significant surcharges, you will be charged 100% of any non-refundable fees if you wish to change or cancel your flight plan.

Fixed in-country costs: early charges for firm bookings will be charged if you cancel or modify your trip. Insurance costs: if you have taken out comprehensive or cancellation insurance, the cost of insurance is due and cannot be refunded.

Please note that fees apply according to the date we receive your cancellation or modification request in writing.

If we have to cancel a departure due to an insufficient number of participants, you will be informed no later than 21 days before departure and a full refund will be issued, you will not be entitled to further compensation. We reserve the rights to cancel departures due to exceptional circumstances which may impact the safety of participants. Such circumstances include those amounting to 'force majeure' in which case participants will receive a full refund but they will not be entitled to any compensation.

Modification du contrat

If you wish to make a change to your booking please contact Altai Svalbard in writing; you will be expected to pay any fee which might arise from this change. In the event of unforeseen external events, Altai Svalbard may change some aspects of the travel contract. If any changes are necessary you will be informed as quickly as possible.

Prix et révision des prix

The prices on our website are updated regularly and all of the prices we advertise are accurate when published. We reserve the rights to make changes to any of these prices. Before you make a booking we will give you the up-to-date price of your chosen holiday including any supplements, upgrades or additional activities you may have requested. If the number of travellers is fewer than the indicated number of participants on the website, a small group surcharge may be applied. For all of our trips we include details of services, prices and what is/is not included but please be aware that changes to the prices may be necessary in accordance with exchange rates or price changes of various components of the journey.

Cession du contrat

If you are unable to travel for any reason, you can transfer your booking to another person in which case our modification conditions apply. Both the transferor and transferee will be jointly and severally liable for payment of the total holiday price and other associated expenses. Some airline carriers treat name changes as cancellations and you may be required to pay for the cost of a new ticket.

PRACTICAL INFO

Staff

You will be welcomed at the airport by a representative from our friendly team and accompanied for the duration of your holiday. Armed with an abundance of experience and a wealth of knowledge our professional Svalbard team are experts in polar environments. All activities are lead by our qualified guides who are all English speaking outdoor practitioners with a passion for everything arctic. Please note that this adventure takes place in an isolated, polar environment where around 2500 Polar Bears live - your guide will explain safety rules which must be followed.

Food

Besides one evening meal in Longyearbyen this trip includes full board. For your evening meal on the final day there are shops and kitchen facilities available or local restaurants for you to sample - we have lots of recommendations!

During our expedition, each person is responsible for their own equipment, including food, and will carry everything therefore light and easy to cook meals are favoured. In spite of this, plus the lack of fresh fruits and vegetables in the arctic regions, we are proud of the varied, and frankly delicious food we provide even when camping. You will have the opportunity to try local products and several local delicacies. Each day will start with a hearty breakfast accompanied by plenty of tea and coffee or hot chocolate. You will carry a picnic lunch and plenty of snacks for the day and evening meals will include three courses, soup, a hot main dish and a dessert.

Please let us know about any dietary requirements when you book the trip and we will work with you to cater for your needs. Please be aware that this is a participatory trip, your help cooking and setting up camp is expected. We want you to be a member of our team; not a sheep!

Accommodation

Longyearbyen: 2 nights guesthouse or private apartment accommodation , double rooms, shared kitchen and bathroom facilities.

On board: One night on the cruise ship to reach start point of expedition

During the expedition: normally we provide a 3 man dome tent per 2 people, we use equipment appropriate for Svalbards sometimes changeable conditions. We will also provide a spacious mess tent for meal times, fully equipped with kitchen equipment including a table and stools.

Transportation

This trip includes transportation by local boats.

Budget & exchange

The currency in Svalbard (and Oslo) is the Norwegian Krone, NOK

Please budget for:

- Any additional activities
- Drinks and personal expenses
- One evening meal in Longyearbyen, kitchen facilities, shops and restaurants available*
- Food and perhaps accommodation during your transfer in Oslo

*We recommend a budget starting from €30 / 290NOK for a traditional meal in a local restaurant

Supplied equipment

We will provide you with all of the technical equipment you will need for this adventure - all you need to bring are your hiking boots.

Group Equipment

We will provide the group with...

- A 'Tepee' style mess tent with table, stools and cooking equipment
- 'Ortlieb' water belts
- A Sarsat beacon
- A VHF radio
- A heavy caliber rifle
- An alarm gun
- Mini-flares and penjectors for each group member
- A copy of Spitsbergens animal records
- A first aid kit
- Books about local flora and fauna

Individual Equipment

We will supply you with...

- A tent per two people (a 3 man dome tent for maximum space and comfort)
- A self-inflating sleeping mat
- A suitable synthetic sleeping bag (-6°C)
- An aluminium thermos flask per 2 people
- Helly Hansen fleece lined salopettes for kayaking and when ashore

Sea-kayaking equipment

- A tandem sea kayak with directional rudder (1 per 2 people)
- A Gore-tex dry suit with integrated warm fleece liner
- A pair of kayak pogies
- A spray deck
- A life jacket with two pockets
- A neoprene balaclava
- 1 pair of 'croc' style shoes/sandals

Our tandem sea kayaks were chosen for their stability and comfortable, they are suitable for first time kayakers and have plenty of storage capacity for our expedition gear. They are suitable for the changeable sea conditions and in the unlikely event of capsizing they are surprisingly easy to right, even at sea you would be back on board and paddling in no time.

Vital equipment

For Longyearbyen

- Your swimming stuff (for the pool or sauna options)
- Clothes for travelling in (these can stay here when you are on the expedition part of this adventure)
- A small towel and your personal toiletries

For the expedition

- A sleeping bag liner
- Your walking boots
- Waterproof, windproof jacket (with a hood)
- Waterproof trousers (breathable)
- Warm gloves and hat
- Thermals - top & long johns
- A fleece/jumper
- Suitable underwear, t-shirts and walking trousers
- Thin socks and thick socks (we recommend bringing 3-4 pairs of thick socks)
- Sunhat and sun cream
- Sunglasses (UV 400)
- Toiletries and toilet roll
- Any personal medication
- A water bottle/flask
- A small rucksack to use as a day bag
- Head torch & spare batteries (although it is nearly always light in the summer months)

Material

We prefer that you do not wear cotton clothing, including underwear, when participating in activities. When cotton gets wet from water or sweat it ceases to insulate and it does not dry fast. The best materials for outdoor activities are fast drying materials like polyester or materials which are warm when wet like wool.

The most powerful materials against the wind and rain are 'breathable' materials like Gore-Tex or Nikwax.

Our advice for keeping warm

It can be humid and cold in Spitsbergen, please think carefully about what clothes you pack especially for our winter trips. We will provide warm outer layers but the layers you wear next to your skin can make the biggest difference. We recommend:

- No cotton
- Bring dry spares of everything, including underwear and gloves
- Wear multiple layers including:
 1. A warm breathable base layer
 2. A second thermal layer
 3. Wind and waterproof protective out layers

Helpful equipment

You may also consider packing

- Your camera (and suitable protective case)
- Binoculars
- A comfortable evening outfit
- A comfortable pair of shoes for the evenings
- Inflatable pillow
- Insect repellent
- A knife
- A notepad and pencil
- Plastic bags for wet/dirty clothing

Luggage

You may bring a hold bag (up to 20kg) as well as a cabin bag. Please remember that your possessions will have to fit into your kayak during the expedition so please do not over pack.

For you hold luggage please bring a soft bag like a ruckack rather than a hard cased suitcase because it is more practical when loading local buses and trailers. We also recommend that you pack your clothes in plastic bags inside your rucksack so that they stay dry in the event of bad weather.

Don't forget to bring a small rucksack to use as a day bag. You can bring this as hand luggage on the plane. You will carry your lunch, water, spare layers and any personal medication with you each day in this bag.

Medicine

Your guide is a trained first-aider and will carry a full first aid kit at all times during the trip. Please bring with you any personal medication that you may need such as inhalers, plasters and painkillers.

Healthcare in Norway can be extremely expensive, we strongly advice all of our clients to invest in insurance before travelling.

Passport

You will need a passport that is valid for at least three months after your return date.

Visa

The Norwegian archipelago of Svalbard is a visa-free zone

Mandatory vaccines

There are no specific health risks

Health information & recommendations

Please be aware that your guide will be carrying a gun along with other safety equipment to alarm/repel any Polar Bears.

Healthcare in Norway can be extremely expensive, we strongly advise all of our clients to invest in insurance before travelling.

Weather

The weather in the Svalbard archipelago is very changeable.

The average annual **rainfall** in Longyearbyen is only 200mm (7.87 inches), in London, England, the annual average is 594mm (23.4 inches)! Spitsbergen is a cold desert, showers are very rare in summer.

In summer **temperatures** can range from 1 - 14°C (34 - 57°F), the average temperature is 6 - 8°C (43 - 46°F). The temperature of the sea in summer is around 2°C (35°F) on the West coast and -2°C (28°F) on the East. It is always colder nearer the glaciers.

Strong katabatic **winds** can occur here, particularly near to high glaciers but the winds are normally calm in June and July. Summer winds can generally be described as moderate and localised, the winds tend to pick up towards the end of August as winter nears.

Dark polar nights occur from 14th November to 29th January, the full moon shines across the snow creating a beautiful glittering winter landscape. Then, from 19th April to 23rd August, the sun shines constantly, uninterrupted, high in the sky.

Electricity

In Spitsbergen the standard Europlug socket with two round prongs is used, 230V with a frequency of 50hz

Local time

Svalbard uses Greenwich Mean Time (GMT) +1 hour and Daylight Saving Time (DST) is observed here.

Topography

- The Norwegian Svalbard archipelago is the closest territory to the North Pole; Spitsbergen is the name of the largest island.
- Svalbard covers an area of around 39146 square miles (63000km²) and two thirds of this polar world are constantly covered by ice.
- The archipelago was deserted by human civilisation for a very long time but today has over 2600 inhabitants.
- The archipelago has 3 National Parks, 3 Nature Reserves, 15 Ornithological Reserves (bird reserves) and 3 Botanical Reserves.

Sustainable tourism

As adventure and wilderness travel experts who run trips to some of the most remote parts of the world, we take responsible tourism very seriously. We respect the 'Leave No Trace' outdoor ethical code and try to explore this beautiful location whilst causing minimal environmental damage.

In the Polar Regions the ecological balance is delicate so we ask that you are particularly careful regarding the conservation of the sites we explore. We aim to leave our camping spots even cleaner than when we arrived and, as a company, we participate in the Clean Up Svalbard programme. We support the laws, advice and recommendations which aid the conservation and protection of this unique arctic paradise. This is reflected in our trips, for example, we do not visit Ornithological Reserves during nesting season and never remove historical remains or whales bones from the beaches. We hope that all of our clients will respect our philosophies and embrace these attitudes.

The Leave No Trace policy can be summarized in 7 simple steps which we hope you will follow during ourtrip...

1. Be prepared
2. Stick to trails and camp overnight right
3. Stash your trash and pick up waste

4. Leave it as you find it
5. Be careful with fire
6. Respect wildlife
7. Be considerate of other visitors

Over the years we have built up good relations with our local suppliers and we are keen to support local businesses as much as possible. We are a small company and we pay our local partners and suppliers directly insuring fair rates.

Our small group sizes not only provide a more intimate adventure but also cause less impact on the environment and local communities.

We expect all who travel with us to support and uphold our Sustainable Tourism philosophies.