



## HIKING

## ARCTIC

In the late summer, when the tundra is relatively dry and rivers are fordable, we offer a special hiking expedition with our motor vessels. This type of trip is marked “H” in the trip description. During this expedition, passengers are offered various hiking options. Regular trips offer shorter leisurely excursions, medium demanding hikes, and more strenuous hikes. Landing duration is 2 - 4 hours. On designated hiking trips (H), we additionally want to explore more of the interior of Svalbard, with some landings of up to 6 - 8 hours of hiking time for the dedicated passengers. We are crossing tundra, perhaps small rivers and streams, and may traverse steep terrain. Stamina, equipment, and a good attitude are essentials. The long hikes offered on our special hiking trips are meant as an option for the keen hiker who wants to go faster, longer, and higher than what we normally offer on landings. Those long hiking options (H) may drop the full-day hiking party at one place and collect them at another. Full-day hikes may include a packed lunch. The group size is limited for full-day hikes, and reservations must be made in advance.

The polar bear danger makes hiking in Svalbard impossible without an armed guide nearby. In practical terms, that means there is no turning back once the hike has started and that you should be aware of your own limitations before signing up for a long hike. The group can walk only as far, high, and fast as the slowest person in the group. On our regular voyages, we also offer good hiking possibilities. Our Spitsbergen expeditions with s/v Noorderlicht include passengers that are generally quite active and hiking-minded. Please note that on the Noorderlicht there is no possibility to split up passengers into smaller groups, as only one guide is present. The maximum number of passengers on the Noorderlicht is only 20.



Hikes (with or without snowshoes) will be offered mostly outside glaciated terrain. Walks on potentially crevassed areas fall under the label of “mountaineering” (M), and those options (i.e., during Basecamp voyages in Antarctica) are specifically highlighted in travel offers and documents. Specially designated mountaineering trips (M) have at least one UIAGM-certified mountain guide leading them. Hiking (H) and regular landings will only offer a very limited access to glaciers and only on snow-free and guaranteed crevasse-free areas.

## ANTARCTICA

On our regular expeditions to Antarctica, the hiking options are limited. In the Southern Hemisphere, the topography of the landscape is very different compared to the north. The terrain is very rugged, consisting of mainly steep cliffs and dangerously crevassed glaciers. There are no vegetated areas, such as tundra in Antarctica.

For those who do want to venture away from the Antarctic coastlines, we occasionally offer special hiking trips on islands in the northern part of the Weddell Sea and on the South Shetland Islands. These Antarctic islands are more suitable for hiking, as they are often less covered by ice and more accessible than the alpine northwestern part of the Antarctic Peninsula. On our normal trips to the beautiful island of South Georgia, longer hikes are often offered for the more active passengers. As South Georgia is sub-Antarctic, it is less covered by ice and therefore has more hiking possibilities. For instance, the last section of the famous Shackleton walk can be retraced.

**Please Note:** Hiking possibilities are subject to weather in Antarctica, much more so than in the Arctic. Hiking is also limited by strict environmental regulations.



In the early season, a deep snow cover is present, and snow shoes are provided on board. Walks on potentially crevassed areas fall under the label of “mountaineering” (M), and those options (i.e., during Basecamp voyages in Antarctica) are specifically highlighted in travel offers and documents. Specially designated mountaineering trips (M) have at least one UIAGM-certified mountain guide leading them. Hiking (H) and regular landings will only offer a very limited access to glaciated or otherwise ice-covered terrain due to the ever-existing risk of crevasses.

### What to bring if you go on a hiking trip to either polar region:

- Ankle-high, sturdy hiking boots with a good profile for walks and for snowshoes
- Gaiters (Gamaschen), preferably when wearing hiking boots
- 25-litre rucksack (in the Arctic, a packed lunch may be brought)
- One-litre water bottle
- “Pee bottle” for Antarctica, such as a wide-opening Nalgene bottle



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