

# Overseas Adventure Travel®

THE LEADER IN CUSTOMIZED SMALL GROUP ADVENTURES SINCE 1978

Your O.A.T. Adventure Travel Planning Guide®



New! Arctic Expedition: Untamed Norway  
& Svalbard

2026

# Overseas Adventure Travel®

347 Congress Street, Boston, MA 02210

Dear Traveler,

I am thrilled that you are considering exploring the world with O.A.T. There are so many wonderful destinations to discover, and the itinerary described inside is a perfect way to fulfill a travel dream.

When you join us, you will enjoy the thrill of off-the-beaten-path discovery coupled with the convenience of unpacking just once. Aboard our privately owned small ship, you will visit lesser-known ports that larger vessels cannot access—and enjoy intimate interactions with local people in your small group of no more than 25 travelers. You will get to know community leaders and try your hand at local trades during your *A Day in the Life* experience, share traditional fare and lively conversation during a Home-Hosted Visit, discuss the Controversial Topics impacting everyday life, and visit sites supported by Grand Circle Foundation.

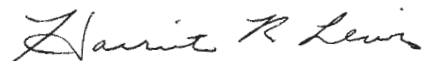
But your personal connections are not limited to your time on land—while onboard, you will enjoy the warm hospitality provided by our friendly, English-speaking crew, as well as the camaraderie of your fellow American travelers. Whether you travel with a partner, sister, friend, or independently, you will feel welcomed and included throughout your journey. And if you do choose to travel solo, you will enjoy an unmatched value, with our FREE or low-cost Single Supplements—just one of the reasons we continue to be the leader in solo travel.

To ensure you experience the true culture and feel supported every step of the way, we provide the services of a local Trip Experience Leader from the beginning of your adventure to the end. Along with introducing you to the history and culture of their homeland, these friendly experts will gladly help you out with any special requests to make your trip even more special. You can also rely on the seasoned team at our regional office, who are ready to help 24/7 in case any unexpected circumstances arise.

Plus, you can put your own personal stamp on your trip, like the, like the **87% of our travelers who customize their experience**. Perhaps you will choose to see more of your destination by adding an optional trip extension to your itinerary. You can also arrive a few days early to explore independently and get acclimated, customize your air itinerary, and more.

I hope you find this Travel Planning Guide helpful. If you have any further questions, do not hesitate to contact one of our Travel Counselors at **1-800-955-1925**.

Warm regards,



Harriet R. Lewis

Chair

Overseas Adventure Travel

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Travelers aboard Zodiac, Svalbard, Arctic Ocean

## New! Svalbard Circumnavigation: An Arctic Expedition Small Ship Adventure

**Norway:** Oslo | **Circumnavigate Svalbard:** Longyearbyen, 11-Night Arctic Expedition Cruise

Small groups of no more than 25 travelers, guaranteed

**17 days starting from \$16,995**

including international airfare

Single Supplement: **\$7,495**

For departure dates & prices, visit [www.oattravel.com/nar2026pricing](http://www.oattravel.com/nar2026pricing)

Set sail aboard the privately chartered **170-passenger M/S World Traveller**—purpose-built for exploring the most remote corners of the globe—and journey north into the Arctic, exploring for eleven nights with your team of expedition leaders. Then, in the Svalbard archipelago, board your ship and cruise among ice floes, alongside pods of beluga whales, and experience a renewed sense of what nature is capable of. This is the only departure which attempts circumnavigation—your best chance to catch a glimpse of polar bears.

### IT'S INCLUDED

- 15 nights accommodation, including 11 nights aboard the *M/S World Traveller*
- International airfare, airport transfers, government taxes, fees, and airline fuel surcharges, unless you choose to make your own air arrangements
- 41 meals: 15 breakfasts, 13 lunches, and 13 dinners
- 4 guided tours (with personal headsets) and cultural experiences; daily Arctic activities including Zodiac cruises and landings (weather permitting); and lectures and discussions with your Expedition Team and Trip Experience Leader
- Gratuities for local guides and motorcoach drivers
- All port charges
- Baggage handling for 1 piece of luggage per person, including tips
- 5% Frequent Traveler Credit toward your next trip

*Prices are accurate as of the date of this publishing and are subject to change.*



## ITINERARY SUMMARY

DAYS	DESTINATION
1	Depart U.S.
2-4	Oslo, Norway
5	Fly to Longyearbyen • Embark ship
6-15	Circumnavigating Svalbard
16	Longyearbyen • Disembark ship • Fly to Oslo
17	Return to U.S.

## CUSTOMIZE YOUR ADVENTURE

### OPTIONAL EXTENSIONS

Reykjavik & Iceland's Natural Wonders

PRE-TRIP: 6 nights from **\$3,795**

Copenhagen, Denmark

POST-TRIP: 4 nights from **\$1,695**

### ARRIVE EARLY

We recommend that you relax after a long flight or explore more in depth before your trip. Prices shown include accommodations and private airport transfer.

- Arrive early in **Reykjavik** before your Reykjavik & Iceland's Natural Wonders pre-trip extension from **\$500** per room, per night
- Arrive early in **Oslo** before your main adventure from **\$150** per room, per night

## WHAT TO EXPECT

① ② ③ ④ ⑤ Moderately Strenuous

**Pacing:** 14 days, with 11 nights aboard the *World Traveller* and 4 nights in Oslo

**Physical Requirements:** Walk 3 miles unassisted on uneven terrain and participate in 6-8 hours of activities each day, including Zodiac excursions with wet landings

**Flight Time:** Involves 2 international flights between U.S. and Oslo, likely with at least one connection

**Climate:** Due to the Arctic's unpredictable weather and ice conditions, circumnavigating the Svalbard archipelago may not be possible and will be replaced with alternative activities

View all physical requirements at [www.oattravel.com/nar](http://www.oattravel.com/nar)

## THE ARCTIC: THE O.A.T. DIFFERENCE

**Unbeatable Value:** Travel at the lowest price and per diems in the industry.

**People-to-People Experiences:** Throughout your cruise, you'll be joined by an experienced Expedition Team who will share their expertise with you. They'll provide vital information about your voyage, lead insightful discussions about the Arctic, and join you on every Zodiac excursion.

**O.A.T. Exclusives:** Step aboard our privately chartered expedition vessel the *World Traveller* to circumnavigate the Svalbard archipelago (if weather and ice conditions allow). Spend 11 nights—more than most other travel companies—exploring this remote region to enjoy wildlife viewing opportunities.



# Svalbard Circumnavigation: An Arctic Expedition

## YOUR DETAILED ITINERARY

### BEGIN YOUR ADVENTURE WITH AN OPTIONAL PRE-TRIP EXTENSION

#### 6 nights in *Reykjavik & Iceland's Natural Wonders*

**Day 1** Depart U.S.

**Day 2** Arrive in Reykjavik, Iceland

**Day 3** Reykjavik • The Blue Lagoon •  
*Harpa Concert Hall* conversation

**Day 4** Golden Circle tour

**Day 5** Seljalandsfoss Waterfall • Gígjökull  
glacier outlet • Explore Basar

**Day 6** Skaftafell • Vatnajökull National  
Park • Glacier lagoon boat tour

**Day 7** Dyrholaey • Solheimajokull glacier  
• Reykjavik

**Day 8** Fly to Oslo

#### **Day 1** Depart U.S.

Fly to Oslo, Norway.

#### **Day 2** Arrive in Oslo, Norway

- Destination: Oslo
- Accommodations: Hotel in Oslo or similar

**Activity Note:** On this journey, travelers will be divided into groups of no more than 25 travelers, each with their own Trip Experience Leader. During your time in Oslo, individual groups will be accommodated in different Oslo hotels with comparable amenities.

**Morning:** Arrive in Oslo and transfer to your hotel. Once there, you'll meet your Trip Experience Leader and join travelers who took our *Reykjavik & Iceland's Natural Wonders* pre-trip extension.

**Lunch:** On your own. You may seek out a restaurant that serves traditional dishes.

**Afternoon:** Embark on an orientation walk around the neighborhood with your Trip Experience Leader. Oslo is Norway's capital city, and its largest hub for international travel. Both trendy and egalitarian, you can expect a blend of tradition and innovation. You may take this opportunity to get acquainted with the Norwegian culture by trying local delicacies such as *kjottboller* (fried meatballs spiced with ginger and nutmeg), or by interacting with locals at the establishments you pass.

**Dinner:** On your own. Your Trip Experience Leader would be happy to provide you with restaurant recommendations.

**Evening:** You have the freedom to retire to your room, or you may wish to find a nearby bar where you and your fellow travelers can toast to the discoveries to come.

### Day 3 Oslo • Vigeland Park

- Destination: Oslo
- Included Meals: Breakfast, Dinner
- Accommodations: Hotel in Oslo or similar

**Breakfast:** At the hotel.

**Morning:** Gather for a Welcome Briefing with your Trip Experience Leader. During this briefing, we will introduce ourselves and review our itinerary in more detail (including any changes that may need to occur). Then, we'll set off on a city drive with a local guide to provide you with a proper introduction to the city of Oslo.

The history of this city can be traced all the way back to AD 1000 when the first small settlement was established on the Bjorvika inlet and expanded to house 3000 residents by the year 1300. Traces of medieval times can still be found in Gamlebyen (Old Town), such as the ruins of the Akurshus fortress and castle as well as the stone remains of the Hovedoya monastery. While Norway was a territory of Denmark into the 1800s, it was ceded to the king of Sweden in 1814, and shortly thereafter got its own constitution which made Oslo (or Christiania, as it was known at the time) the capital of Norway.

While today, Oslo's skyline is constantly changing with the contemporary flourishes that make it a thriving urban center, the Norwegian capital has something that sets it apart from other major cities ... it is completely surrounded by nature. With mountains on one side and the North Sea on the other, the city's center is only a stone's throw away from national forests, wilderness parks, ski slopes, and the islands

of the Oslofjord. During your free time here, consider paying a visit to Svartdalsparken Park, where you can walk a forested trail that will take you past scenic ponds and across a bridge that gives you panoramic views of a waterfall. After we explore some of the city's highlights, we'll stop for a visit to Vigeland Park. This open-air gallery features the sculptures of Gustav Vigeland, which he installed here from 1924 to 1943. He is best known for his bold and striking depictions of the human form, which you'll witness today during a walking tour through the exhibit.

Then, we'll drive to the Bygdøy peninsula to the *Frammuseet* (Fram Museum). Named for one of Norway's oldest vessels used for North and South Pole expeditions, the *Fram* (meaning "forward") was the strongest wooden ship in the world at the time of its launch in 1892. Roald Amundsen set sail for the North Pole aboard the *Fram* in 1910. But after learning that Robert Peary had beaten him to the prize, he turned the vessel around and became the first man to reach the South Pole instead, beating Robert Falcon Scott. The *Fram* and another vessel, the *Gjøa*, the first ship to successfully navigate the Northwest Passage are here at this museum that provides a fascinating glimpse into Norway's polar history.

**Lunch:** On your own.

**Afternoon:** You have the freedom to explore at your own pace. Perhaps you'll choose to walk to the Quayside area.

**Dinner:** Enjoy a Welcome Dinner at a local restaurant.

**Evening:** You are free to return to your room to rest, or you may venture out to experience Oslo's night culture.

## Day 4 Explore Oslo

- Destination: Oslo
- Included Meals: Breakfast, Lunch
- Accommodations: Hotel in Oslo or similar

**Breakfast:** At the hotel.

**Morning:** After breakfast, we'll continue our discoveries of Oslo on a walking tour of the city with a local guide. Our tour will take us through the city center, taking in the sights and sounds you can only experience on foot. During our walk, we will stop for a tour of City Hall, where the Nobel Peace Prize is awarded every December. We will continue exploring the city until lunch time.

**Lunch:** At a local restaurant.

**Afternoon:** After lunch, you have the remainder of the day to relax or explore Oslo independently. You may wish to visit the Munch Museum, the Resistance Museum, or perhaps take the island ferry to explore the Oslo Fjord. Feel free to use your complimentary 48-hour Oslo transportation pass to discover more of the city.

**Dinner:** On your own—ask your Trip Experience Leader for local restaurant recommendations. Perhaps you want to try Norway's national dish, *farikal*. This simple and hearty stew is prepared with meat—usually lamb—cabbage, and potatoes, and it is typically swimming in gravy.

**Evening:** You have the freedom to spend the rest of your evening as you wish. Head back to your room to pack before we leave Oslo tomorrow, or you may choose to set off on an evening stroll to see the city aglow under the urban lights.

## Day 5 Oslo • Fly to Longyearbyen • Embark ship

- Destination: Arctic Ocean
- Included Meals: Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner
- Accommodations: M/S *World Traveller*

**Activity Note:** Today may require a very early wake-up to catch our flight to Longyearbyen. Travelers may be on different flights, and flight times may vary. While circumnavigation is not guaranteed, it is one of the only ways to catch a glimpse of polar bears, along with the other native fauna such as reindeer and walrus in this diverse landscape. Boarding may be at the pier, or via Zodiac, depending on traffic at the pier, and cannot be determined beforehand.

**Early Morning:** We must wake very early this morning in order to make our 4am transfer to the airport for our flight to Longyearbyen.

**Breakfast:** Served onboard your flight.

**Morning:** Upon landing in Longyearbyen, a local guide will take us on a walking tour of this small, Arctic coal mining town in the Svalbard archipelago. The first aspects of Longyearbyen you may notice are its whitewashed landscapes and mountainous backdrop, making it a picturesque jumping off point for our adventure into the frozen wilderness.

Later this morning, we'll set off for a nearby pier where we'll board the 170-passenger *World Traveller*, your home away from home for the next 11 nights and your ticket to a once-in-a-lifetime discoveries. Before you unfolds an incredible Arctic journey filled with the scenic icebergs, crystal clear waterfalls and breathtaking fjords of Svalbard. You will be transported to a winter wonderland at the edge of the world, guided by your knowledgeable Trip Experience Leader on zodiac excursions featuring sightings of rare



and exotic wildlife—reindeer, walruses, seals, and foxes—found nowhere else on Earth. Let the adventure begin.

**Lunch:** Onboard the ship.

**Afternoon:** After lunch, enjoy free time to get settled in. Later, we'll take part in a short introduction to the crew and a safety briefing, after which we'll gather on the deck and watch Longyearbyen shrink into the distance as we set sail.

**Dinner:** Onboard the ship. After dinner this evening, we'll gather onboard for our nightly Recap and Briefing.

**Evening:** Free to enjoy the ship's amenities before an expedition briefing.

## Day 6 Svalbard

- Destination: Arctic Ocean
- Included Meals: Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner
- Accommodations: *M/S World Traveller*

**Activity Note:** Your itinerary will be determined by a number of factors, including weather, environmental conditions, wildlife sightings, and more. For the duration of this Small Ship Adventure, you will need to embark aboard Zodiac crafts for your Arctic excursions. Your landings may be “wet,” which means you'll need to step into water up to ten inches deep and wade ashore. Good agility, balance, and strength are needed for this expedition, as the terrain is rugged and often challenging to navigate. Due to ever-changing wind, weather, and sea conditions, it is impossible to predict precisely when this first landing—and all subsequent landings—will occur.

**Today's Activities:** Today your Arctic cruise begins! For your first day, we may set out by Zodiac towards Ny Alesund, otherwise known as the northernmost town in the world. This former mining town served as the starting point

for explorer Roald Amundsen's expedition by airship to the North Pole, and then Alaska. This is regarded as the first successful flight across the North Pole, although the airship crashed while trying to return, and Amundsen disappeared during the 1928 rescue mission to recover it. While exploring the town, we may visit the mooring tower where his airship was docked, as well as the world's northernmost post office, where we can send postcards to relatives and friends back home to show them exactly how far our adventure has taken us. After dinner this evening, we'll gather onboard for our nightly Recap and Briefing.

**Today's Meals:** All meals will be served in the ship's dining room. Our crew and Trip Experience Leader will inform us of precise start times, and there will be daily memos posted around the ship to inform you and your fellow travelers of meal times. Tonight will feature a special Captain's Welcome Dinner.

## Day 7 Svalbard

- Destination: Arctic Ocean
- Included Meals: Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner
- Accommodations: *M/S World Traveller*

**Today's Activities:** Depending on the weather and ice conditions, we'll embark on a Zodiac cruise somewhere along Spitzbergen's rugged west coast at the foot of glaciers flanked by towering mountains. This remote region once served as a base for whale hunting in the 17th century, and you might like to ask the Expedition Team questions about this controversial history. Keep your eyes peeled for native birds such as kittiwakes while we cruise.

After dinner this evening, we'll gather onboard for our nightly Recap and Briefing.

**Today's Meals:** All meals will be served in the ship's dining room. Your crew and Trip Experience Leader will inform you of precise

start times, and there will be daily memos posted around the ship to inform you and your fellow travelers of meal times.

## Day 8 Svalbard

- Destination: Arctic Ocean
- Included Meals: Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner
- Accommodations: *M/S World Traveller*

**Today's Activities:** The artistic essence of nature is on full display as we cruise by a vast expanse of sea ice north of Spitsbergen. Evocative of a frozen mosaic, sea ice is an attractive setting for polar bears as it allows them to move along the surface of the water without detection when they hunt for seals. We'll keep our eyes open for wildlife as we drift past ice floes.

After our day's explorations, we'll gather onboard for our nightly Recap and Briefing.

**Today's Meals:** All meals will be served in the ship's dining room. Your crew and Trip Experience Leader will inform you of precise start times, and there will be daily memos posted around the ship to inform you and your fellow travelers of meal times.

## Day 9 Svalbard

- Destination: Arctic Ocean
- Included Meals: Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner
- Accommodations: *M/S World Traveller*

**Today's Activities:** Coated in sparkling permafrost, pearly white icebergs float by your cabin window, contrasted only by endless cerulean blue skies. On land, only the top three feet of snow melts during the summer months. If conditions are right, we may attempt a series of shore landings whether to get closer to wildlife, such as seals or foxes, or hike along the rugged coastline. Take the opportunity to ask the Expedition Team any questions you

may have about the icy environment. After our day's explorations, we'll gather onboard for our nightly Recap and Briefing.

**Today's Meals:** All meals will be served in the ship's dining room. Your crew and Trip Experience Leader will inform you of precise start times, and there will be daily memos posted around the ship to inform you and your fellow travelers of meal times.

## Day 10 Svalbard

- Destination: Arctic Ocean
- Included Meals: Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner
- Accommodations: *M/S World Traveller*

**Today's Activities:** This morning, we may board Zodiacs to view nearby cliffs, which are home to breeding pairs of Brünnich's guillemots. These birds are a member of the auk family, boasting close ties to the penguin. Unlike their southern relatives, however, they do fly. During breeding season, guillemots live in tightly-packed colonies for protection. If you have the opportunity to observe them, keep an eye out for one of their chief predators, glaucous gulls. These sharp-eyed scavengers love to snack on guillemot eggs. After our day's explorations, we'll gather onboard for our nightly Recap and Briefing.

**Today's Meals:** All meals will be served in the ship's dining room. Your crew and Trip Experience Leader will inform you of precise start times, and there will be daily memos posted around the ship to inform you and your fellow travelers of meal times.

## Day 11 Svalbard

- Destination: Arctic Ocean
- Included Meals: Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner
- Accommodations: M/S *World Traveller*

**Today's Activities:** Considered an Arctic desert, approximately 60% of Svalbard is protected or preserved. Even home to its own species of reindeer, many animals here can only be found by taking zodiac excursions and venturing forth into their habitat. If conditions allow, we may go ashore and come across a walrus haul-out. Due to their dramatically shrinking sea ice habitat, walruses swim long distances to congregate together on land and can amass in the hundreds. After our day's explorations, we'll gather onboard for our nightly Recap and Briefing.

**Today's Meals:** All meals will be served in the ship's dining room. Your crew and Trip Experience Leader will inform you of precise start times, and there will be daily memos posted around the ship to inform you and your fellow travelers of meal times.

## Day 12 Svalbard

- Destination: Arctic Ocean
- Included Meals: Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner
- Accommodations: M/S *World Traveller*

**Today's Activities:** If conditions allow, we may go ashore to a nesting site for black-legged kittiwakes, a seabird first discovered in 1758 by Carl Linnaeus, a Swedish biologist and physician known as the father of modern taxonomy. After our day's explorations, we'll gather onboard for our nightly Recap and Briefing.

**Today's Meals:** All meals will be served in the ship's dining room. Your crew and Trip Experience Leader will inform you of precise

start times, and there will be daily memos posted around the ship to inform you and your fellow travelers of meal times.

## Day 13 Svalbard

- Destination: Arctic Ocean
- Included Meals: Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner
- Accommodations: M/S *World Traveller*

**Today's Activities:** You are now part of the rich history of Svalbard explorers. Consisting of nine main islands, the archipelago of Svalbard was officially discovered by Dutchman Willem Barentsz in 1596. With remarkable white wilderness and singular opportunities for scientific study it is no wonder adventurers keep coming back to see what they can uncover. Weather permitting, we may attempt zodiac landings on nearby islands. Watch for various wildlife including polar bears, and narwhals, an Arctic porpoise famous for its prominent tooth which grows through its upper lip and gives an unmistakable unicorn appearance. After our day's explorations, we'll gather onboard for our nightly Recap and Briefing.

**Today's Meals:** All meals will be served in the ship's dining room. Your crew and Trip Experience Leader will inform you of precise start times, and there will be daily memos posted around the ship to inform you and your fellow travelers of meal times.

## Day 14 Svalbard

- Destination: Arctic Ocean
- Included Meals: Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner
- Accommodations: M/S *World Traveller*

**Today's Activities:** This morning we'll take in the beautiful fjords along the southern tip of Spitsbergen. The word 'spitsbergen' translates to 'pointed mountains,' and we'll come to learn it was aptly named as we witness its mountainous terrain. Later this afternoon,

we may attempt a Zodiac landing at a nearby glacier, providing an opportunity to come face-to-face with one of these towering giants. After our day's explorations, we'll gather onboard for our nightly Recap and Briefing.

**Today's Meals:** All meals will be served in the ship's dining room. Your crew and Trip Experience Leader will inform you of precise start times, and there will be daily memos posted around the ship to inform you and your fellow travelers of meal times.

### Day 15 Svalbard

- Destination: Arctic Ocean
- Included Meals: Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner
- Accommodations: M/S *World Traveller*

**Today's Activities:** If conditions allow, we might land where piles of beluga whale skeletons can be found. These are remains from the 19th century whale slaughter that took place in Svalbard, and are a reminder of the scars that mankind has left on even the most untouched of places. Fortunately, beluga whales still exist today, and you may come across a pod of them while cruising the waters of this region. After our day's explorations, we'll gather onboard for our nightly Recap and Briefing.

**Today's Meals:** All meals will be served in the ship's dining room. Your crew and Trip Experience Leader will inform you of precise start times, and there will be daily memos posted around the ship to inform you and your fellow travelers of meal times.

### Day 16 Longyearbyen • Disembark ship • Fly to Oslo

- Destination: Oslo
- Included Meals: Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner
- Accommodations: Hotel in Oslo or similar

**Activity Note:** Disembarkation may be at the pier, or via Zodiac, depending on traffic at the pier, and cannot be determined beforehand. Flight times may vary and groups may be split across multiple flights, effecting the timings of activities throughout this day.

**Breakfast:** Onboard the ship.

**Morning:** Disembark our ship in Longyearbyen, and transfer to the airport for your flight back to Oslo.

**Lunch:** In flight.

**Afternoon:** Upon arrival, transfer to the airport hotel. Enjoy the rest of the afternoon at leisure preparing for returning home tomorrow.

**Dinner:** At the airport hotel.

**Evening:** You have the freedom to spend the rest of your evening packing and resting.

### Day 17 Oslo • Return to U.S. or begin your post-trip extension

- Included Meals: Breakfast

**Breakfast:** At the hotel.

**Morning:** Transfer to the Oslo airport for your flight home. Or, begin your post-trip extension in *Copenhagen, Denmark*.



## END YOUR ADVENTURE WITH AN OPTIONAL POST-TRIP EXTENSION

### **4 nights in *Copenhagen, Denmark***

**Day 1** Fly to Copenhagen, Denmark

**Day 2** Explore Copenhagen

**Day 3** Copenhagen • Helsingor

**Day 4** Copenhagen • Explore Christiania

**Day 5** Return to U.S.

## PRE-TRIP

### Reykjavik & Iceland's Natural Wonders

#### INCLUDED IN YOUR PRICE

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- » Airfare from Reykjavik to Oslo
- » 6 nights accommodation
- » 12 meals: 7 breakfasts, 2 lunches, and 3 dinners
- » 5 guided tours and cultural experiences
- » Services of our local Trip Experience Leader

- » Gratuities for local guides and motorcoach drivers
- » All transfers

**Please note:** Travelers purchasing their own international flights will be responsible for additional internal flight costs.

#### PRE-TRIP EXTENSION ITINERARY

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From its roaring waterfalls and mighty glaciers to its bubbling geysers and black sand beaches, Iceland abounds with natural phenomena that shape the earth. Experience these mighty forces on a 4x4 highland coach tour through volcanic landscapes and winding rivers, and embark on a boat tour into glacial lagoons—right up to the edge of crystalline icebergs. You'll also soak in the nourishing minerals of the Blue Lagoon's geothermal waters on this unforgettable adventure in an unspoiled land.

##### Day 1 Depart U.S.

Fly to Reykjavik, Iceland.

##### Day 2 Arrive in Reykjavik, Iceland

- Destination: Reykjavik
- Included Meals: Breakfast, Dinner
- Accommodations: Berjaya Reykjavik Marina Hotel or similar

**Early Morning:** Arrive in Keflavik and transfer to your hotel in Reykjavik.

**Breakfast:** At the hotel.

**Morning:** After taking some time to get settled in and relax, we'll set off on an orientation walk around the vicinity of our hotel. Our Trip Experience Leader will guide us on our explorations, pointing out restaurant

recommendations for meals on your own, sights to visit during your free time, and ATMs as we go.

**Lunch:** On your own. Perhaps you'll venture out to find a restaurant that serves hot dogs. Surprisingly, Iceland is known for their hot dogs, which differ slightly from American dogs. In Iceland, hot dogs are made from multiple meats, including lamb, pork, and beef. Sandwiched between a bun like our American hot dogs, the traditional Icelandic toppings include diced fried onions, mustard, and remoulade sauce.

**Afternoon:** We'll continue our explorations, walking to attractions like the botanical gardens to witness some of the 3000 plant

species that are on display here, and we'll also visit Laugardalslaug, Reykjavik's largest public pool.

Later this evening, we'll gather for a Welcome Briefing at the hotel. During this briefing, we will introduce ourselves and review our itinerary in more detail (including any changes that may need to occur). Our Trip Experience Leader will also go over logistics, safety and emergency procedures, and answer questions we may have.

**Dinner:** At the hotel.

**Evening:** You have the freedom to spend the rest of your evening as you wish. You may choose to retire to your room to get some rest, or you may venture out to a bar where you can find Brennivín, a classic Icelandic schnapps. Raise your glasses with your fellow travelers and exclaim "skål" (cheers) to the adventures to come.

### **Day 3 Reykjavik • The Blue Lagoon • Harpa Concert Hall conversation**

- Destination: Reykjavik
- Included Meals: Breakfast
- Accommodations: Berjaya Reykjavik Marina Hotel or similar

**Breakfast:** At the hotel.

**Morning:** Head to the Blue Lagoon. Relax in the blend of sea and geothermal-heated water as you take in the surrounding lunar lava landscape. The milky-blue waters are rich with natural minerals that are known for their skin nourishing properties. You can also try a mud mask.

Return to Reykjavik and head to a nearby food court.

**Lunch:** On your own at the food court. If you want to say you've had a historically-popular Icelandic dish, you may want to find a place that serves fermented shark. While locals rarely eat this ingredient regularly, it used to be a staple in Icelandic cuisine.

**Afternoon:** From the food court, we'll walk to the Harpa Concert Hall. During an engaging conversation, you'll learn how the hall is seen as a symbol of Iceland's recovery following the nation's financial crisis of 2008.

The rest of the afternoon is free to explore on your own. Perhaps you'll continue enjoying Iceland's thermal waters during a visit to Laugardalslaug, a complex of natural public pools.

**Dinner:** On your own. You may choose to find a restaurant that serves a hearty soup like *kjötsupa*, made with lamb and vegetables.

**Evening:** You have the freedom to spend the rest of your evening as you wish. Perhaps you'll retire to your room to rest before tomorrow's discoveries. Or if you're a cinephile, you may visit the Lebowski Bar, a bar inspired by the *The Big Lebowski*.

### **Day 4 Golden Circle tour**

- Destination: Iceland countryside
- Included Meals: Breakfast, Dinner

**Breakfast:** At the hotel.

**Morning:** Explore the Golden Circle—a ring of natural highlights. First, we visit Thingvellir National Park, which sits in a major rift between two tectonic plates—the Eurasian and North American. This rift creates a valley in the land, ringed by rocky cliffs and fault lines. The mountains surrounding this plain, dotted with canyons, caves, streams and springs,

form a striking natural amphitheater. It's not surprising that the world's oldest Parliament was formed here.

Then, we'll visit Geysir, the geyser from which all others take their name. Geysir is silent these days, but we'll witness the dramatic columns of water that shoot into the air from nearby Strokkur geyser. In this area of intense geothermal activity, puddles of water on the ground literally boil.

**Lunch:** On your own in the Geysir area—ask your Trip Experience Leader for local restaurant recommendations.

**Afternoon:** We'll continue on to the stunning Gullfoss waterfall. This natural splendor features two tiers of rushing white water that flow into a hundred-foot-deep crevice. Next, we depart for the hotel in our next destination. Upon arrival, we'll check in and you'll have some time to get settled in.

**Dinner:** At the hotel.

**Evening:** You are free to return to your room to get some sleep, or perhaps you'll set off on an evening stroll to explore at your own pace.

### **Day 5 Seljalandsfoss Waterfall • Gígjökull glacier outlet • Explore Basar**

- Destination: Iceland countryside
- Included Meals: Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner

**Activity Note:** If the groups are larger than 25, then one group will switch days. The other group will explore Glacier Lagoon.

**Breakfast:** At the hotel.

**Morning:** Journey to the south coast, where we'll stop at the iconic Seljalandsfoss waterfall. Known as one of Iceland's most graceful waterfalls, it's fed by melting water from the famed glacier-capped Eyjafjallajökull volcano. It also features a cavern and paths that allow

travelers to encircle it in the warmer seasons. Next, we'll drive to the Gígjökull glacier outlet where we'll set off on a hike. This crater was created as a result of the 2010 Eyjafjallajökull volcanic eruption, which drastically changed the landscape of this region.

Shortly before lunch, we'll drive to Basar, a rugged and remote region of Iceland, stopping briefly along the way at Álfakirkja, a church that is believed by locals to belong to elves. We'll then continue on to Basar.

**Lunch:** A packed lunch in Basar.

**Afternoon:** We'll set off to explore Basar on a hike. We'll take in the rugged beauty of Basar as we pass gently sloping mountains blanketed with green, moss and expansive valleys, stopping briefly at Langidalur. After, we'll begin our return journey to the hotel, passing Seljalandsfoss waterfall again as we drive.

**Dinner:** At the hotel.

**Evening:** You have the freedom to spend the rest of your evening as you wish. You may choose to relax at the hotel, or find a bar where you and your fellow travelers can grab a drink together.

### **Day 6 Skaftafell • Vatnajökull National Park • Glacier lagoon boat tour**

- Destination: Iceland countryside
- Included Meals: Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner

**Breakfast:** At the hotel.

**Morning:** Depart for the Jokulsarlon glacial lagoon. Along the way, we'll stop in the Skaftafell region of southeast Iceland. Once a national park of its own, Skaftafell is now a preserved area within Vatnajökull National Park, flanked by glaciers and jagged mountain peaks.



Continue on to Jokulsarlon glacial lagoon, the deepest lake in Iceland. If weather permits, we'll embark on a boat tour before hiking along the black sand beaches of the lagoon. During our explorations, look out for icebergs that have calved from the glacier's edge.

**Lunch:** At Fosshotel Glacier Lagoon.

**Afternoon:** Return to the hotel. Upon arrival, you'll have free time to relax or venture out to explore at your own pace.

**Dinner:** At a local restaurant.

**Evening:** You have the freedom to return to your room or maybe you'll venture out on an evening stroll.

## **Day 7 Dyrholaey • Solheimajokull glacier • Reykjavik**

- Destination: Reykjavik
- Included Meals: Breakfast
- Accommodations: Berjaya Reykjavik Marina Hotel or similar

**Breakfast:** At the hotel.

**Morning:** Witness the naturally formed rock formation of Dyrholaey. During our time here, we'll walk along the shores and take in the natural beauty of the Atlantic Ocean.

After, we'll drive to the Solheimajokull glacier for a hike. Solheimajokull sits between Iceland's Katla and Eyjafjallajokull volcanoes and is popular among travelers for its easy accessibility. Following our hike, we'll drive to Selfoss.

**Lunch:** On your own upon arrival in Selfoss. You may seek out the traditional flavors of Iceland that you have come to know.

**Afternoon:** Begin our drive to our hotel in Reykjavik. Upon arrival, we'll check in and you have some free time.

**Dinner:** On your own. You may want to sample some of Iceland's seafood. Perhaps you'll seek out a dish like *humar*, Icelandic lobster.

**Evening:** You have the freedom to spend the rest of your evening as you wish—ask your Trip Experience Leader for recommendations. You can retire to your room to pack before we leave tomorrow, or you may choose venture out in search of a restaurant or café that serves local desserts and local ice creams... popular even in cold or rainy weather!

## **Day 8 Fly to Oslo**

- Destination: Oslo
- Included Meals: Breakfast

**Activity Note:** We'll have an early wake-up call this morning so we can depart the hotel by 5am.

**Breakfast:** A boxed breakfast will be provided by the hotel.

**Early Morning:** Transfer to Keflavik Airport for our flight to Oslo.

**Lunch:** On your own during your flight or at the airport.

**Afternoon:** Upon arrival, transfer to the hotel and join your fellow travelers on *Svalbard Circumnavigation: An Arctic Expedition*.

## POST-TRIP

### Copenhagen, Denmark

#### INCLUDED IN YOUR PRICE

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- » Airfare from Oslo to Copenhagen
- » 4 nights accommodation
- » 7 meals: 5 breakfasts, 1 lunch, and 1 dinner
- » 2 guided tours and cultural experiences
- » Services of our local Trip Experience Leader

- » Gratuities for local guides and motorcoach drivers
- » All transfers

**Please note:** Travelers purchasing their own international flights will be responsible for additional internal flight costs.

#### POST-TRIP EXTENSION ITINERARY

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*Experience Copenhagen at your own pace, with opportunities to stroll the charming cobblestone streets lined with colorful row houses. You'll see a different side of the city on a guided tour of the Christiania district where you'll discover the artistic culture and alternative nature of this one-of-a-kind neighborhood. As you explore the city's many art galleries and cozy cafes, you'll see why Copenhagen is known as the "happiest city in the world."*

##### Day 1 Fly to Copenhagen, Denmark

- Destination: Copenhagen, Denmark
- Included Meals: Breakfast, Lunch
- Accommodations: Phoenix Copenhagen Hotel or similar

**Breakfast:** At the hotel.

**Morning:** Transfer to the airport for your flight from Oslo to Copenhagen. Upon arrival, head to the hotel and check in.

**Lunch:** At a local restaurant.

**Afternoon:** Enjoy free time to explore before joining our Trip Experience Leader on an orientation walk.

**Dinner:** On your own—ask your Trip Experience Leader for local restaurant recommendations. You may want to find a

restaurant that prepares traditional cuisine like *krebinetter*, which is breaded and fried pork that is typically served with vegetables.

**Evening:** You have the freedom to spend the rest of your evening as you wish.

##### Day 2 Explore Copenhagen

- Destination: Copenhagen
- Included Meals: Breakfast
- Accommodations: Phoenix Copenhagen Hotel or similar

**Breakfast:** At the hotel.

**Morning:** Embark on a walking tour of Copenhagen. The world's oldest capital city is also among the most welcoming in Scandinavia—the Danes are known for being more extroverted than their neighbors, as you'll experience during your stay here. On your

tour, your Trip Experience Leader will show you some of the city's most iconic and historic buildings, streets, and sites.

**Lunch:** On your own. You might seek out a restaurant that serves popular dishes like *flaeskesteg*, lean cuts of pork prepared with sides of red cabbage pork rinds.

**Afternoon:** Enjoy free time to explore. Perhaps you'll step into some of the city's galleries to see what makes Danish design famous the world over. Or, you could hop onto a bicycle and see the city the way the locals do.

**Dinner:** On your own. You may want a traditional meal like herring, which has been enjoyed by the Danish people for centuries.

**Evening:** You have the freedom to spend the rest of your evening as you wish.

### Day 3 Copenhagen • Helsingor

- Destination: Copenhagen
- Included Meals: Breakfast
- Accommodations: Phoenix Copenhagen Hotel or similar

**Breakfast:** At the hotel.

**Morning:** Begin a day of exploration at your leisure. Perhaps the day will lead you to *Nyhavn* (New Harbor), the 17th-century waterfront and canal area that is now the heart of entertainment in the city. Or, maybe you'll enjoy a visit to the Rosenborg Castle where the crown jewels are housed and 40 acres of lush royal gardens surround the historic palace. Your Trip Experience Leader will be happy to make suggestions on how to spend your day.

Or, you may choose to join your trip leader on a Freedom to Explore visit to Helsingor, using public transportation.

**Lunch:** Lunch is on your own—ask your Trip Experience Leader for local restaurant recommendations.

**Afternoon:** Day at leisure. In your personal time you may choose to explore Helsingor, located on the shores of the sound dividing Denmark and Sweden. Here, medieval style radiates from every corner, which you'll experience as you stroll down the city's cobbled streets, past simple, quaint buildings. Helsingor's rich history can be traced back to the 15th–16th centuries when it enjoyed a period of prosperity as a result of being a major trade route in the region.

**Dinner:** On your own—ask your Trip Experience Leader for recommendations. Perhaps you'll try a dish like *fiskefrikadeller*, a refreshing meal made with codfish, citrus juice, dill, and parsley.

**Evening:** You have the freedom to spend the rest of your evening as you wish.

### Day 4 Copenhagen • Explore Christiania

- Destination: Copenhagen
- Included Meals: Breakfast, Dinner
- Accommodations: Phoenix Copenhagen Hotel or similar

**Breakfast:** At the hotel.

**Morning:** We'll discover the Christiania district of Copenhagen with a local guide during a walking tour. This unique enclave of the city was established in 1971 by a counterculture group who inhabited an abandoned military barracks and developed their own set of societal rules, completely independent from the Danish government. Today it is still semi-autonomous, and a haven for artists, musicians, and those seeking an alternative lifestyle.

The district is a mix of workshops, homemade houses, art galleries, music venues, organic restaurants, and green spaces. Cars and cameras are prohibited in Christiania to protect the alternative nature of the neighborhood.

**Lunch:** On your own. Enjoy the flavors of Denmark that you've come to know. Perhaps you'll find a restaurant that serves a traditional dish you loved, or you may seek out a new dish like *aebleskiver*, which combines the sweet and the savory as this meal is made with pork and apples.

**Afternoon:** Free for your own discoveries. Perhaps you'll visit the Tivoli Gardens, a historic amusement park where you can tap into your inner child as you enjoy carnival rides, games, and more. Or you may choose to stroll through Copenhagen's fine botanical gardens. Covering nearly 25 acres of land, this garden houses the largest collection of living plants in the world.

**Dinner:** At a local restaurant.

**Evening:** You have the freedom to spend the rest of your evening as you wish—ask your Trip Experience Leader for recommendations.

## **Day 5 Return to U.S.**

- Included Meals: Breakfast

**Breakfast:** At the hotel.

**Morning:** Transfer to the airport for your return flight home.



## WORLD TRAVELLER

### Explore the Arctic aboard a 170-passenger expedition ship

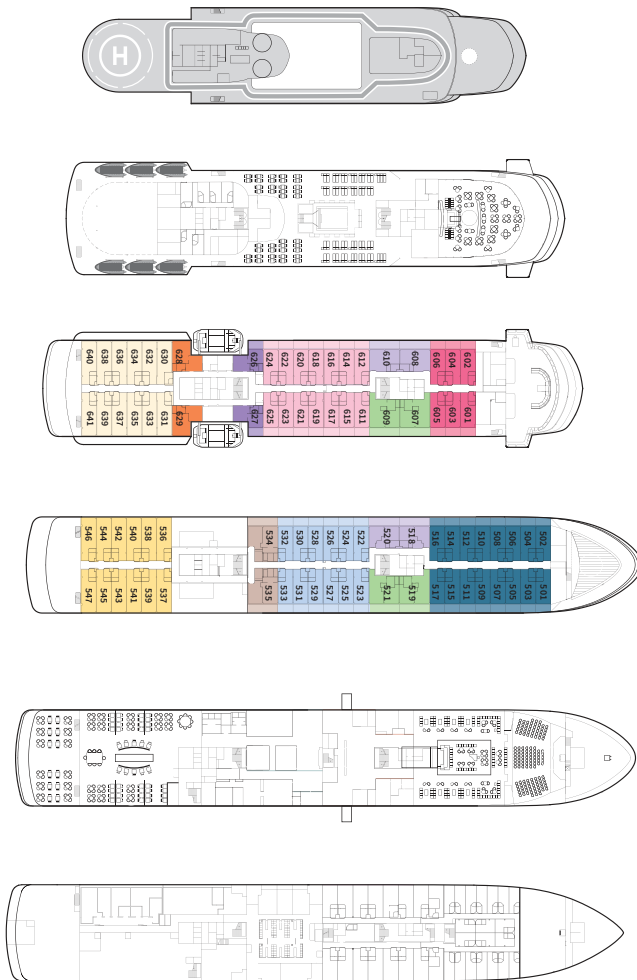
Experience the wonders of the Arctic aboard the privately chartered, 170-passenger *World Traveller*. This expedition ship holds groups of **20-25 travelers (with an average of 22)**, each with its own **local Trip Experience Leader**. Plus, the ship is equipped with Zodiac crafts for shore landings and up-close explorations at sea. Your discoveries will be enhanced by a knowledgeable Expedition Team, who will share insights with you onboard and during your excursions.



## SHIPBOARD FEATURES

- **Welcoming restaurant:** Savor internationally themed and American-style dishes during all meals.
- **Three comfortable lounges:** Witness an array of wildlife from the Dome Observation Lounge; mingle with fellow travelers in the main lounge; and join your Expedition Team in the auditorium for in-depth discussions about the Arctic environment.
- **Complimentary beverages:** Enjoy house beer and wine—as well as soft drinks—at any time of day while onboard.
- **Outdoor deck:** Relish views of glacier-clad shores as you breathe in the crisp Arctic air.
- **Spa & Sauna:** Refresh and recharge with a sauna visit or massage.
- **English-speaking crew:** Enjoy dedicated attention from the staff throughout your journey.
- **Zodiac crafts:** Venture into the Arctic landscape—including cruises and shore landings—aboard the ship's Zodiacs.

## WORLD TRAVELLER



### CABIN CATEGORIES

NS	Suite with oversized private balcony – 465 sq. ft.
DS	Suite with oversized private balcony – 445 sq. ft.
JS	Suite with oversized private balcony – 382 sq. ft.
BS1	Cabin with floor-to-ceiling Juliette balcony – 300 sq. ft.
BS2	Cabin with private balcony – 300 sq. ft.
A	Cabin with floor-to-ceiling Juliette balcony – 270 sq. ft.
B	Cabin with floor-to-ceiling Juliette balcony – 270 sq. ft.
C	Cabin with private balcony – 270 sq. ft.
D	Cabin with private balcony – 270 sq. ft.
E	Cabin with private balcony – 270 sq. ft.
F	Cabin with private balcony – 270 sq. ft.

**Registration:** Portugal

**Length:** 413 ft.

**Beam:** 62 ft.

**Draft:** 15.7 ft.

**Cabin size:** 270-465 sq. ft.

**Number of Cabins (in use):** 86

**Passenger Capacity:** 170

**Entered Service:** 2022

**Passenger Decks (in use):** 6

**Group Size:** 25 travelers maximum, with 1 dedicated Trip Experience Leader

**Onboard doctor and small infirmary are available**

*This ship complies with the latest international and U.S. Coast Guard safety regulations and is outfitted with current navigational and communications technology. It has retractable fin stabilizers to help reduce discomfort during rough seas.*

## CABIN FEATURES

- 86 cabins between 270-465 sq. ft.
- All outside-facing with a private balcony or a floor-to-ceiling Juliette balcony
- All cabins have either one queen bed or two twin beds
- Flat-screen TV, DVD player, telephone, lockable safety drawer
- Private bathroom with shower and toiletries



*Cabin with queen-sized bed and private balcony*

# TRAVEL DOCUMENTS & ENTRY REQUIREMENTS

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## Your Passport

- Must be in good condition
- Must be valid for at least 6 months after your scheduled return to the U.S.
- Must have the required number of blank pages (details below)
- The blank pages must be labeled “Visas” at the top. Pages labeled “Amendments and Endorsements” are not acceptable

## Need to Renew Your Passport?

Contact the National Passport Information Center (NPIC) at **1-877-487-2778**, or visit the U.S. Department of State’s official website at **www.travel.state.gov** for information on obtaining a new passport or renewing your existing passport. The U.S. Department of State allows for passport renewal by mail or, for applicable citizens, renewal online. We advise you review the process and requirements for online passport renewal on the official website.

You may also contact our recommended visa service company, PVS International, at **1-800-556-9990** for help with your passport.

## Recommended Blank Pages

Please confirm that your passport has enough blank pages for this adventure.

- **Main trip only:** You will need 2 blank passport pages.
- **Pre-trip extension to Iceland:** No additional blank passport pages needed.
- **Post-trip extension to Demark:** No additional blank passport pages needed.

## No Visas Required

Travelers with a U.S. passport do not need any visas for this adventure, including the optional trip extensions.

## Traveling Without a U.S. Passport?

If you are not a U.S. citizen, or if your passport is from any country other than the U.S., it is your responsibility to check with your local consulate, embassy, or a visa services company about visa requirements. We recommend the services of PVS International, a national visa service located in Washington D.C.; they can be reached at **1-800-556-9990** or **www.pvsinternational.org**.

## Traveling With a Minor?

Some governments may require certain documentation for minors to enter and depart the country or to obtain a visa (if applicable). For further detail on the required documentation, please contact your local embassy or consulate.

## Travel Protection Required:

For new bookings starting 1/1/25, Overseas Adventure Travel requires all travelers purchase travel protection with Medical Evacuation coverage of at least \$200,000 and Medical Expense coverage of at least \$50,000, due to the remote nature of your adventure.

## O.A.T. Travel Protection:

If you **purchase your Travel Protection Plan** through O.A.T., no further action will be needed, as the Medical Evacuation coverage and Medical Expense coverage meets these requirements.

## Your Own Travel Protection:

If you purchase your own travel protection, we recommend you review the plan to ensure Medical Evacuation coverage of at least \$200,000 and Medical Expense coverage of at least \$50,000 is included. Once you confirm your plan meets the requirements, you will need to email the following information to **TravelCoverage@oattravel.com**:

- Traveler Name(s)
- Reservation Number
- Trip Protection Provider
- Policy Number
- Date of Purchase
- Copy of your Policy Documents

You can also contact our Travel Counselors at **1-800-221-0814** to review this policy. You will be required to provide proof of coverage by 60 days prior to departure at the latest.

## Emergency Photocopies of Key Documents

We recommend you carry color photocopies of key documents including the photo page of your passport plus any applicable visas, air itinerary, credit cards (front and back), and an alternative form of ID. Add emergency phone numbers like your credit card company and the number for your travel protection plan. Store copies separate from the originals.

If you plan to email this information to yourself, please keep in mind that email is not always secure; consider using password protection or encryption. Also email is not always available worldwide. As an alternative, you could load these documents onto a flash drive instead, which can do double-duty as a place to backup photos during your trip.



## **Overseas Taxes & Fees**

This tour may have taxes and fees that cannot be included in your airline ticket price because you are required to pay them in person onsite. All taxes are subject to change without notice and can be paid in cash (either U.S. or local currency).

## RIGORS, VACCINES & GENERAL HEALTH

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### Is This Adventure Right for You?

**Please review the information below prior to departing on this adventure.** We reserve the right for our Trip Experience Leaders to modify participation, or in some circumstances send travelers home, if their condition would adversely affect the health, safety, or enjoyment of themselves or of other travelers.

#### GROUP SIZE

- This adventure has a maximum group size of 25 travelers (average of 22) with an international Trip Experience Leader exclusive to O.A.T.

#### PACING

- 17 days, with 11 nights aboard the *World Traveller* and 4 nights in Oslo
- 2 international flights between U.S. and Oslo; 2 internal flights
- Air travel will likely have at least one connection
- All travelers will go out into the Arctic environment at once—either on a Zodiac cruise or a shore landing.

#### PHYSICAL REQUIREMENTS

- Walk 3 miles unassisted on uneven, often rugged terrain consisting of loose scree, mud, and rocks, as well as participate in 6–8 hours of activities each day
- Good agility, balance, and strength are needed for this expedition. Unlike traditional cruises, you will board Zodiac boats daily
- Throughout the expedition, travelers will be a two-day distance from the nearest medical facility; those using mobility aids or with medical conditions that might require immediate attention or evacuation will not be able to board the *World Traveller*
- The ship's physician reserves the right to deny boarding to any traveler deemed unfit for this expedition
- We reserve the right for Trip Experience Leaders to restrict participation, or in some circumstances send travelers home, if their limitations impact the group's experience

#### TERRAIN & TRANSPORTATION

- Uneven surfaces, including ice, slippery rocks, sand, scree, and snow
- Travel by 170-passenger expedition ship, 45-seat coach, and Zodiac
- Some landings in the Arctic are wet landings, so weatherproof clothing is mandatory. **Please note:** Rubber boots will be provided to all travelers.

- Weather and ice conditions and tides may require adjustments to your itinerary to ensure your safety

## CLIMATE

- Daytime temperatures range from 30–45°F during cruising season
- Expect high winds
- **Please note:** *Due to the Arctic's unpredictable weather and ice conditions, circumnavigating the Svalbard archipelago may not be possible and will be replaced with alternative activities*

## THE #1 THING TO KNOW ABOUT THIS TRIP IS: THIS IS AN EXPEDITION, AND THE NATURE OF THIS TRIP REQUIRES A HIGHER LEVEL OF FITNESS THAN THAT OF OTHER CRUISES.

### Steps to Take Before Your Trip

Before you leave on this adventure, we recommend the following:

- Check with the CDC for their recommendations for the countries you'll be visiting. You can contact them online at [www.cdc.gov/travel](http://www.cdc.gov/travel) or by phone at **1-800-232-4636**.
- Have a medical checkup with your doctor at least 6 weeks before your trip.
- Pick up any necessary medications, both prescription and over-the-counter.
- Have a dental and/or eye checkup. (Recommended, but less urgent)

### No Vaccines Required

#### Recommended Vaccines

At the time of writing there were no required vaccines for this trip. The CDC recommends that all travelers be up to date on their routine vaccinations and on basic travel vaccines like Hepatitis A and Typhoid, but these are suggestions only. However, this could change in future so we encourage you to check with the CDC yourself before meeting with your doctor.

#### Motion Sickness Medication

We strongly suggest that all travelers bring motion sickness medication as a precaution, even if you are not usually prone to seasickness. As an ocean expedition, we anticipate rough seas in some areas and there may be sudden movements as the ship navigates icy waters. There are several types of motion sickness medication, so we suggest that you consult your doctor to find out what works best for you.

#### Traveling with Medications

- **Pack medications in your carry-on bag** to avoid loss and to have them handy.
- **Keep medicines in their original, labeled containers** for a quicker security screen at the airport and a better experience if you get stopped by customs while overseas.

- **Bring copies of your prescriptions**, written using the generic drug name rather than a brand name to be prepared for any unforeseen loss of your medications.

We recommend checking with the State Department for medication restrictions by country: **travel.state.gov** (Go to “Find International Travel Information”, select “Country Information”, then enter the country into the search bar; if you don’t see any medications specifically mentioned under the “Health” section, then you can presume major U.S. brands should be OK).

## Staying Healthy on Your Trip

### Jet Lag Tips

- Start your trip well-rested.
- Begin a gradual transition to your new time zone before you leave or switch to your destination time zone when you get on the plane.
- Attempt to sleep and eat according to the new schedule.
- Avoid heavy eating and drinking caffeine or alcoholic beverages right before—and during—your flight.
- Drink plenty of water and/or fruit juice while flying
- Stretch your legs, neck, and back periodically while seated on the plane.
- After arrival, avoid the temptation to nap.
- Don’t push yourself to see a lot on your first day.
- Try to stay awake your first day until after dinner.

### Allergies

If you have any serious allergies or dietary restrictions, we advise you to notify us at least 30 days prior to your departure. Please call our Travel Counselors at **1-800-221-0814**, and we will communicate them to our regional office. Every effort will be made to accommodate you.

### Water

- Water in Scandinavia and Iceland is considered safe, but as an added safety precaution against possible stomach upsets, we recommend you drink bottled water as much as possible.
- Never drink from a mountain stream, fjord, or river, regardless of how clean it might appear.
- Bottled water is usually for sale in hotels, food shops, and restaurants.

If you have any concerns, we strongly suggest that you let your doctor know about any medical condition you have, particularly cardiac or respiratory disease or diabetes, and discuss the details of the trip itinerary as it pertains to your health. Your trip will take you into remote areas, with

limited medical facilities. For the cruise portion of your trip, the ship's physician reserves the right to deny any traveler from boarding if they are deemed unfit for the trip, or if they have a medical condition that cannot safely be managed onboard.



# MONEY MATTERS: LOCAL CURRENCY & TIPPING GUIDELINES

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## Top Three Tips

- **Carry a mix of different types of payments**, such as local currency, an ATM card, and a credit card.
- **Traveler's checks are not recommended.** Traveler's checks are not accepted in these regions.
- **You will not be able to pay with U.S. dollars on this trip;** you will need local currency instead. Credit cards and ATMs are widely available, so you will not need a large amount of cash.

## Local Currency

For current exchange rates, please refer to an online converter tool like [www.xe.com/currencyconverter](http://www.xe.com/currencyconverter), your bank, or the financial section of your newspaper.

**Norway:** Norwegian Krone (kr., NOK)

**Iceland:** Icelandic *krona* ( Íkr)

**Denmark:** Danish *krone* (Kr., DKK)

## How to Exchange Money

On your trip, the easiest way to exchange money is to withdraw funds from a local ATM. The ATM will give you local money and your bank at home will convert that into U.S. dollars.

You can also exchange cash at some hotels, large post offices, and money exchange offices. To exchange cash, you'll usually need your passport and bills in good condition (not worn, torn, or dirty). New bills (post 2004) are best.

Please note that many banks in Europe will only exchange money for their own customers. Never exchange money on the street. All exchange methods involve fees, which may be built into the conversion rate; ask beforehand.

## ATMs

When using the ATM, keep in mind that it may only accept cards from local banks, and may not allow cash advances on credit cards; you might need to try more than one ATM or more than one card. Many banks will charge a set fee or a percentage fee each time you use a foreign ATM. We recommend that you check with your bank before you depart. Don't forget to memorize the actual digits of your card's PIN number (many keypads at foreign ATMs do not include letters on their keys—they only display numbers.)

In most countries, ATMs are widely available in major cities. If you are in a rural location, it will likely be harder to find an ATM. If you are visiting a country that has different expectation for ATMs, they will be listed below.

**Nordic Countries:** Most Nordic countries are cashless. In response, ATMs are less widely available and cash is not accepted in many places.

### Credit & Debit Cards

While traveling, most countries and major cities will accept credit cards. We suggest that you bring one or two, especially if you are planning a large purchase (artwork, jewelry). We also suggest that you bring more than one brand of card (i.e. Visa, MasterCard, American Express) if possible, as not all are accepted around the world. If you are visiting a country that does not commonly accept credit cards, they will be listed below.

**Nordic Countries:** Credit and debit cards are readily accepted in Nordic countries. Some cafes, restaurants, and attractions will only accept credit cards. Visa is the most widely accepted credit card in most Nordic countries, followed by MasterCard and then American Express.

### Notify Card Providers of Upcoming Travel

Many credit card companies and banks have fraud alert departments that will freeze your card if they see suspicious charges—such as charges or withdrawals from another country. To avoid an accidental security block, it is a good idea to notify your credit card company and/or bank you will be using your cards abroad. You can do this by calling their customer service number a week or two before your departure. Some banks or credit card companies will also let you do this online.

You should also double-check what phone number you could call if you have a problem with a card while you are abroad. Don't assume you can use the 1-800 number printed on the back of your card—most 1 800 numbers don't work outside of the U.S.!

### On Board Ship: Two Separate Bills Will be Issued

- **Shipboard account:** This bill is for any on board purchases (drinks, laundry, souvenirs, etc.). This bill is payable at the front desk by cash or credit/debit card only. For cash, the ship accepts U.S. dollars. For credit/debit cards, we accept MasterCard, Visa, and Discover. Other forms of payment, such as checks or American Express are not accepted.
- **Optional tour account:** This bill is for any optional tours taken during the trip and is calculated in U.S. dollars. This bill is paid with your International Trip Leader (they will have you fill out a form) by credit/debit card only; other forms of payments such as cash and checks are not accepted. For more information on optional tours—including which cards we accept for payment—see the “Preparing for Your Trip” chapter.

**Please note:** Payments made by credit card may take up to three months to process. We ask that you use a credit card that will not expire until three months after your trip ends. Because our headquarters are in Boston, the charges may appear to be from Boston or might be labeled as “OPT Boston” (depending on your credit card company).

## Exchange Services: Policy Update

Due to international banking laws, we are no longer able to exchange money onboard the ship. If you need to obtain local currency, please see the “How to Exchange Money” section for helpful tips and information.

## Tipping Guidelines

Of course, whether you tip, and how much, is always at your own discretion. But for those of you who have asked for tipping suggestions, we offer these guidelines:

- **O.A.T. Trip Experience Leader:** It is customary to express a personal “thank you” to your Trip Experience Leader at the end of your trip. As a guideline, many travelers give \$8–\$12 USD (or equivalent in local currency) per person for each day their Trip Experience Leader is with them. *Please note that these tips can only be in cash. If you are taking any of the optional extensions, your Trip Experience Leader during the extension(s) may not be the same as the one on your main trip.*
- **Shipboard Crew:** While sailing on the ship, we recommend a flat tip of \$16–\$18 U.S. per traveler, per day. You’ll give this tip once—at the end of your cruise—and it will be pooled among the entire crew. Crew tips can be in the form of cash in Euros or U.S. dollars.
- **Housekeeping Staff at Hotels:** We recommend \$1 per room, per night. (This is for hotels only; on the ship Housekeeping are part of crew, so you don’t need to tip them separately.)
- **Included in Your Trip Price:** Gratuities are included for local guides, motorcoach drivers, and Expedition Team on your main trip, extensions, and all optional tours.

## Time at Leisure

When you are exploring on your own, it’s useful to know when to tip and how much, because local customs often differ from the U.S. Here are a few helpful guidelines for the most common services a traveler might use:

- **Taxis:** In many cities the tip is included in the fare, and will be announced on a sign inside the cab; otherwise a 10% tip is appropriate.
- **Restaurants, cafes, and bars:** A service charge is usually included in restaurant and bar bills, but it is customary to leave an additional tip of around 10% of the bill for your waiter or bartender in Scandinavia. Tipping at restaurants is not common in Iceland. Locals might round up the bill to the next 500–1000 ISK and tell the waiter to keep the change, but it is not expected. Tipping is not necessary—and may not be possible—when paying by credit card.
- **Public Restrooms:** Most public restrooms in Scandinavia are pay-toilets; you pay the staff at the entrance to the restroom or drop the appropriate coin into the slot on the stall door. In Norway, credit cards can be used as well. Many restaurants, cafes, and shops offer only pay-toilets or reserve their restrooms for patrons only. Costs vary from the equivalent of 0.5 euros to 1 euro, so be sure that you have coins (in the local currency) available.

## AIR, OPTIONAL TOURS & STAYING IN TOUCH

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### Land Only Travelers & Customized Air

#### Quick Definitions

- **Land Only:** You will be booking your own international flights. Airport transfers are not included.
- **Air-Inclusive:** You booked international air with us. Airport transfers are included as long as you didn't customize your trip's dates (see next bullet).
- **Arrive Early or Stopover (select adventures only):** If you chose one of these Customization options and purchased air through O.A.T, accommodations and airport transfers are included. However, if you chose one of our Customization options, but did not purchase air through O.A.T., accommodations are included, but airport transfers are not. If you chose one of our customization options, and purchase air through O.A.T. but not the accommodations, the airport transfers are not included. We have included transfer options below.
- **Customization on Your Own:** If you have not purchased air through O.A.T. and decided to arrive early, stay longer, or stop in a connecting city on your own, you are responsible for airport transfers and accommodations. For your convenience, a preliminary list of your included hotels is available on your My Planner at [www.oattravel.com/myplanner](http://www.oattravel.com/myplanner) under "My Reservations" to help you with selecting a hotel for your additional time.

### Air Inclusive Travelers

If you have purchased international air with us, there are some points that may be helpful for you to know.

- **Flying with a Travel Companion:** If you're traveling with a companion from a different household, and both of you are beginning and ending your trip at the same airport on the same dates, let us know you'd like to travel together and we'll make every effort to arrange this (please note, however, that this is not always possible). If you request any changes to your flights, please be sure that both you and your companion tell us that you still want to fly together.
- **Selecting Your Seats:** If your airline allows pre-assigned seats, you will be able to select and view them directly from the airline's website after booking. Some airlines will not allow seat confirmation until your reservation is ticketed 45-30 days prior to departure, and/or they may charge a nominal fee. You may locate your itinerary on an airline's website utilizing the Record Locator Number found on the Air Itinerary in your My Planner.

### Airport Transfers Can Be Purchased

For eligible flights, airport transfers may be purchased separately as an optional add-on, subject to availability. To be eligible, your flight(s) must meet the following requirements:

- You must fly into or fly home from the same airport as O.A.T. travelers who purchased included airfare.
- Your flight(s) must arrive/depart on the same day that the group arrives or departs.
- If you are arriving early, you must have arranged the hotels through our Arrive Early personalization option

Airport transfers can be purchased up to 45 days prior to your departure; they are not available for purchase onsite. To learn more, or purchase airport transfers, please call our Travel Counselors at **1-800-221-0814**.

If you don't meet the requirements above, you'll need to make your own transfer arrangements. We suggest the Rome to Rio website as a handy resource: [www.rome2rio.com](http://www.rome2rio.com)

## Optional Tours

Optional tours are additional add-on tours that allow you to personalize your adventure by tailoring it to your tastes and needs. And if you decide not to join an optional tour? Then you'll have free time to relax or explore on your own—it's about options, not obligations.

## What You Need to Know

- All optional tours are subject to change and availability.
- Optional tours that are reserved with your Trip Experience Leader can be paid for using credit/debit cards only. We accept MasterCard, Visa, and Discover credit cards; we can also take MasterCard or Visa debit cards as long as the card allows you to sign for purchases. (You won't be able to enter a PIN.)
- To ensure that you are charged in U.S. dollars, your payment will be processed by our U.S. headquarters in Boston. This process can take up to three months, so we ask that you only use a card that will still be valid three months after your trip is over. The charge may appear on your credit card statement as being from Boston, MA or may be labeled as "OPT Boston".
- Your Trip Experience Leader will give you details on the optional tours while you're on the trip. But if you'd like to look over descriptions of them earlier, you can do so at any time by referring to your Day-to-Day Itinerary (available online by signing into My Planner at [www.oattravel.com/myplanner](http://www.oattravel.com/myplanner)).

## Communicating with Home from Abroad

### Cell Phones

If you want to use your cell phone on the trip, check with your phone provider to see if your phone and service will work outside of the U.S. It may turn out to be cheaper to rent an international phone or buy a SIM card onsite. If you want to use a local SIM, just make certain your phone is



“unlocked”, meaning it can accept a local SIM card. If your cell is “unlocked” then you will be able to purchase a local SIM for it and then buy minutes with “Pay as You Go” cards, so that you have a local contact number for your friends and family.

## Calling Apps

Another option is to use a smartphone app like Skype, FaceTime, or WhatsApp. We recommend you use WhatsApp to communicate with home while abroad and with your Trip Experience Leader while onsite. You will need a Wi-Fi connection if you do not have international coverage. Other calling options include smartphone apps such as Skype or FaceTime. You will need a Wi-Fi connection for these apps and the calls may count towards your phone plan’s data allowance. Many smartphones—and some tablets or laptops—come with one of these apps pre-installed or you can download them for free from the appropriate apps store.

## Calling Cards & 1-800 Numbers

When calling the U.S. from a foreign country, a prepaid calling card can be useful because it circumvents unexpected charges from the hotel. Calling cards purchased locally are typically the best (less expensive, more likely to work with the local phones, etc.). One reminder: Do not call U.S. 1-800 numbers outside the continental United States. This can result in costly long distance fees, since 1-800 numbers do not work outside the country.

## Receiving Calls from Home

To ensure you are available during your trip to friends and relatives at home, you will receive two copies of your hotel list, including phone numbers, with your Final Documents. One copy is for you to bring, and one is to leave behind with friends or relatives in case they need to contact you during the trip.

## How to Call Overseas

When calling overseas from the U.S., dial 011 for international exchange, then the country code (indicated by a plus sign: +), and then the number. Note that foreign phone numbers may not have the same number of digits as U.S. numbers; even within a country the number of digits can vary depending on the city and if the phone is a land line or cell phone.

**Norway:** +47

**Denmark:** +45

**Iceland:** +354

## PACKING: WHAT TO BRING & LUGGAGE LIMITS

### Luggage Limits

MAIN TRIP LIMITS	
Pieces per person	One checked bag and one carry-on per person.
Weight restrictions	Varies by airline. The standard weight limit is <b>50 lbs for checked bags</b> and <b>15 lbs for a carry-on</b> .
Size Restrictions	Varies by airline. Measured in linear inches ( <i>length+width+depth</i> ). Generally, <b>62 linear inches is the checked bag limit; carry-on limit is 45 linear inches</b> .
Luggage Type	A sturdy, fabric-sided suitcase with built-in wheels and lockable zippers is recommended.
TRIP EXTENSION(S) LIMITS	
Same as the main trip.	
REMARKS/SUGGESTIONS	
<p><b>One suitcase and one carry-on bag per person:</b> Due to the space limitations on bus transfers, you'll be restricted to one suitcase and one carry-on bag per person. This is to ensure that we have room for everyone's luggage. We ask that you abide by this limit to avoid inconveniencing your fellow travelers and prevent additional airlines luggage fees (which are your responsibility). Most airlines now charge to check more than one suitcase per person.</p> <p><b>Luggage rules:</b> Luggage rules and limits are set by governmental and airline policy. Enforcement of the rules may include spot checks or may be inconsistent. However one thing is the same across the board: If you are found to have oversized or overweight luggage, you will be subject to additional fees, to be assessed by—and paid to—the airline in question.</p>	

#### Don't forget:

- **These luggage limits may change.** If the airline(s) notify us of any changes, we will include an update in your Final Documents booklet.
- It's a good idea to reconfirm baggage restrictions and fees directly with the airline a week or so prior to departure. For your convenience, we maintain a list of the toll-free numbers for the most common airlines on our website in the FAQ section.

- **Baggage fees are not included in your trip price;** they are payable directly to the airlines.
- The luggage limits above are based on your regional flights, which may be less than your international flights. Even if your international airline offers a larger weight limit, you will need to pack according to the lower restrictions.

## Your Luggage

- **Checked Luggage:** Consider a duffel bag or soft-sided suitcase. Look for one with heavy nylon fabric, wrap-around handles, built-in wheels, and a heavy duty lockable zipper. Due to space limitations on our motorcoaches, you are allowed one piece of checked luggage per person. Porterage at airports and hotels is provided for **one** bag per person. All bags should have luggage tags.
- **Carry-on Bag:** You are allowed one carry-on bag per person. We suggest a tote or small backpack that can be used as both a carry-on bag for your flight and to carry your daily necessities—water bottle, camera, etc—during your daily activities.
- **Locks:** For flights that originate in the U.S., you can either use a TSA-approved lock or leave your luggage unlocked. Outside of the U.S. we strongly recommend locking your luggage as a theft-prevention measure.

## Clothing Suggestions: Functional Tips

- **Travel light:** A good rule of thumb is to gather together everything you want to bring; then take half of that. To have a varied travel wardrobe, yet keep your luggage light, we recommend you select a color scheme and pack color-coordinated clothing items that can be mixed to create different outfits. For more packing and luggage tips, you might want to visit [www.travelite.org](http://www.travelite.org).
- **Pack casual clothes:** Comfortable, informal apparel is acceptable at each of your destinations. At dinner, you will not need to wear “dressy” clothing; men do not need jackets or ties and women do not need fancy dresses. You may want one or two “smart casual” outfits for the Welcome Reception or Farewell Dinner, but it’s completely up to you.
- **Learn from previous travelers:** Our travelers’ top three comments about packing are “I wish I had brought less,” “I should have double-checked the weather,” and “You said I’d need (insert something you don’t need here) and I didn’t.” Our suggestions are springboards, not requirements – take them with a grain of salt. Finally, remember the Golden Rule of Packing Light: whatever you think you need at first—take half the clothes and twice the money.
- **Comfortable, supportive walking shoes are essential on the extensions:** You’ll be on your feet and walking a lot, sometimes over rough and slippery surfaces, so choose your footwear carefully. The soles of your shoes should offer good traction. You can find especially supportive or light hiking shoes designed for walking. For the ship, you’ll need a pair of clean shoes (either washed thoroughly or new) for the Arctic portion of your adventure. You may want to consider bringing a second pair of shoes for this purpose.

## Expedition Clothing

As you will experience a wide range of temperatures and weather conditions, our list suggests several layers of clothing. For the warmer climates you visit (such as Oslo), most of your clothing can be made of cotton or cotton-synthetic blends. For the colder climates, consider long-sleeved underwear made from water-wicking synthetics beneath outer layers of wool-synthetic blends and fleece, to stay dry and warm.

- **Expedition Gear:** Other than boots, parkas, waterproof pants, and potentially a walking stick or trekking pole, it is not necessary to have expedition gear for this trip. For more on boots, parkas, or waterproof pants, please see below.
- **Boots are provided:** During this adventure, you'll step from the Zodiacs into icy water that can be up to 10 inches deep—making protective boots a must. We will provide you with knee-high rubber Wellington-type boots from a stock selection of available sizes (men's sizes 6 to 14; and women's sizes 5 to 12; with a calf circumference of approximately 15.7 inches). The boots will be distributed before embarkation. You may use them for the duration of your cruise and then return them before disembarkation.
- What if we don't have your size or if you prefer to wear your own boots? In that case the ship staff recommends a pair of waterproof knee-height rubber boots with sturdy soles, such as Rocky rubber mud boots or Wellingtons. Make sure to break in any new footwear before your voyage. All travelers should also bring lightweight boot liners and/or heavy hiking socks for additional warmth.
- **Parkas are included:** We will provide you with parkas for this trip. We will send you an order form so that you may select your size. Your parka will be sent to you before you depart and will be yours to keep.
- **Waterproof pants:** Essential to any layering system is keeping the outer layer dry. You must bring water and windproof rain (or ski) pants to wear over your long underwear/leggings and regular pants to keep warm and dry. These waterproof pants should be worn over your knee-high boots when going ashore. We recommend pants with side zippers on the lower part of the leg; they are easier to get on over your boots.
- Gore-Tex and similar fabrics that are waterproof and "breathable" materials that keep out wind and water without trapping excess heat may be excellent. However, these fabrics are expensive and can be damaged by prolonged exposure to salt water. Gore-Tex should be rinsed in freshwater after exposure to salt.
- **On excursions:** The interior of the ship is heated to a comfortable 70-75° F, but the outdoor environment in the Arctic resembles moderate winter weather. Since the majority of your days during this trip are spent on the Arctic cruise, part of the list below emphasizes what you will need to dress in layers for this portion of the trip. For an Arctic shore excursion, a typical layering system consists of long underwear (top and bottom), a warm long-sleeved shirt, warm pants, a sweater, fleece jacket, liner socks plus one to two pair heavier socks for

warmth, rubber boots, liner gloves inside heavier outer gloves, warm hat, water- and wind-proof outer jacket, and waterproof outer pants. Even if you're accustomed to temperatures in the 30s-40s, wind chill can make it feel much colder.

- **Bio-security and conservation:** To protect the natural ecosystems, we recommend that you avoid any clothing, footwear, or items (such as backpacks) that use mesh or Velcro, as these are harder to clean and may have contaminants that could adversely affect the local environment.

## Recommended Packing Lists

We have included suggestions from Trip Experience Leaders and former travelers to help you pack. These packing lists are only jumping-off points—they offer recommendations based on experience, but not requirements. Each travelers packing list may be different depending on the climate you are used to. We recommend using [www.weather.com](http://www.weather.com) and consulting the “Climate” chapter of this handbook.

And don't forget a reusable water bottle—you'll need it to take advantage of any refills we offer as we are working to eliminate single-use plastic bottles on all of our trips.

## Recommended Items

- ☐ Daily essentials: toothbrush, toothpaste, floss, hairbrush or comb, shaving items, deodorant, etc. The ship will have shampoo and shower gel available in your cabin.
- ☐ Spare eyeglasses/contact lenses and your prescription
- ☐ Sunglasses and a neck strap
- ☐ Hand and toe warmers
- ☐ Sunscreen, SPF 45 or stronger (essential for the Arctic)
- ☐ Washcloth (not always supplied)
- ☐ Pocket-size tissues
- ☐ Moist towelettes and/or anti-bacterial “waterless” hand cleanser
- ☐ Flashlight, extra batteries/bulb
- ☐ Photocopies of passport, air ticket, credit cards
- ☐ Camera, spare batteries, and memory cards
- ☐ A waterproof protector for your camera. Please do NOT use a plastic bag for this purpose—it can cause litter.



- ☐ Compact binoculars/camera lens with strong zoom: If polar bears are nearby, we will observe from the ship instead of going in the Zodiacs for safety purposes.

### Clothing for Land Stays

- ☐ Shirts: A mixture of short and long-sleeved shirts to layer
- ☐ Light rain jacket/windbreaker with hood
- ☐ Shoes and socks: comfortable walking, running shoes, or light hikers (please see “Clothing Suggestions” for note about shoes for Arctic cruise)
- ☐ Consider casual good-traction shoes, or sport sandals
- ☐ Underwear and sleepwear
- ☐ Trousers/jeans: Comfortable and loose fitting is best for comfort and movement.
- ☐ Walking shorts (for Oslo on the main trip or optional Copenhagen extension)
- ☐ Cotton sweater or sweatshirt for the air-conditioned bus
- ☐ Wide-brim sun hat or visor
- ☐ Swimsuit, for hotel pools

### Clothing for Your Arctic Cruise

- ☐ Shirts: Several turtlenecks and T-shirts for layering and aboard ship. Woolen, knit, cotton sweaters/tops, or polar fleece tops in medium weight for layering.
- ☐ Trousers: Sturdy, warm trousers such as wool-synthetic blends, sweatpants, or quick-dry pants. Bring a pair of warm ski pants if you have them.
- ☐ Warm jacket/parka
- ☐ Waterproof gear: Rain jacket and waterproof pants (rain pants), roomy enough to wear over other clothing.
- ☐ For layering: wool or fleece sweaters, Polartec fleece jacket
- ☐ Scarf or other face protection
- ☐ Long underwear (top and bottom): In silk, polypropylene, or similar. Lightweight is best unless you chill easily, in which case bring medium or heavier weight

- ☐ Warm hat/cap that protects your ears
- ☐ Boots: We will provide boots during your cruise. If you prefer to buy your own, please see the “Clothing Suggestions” section on the previous pages.
- ☐ Warm socks: High “outer” socks in a natural fiber like wool or cotton, plus thin liner or “inner” socks in polypropylene or other moisture-wicking synthetics.
- ☐ Gloves: 1 pair light liner gloves plus 1 pair heavier waterproof gloves

## Medicines

- ☐ Your own prescription medicines – please ensure you have a large enough supply to cover the entirety of your adventure
- ☐ Vitamins
- ☐ Cold remedies: Sudafed/Dristan
- ☐ Pain relievers: Ibuprofen/naproxen/aspirin
- ☐ Laxatives: Senokot/Ex-Lax
- ☐ Antihistamine: Benadryl
- ☐ Stomach upset: Pepto-Bismol/Mylanta
- ☐ Anti-diarrheal: Imodium
- ☐ Band-Aids
- ☐ Moleskin foot pads
- ☐ Antibiotic: Neosporin/Bacitracin
- ☐ Motion sickness medicine

## Optional Gear

- ☐ Travel alarm
- ☐ Hanging toiletry bag with pockets
- ☐ Basic sewing kit
- ☐ Hand-wash laundry soap, and maybe clothespins/travel clothesline/stopper

- ☐ Electrical transformer & plug adapters—see “Regional Electricity” section
- ☐ Travel journal/note pad/reading material
- ☐ Home address book
- ☐ Photos, small gift for Home-Hosted visit
- ☐ Phrase book
- ☐ Pocket calculator for exchange rates
- ☐ Walking stick or trekking pole (you may be able to find a folding or collapsible version for ease of packing)
- ☐ Travel money purse, worn under your shirt or jacket; money belt

## Electricity Abroad

When traveling overseas, the voltage is usually different and the plugs might not be the same shape.

### Voltage

Electricity at hotels in Norway, Denmark, Iceland, and onboard the ship is 220/230 volts. In the U.S. it is 110 volts. Most of the things a traveler will want to plug in—battery chargers, MP3 players, tablets or computers—can run off both 110 and 220/230. But you should check the item or the owner’s guide first to confirm this before you plug it in. Plugging a 110V U.S. appliance into 220/230V service will ruin the motor. If you have something that needs 110 volts—like a shaver or a hairdryer—you can bring a transformer to change the current. (But transformers tend to burn out, so it might be better to leave whatever it is at home.)

### Plugs

Onboard the ship, you will use a Type C plug.

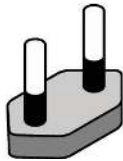
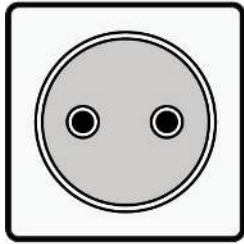
In hotels, the shape of plugs will vary from country to country, and sometimes even within a country depending on when that building was built. Different plug shapes are named by letters of the alphabet—Type A, Type B, and so on. Standard U.S. plugs are Type A and Type B. Here is the list of plugs for the countries on this trip:

**Norway:** C and F

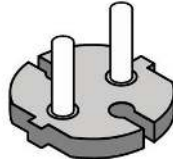
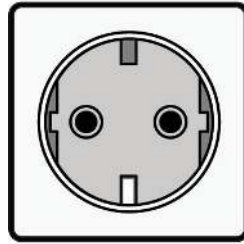
**Iceland:** C and F

**Denmark:** C and F

**Type C**



**Type F**



#### Availability

**A constant electricity supply cannot be guaranteed during overnight stays.** Travelers dependent on electricity supply (as in the case of those with sleep apnea) should consider a different trip.

## CLIMATE & AVERAGE TEMPERATURES

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**Oslo, Norway:** Although well into the northern latitudes, Oslo's climate is fairly temperate thanks to warm air being wafted across the Atlantic from the Gulf Stream. Summer weather in Oslo is mild and pleasant, with frequent hot spells, and plenty of long sunny days. In winter temperatures hover just above or below freezing. Snow is plentiful in winter, and rainfall is spread across the year, the rainiest month being August.

**Svalbard, Norway:** Situated in the Arctic circle, this Norwegian archipelago experiences cold weather throughout the year, reaching into the 40s during the summer months (June–Aug) and experiencing freezing or sub-zero temperatures for the remainder of the year. Svalbard is influenced by the West Spitsbergen Current with a milder climate to the north and west and the East Spitsbergen Current with harsher temperatures to the east. Fog and precipitation is common throughout the year. Winds are constantly shifting but are most prevalent during winter months; June and July bring the calmest winds, but strong winds are still possible, especially during a storm. Due to its northern location, Svalbard experiences perpetual light from April through August and darkness from October through February.

**Iceland:** Though Iceland's climate is cool, warm ocean currents keep it more temperate than you might expect for its northerly location. Highs in Reykjavik during the summer months, with their long hours of daylight, average in the 50s but can easily reach the 60s or low 70s—like fall days in the northeastern U.S. Humidity can be low at summer's outset (May), when the air has exceptional clarity on sunny days. September and October in Iceland are cooler and you'll want to have a warm jacket, warm hat, and gloves available. The winter months bring below-freezing weather and shorter daylight hours, offering a unique opportunity to go in search of the Northern Lights, but you'll need warm winter gear.

**It's often windy, so bring a good windbreaker. The weather can change rapidly, so be prepared to add or remove outer layers during the course of a day's tour.**

Also, know that **when conditions are windy, the temperature will feel several degrees cooler than it really is, a phenomenon known as “the wind chill effect”**. Locals are used to it, but it often catches visitors by surprise—anything a local describes as a “light breeze” probably requires an extra layer, like a windbreaker or jacket. In winter, this may mean wearing three layers (a top, a fleece/sweater, and a jacket/coat).

**Copenhagen, Denmark:** The weather in Copenhagen is mild through all the four seasons—with highs usually in the 60s and lows usually in the 50s—although temperatures in winter can drop down into the 30s and 40s. On the other end of the scale, summertime highs rarely go above 80 °F despite the occasional heat wave. Rainfall is moderate too, but spread throughout the year, so showers are possible in any season. Grey skies are the norm rather than the exception in Copenhagen.



## Climate Averages & Online Forecast

The following charts reflect the **average** climate as opposed to exact weather conditions. This means they serve only as general indicators of what can reasonably be expected. An extreme heat wave or cold snap could fall outside these ranges. As your departure approaches, we encourage you to use **[www.weather.com](http://www.weather.com)** for a more accurate forecast of the locations you visit.

### Average Daily High/Low Temperatures (°F), Humidity & Monthly Rainfall

MONTH	OSLO, NORWAY		
	Temp. High-Low	% Relative Humidity (am-pm)	Average # of Days with Rainfall
JAN	31 to 20	86 to 80	10
FEB	32 to 19	88 to 74	9
MAR	39 to 27	86 to 65	13
APR	49 to 34	70 to 52	15
MAY	62 to 45	71 to 48	18
JUN	68 to 52	71 to 50	19
JUL	71 to 55	73 to 52	20
AUG	69 to 53	80 to 54	20
SEP	60 to 45	83 to 58	20
OCT	49 to 38	86 to 69	19
NOV	39 to 29	86 to 78	15
DEC	32 to 22	86 to 82	10

MONTH	SVALBARD, NORWAY		
	Temp. High-Low	% Relative Humidity (am-pm)	Average # Days with Rainfall
JAN	10 to 0	73 to 73	21
FEB	10 to -1	76 to 75	19
MAR	12 to 1	75 to 74	20
APR	16 to 6	74 to 71	18
MAY	29 to 22	75 to 71	19
JUN	46 to 40	74 to 72	17
JUL	46 to 40	78 to 72	18
AUG	44 to 38	78 to 72	21
SEP	36 to 30	77 to 73	20
OCT	25 to 18	73 to 73	22
NOV	19 to 10	72 to 73	21
DEC	12 to 3	72 to 72	21

## ABOARD YOUR SHIP: CABIN FEATURES, DINING & SERVICES ON BOARD

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### *M/S World Traveller*

#### Cabin Amenities

Your cabin features a private bathroom with shower (shampoo and shower gel are provided), a hairdryer, a TV, in-room heating, an in-room safe, and a mini-refrigerator.

#### Cabin Assignments

You will receive confirmation of your deck and/or cabin category upfront in writing; it will be on your invoice and online in My Planner at **[www.gct.com/myplanner](http://www.gct.com/myplanner)**. However, your cabin number may not be assigned until you arrive onboard the ship. (This is normal procedure for many small ships.) If there's no cabin number on your invoice or online, you can presume it will be assigned later and communicated to you when you board.

#### Dining

All meals are taken in the ship's dining room which serves three meals per day. Breakfast and lunch are typically buffet-style while dinner will be a traditional plated meal. Complimentary soft drinks, juice, and water are available at all three meals; coffee and tea are included, or specialty coffee drinks are available for purchase; house beer and wine are served with dinner. Other premium beverage choices may be charged to your shipboard account. Prices will vary by vintage, starting at approximately \$30 per bottle of wine. Because of the remote locations that you'll be visiting on this trip, alcohol is typically imported which means that you will likely experience higher prices than what you would typically find at home. (No outside alcohol may be consumed onboard the *World Traveller*.)

If you require a special diet, please request this in advance, you may do so by contacting one of our Travel Counselors (please note, kosher meals are not available on the *World Traveller*). Dining times will vary according to the scheduled daily activities.

#### Electricity

Cabins on the *World Traveller* are equipped with 220-volt outlets which use a Type C plug (also known as the "Euro plug"). Please be sure to check the voltage of all your appliances. Most modern devices are dual-voltage, meaning they can run on both 110 and 220 volts. If you have any appliances that are 110 V, we recommend that you bring a converter. For more details on electricity, please see your Travel Handbook.

#### Getting Ashore

Getting from ship to shore during an ocean-going voyage is not the same experience as on a river cruise—it requires more balance and agility, plus there are more formalities.

- **Balance and agility are needed:** To get ashore, we will use the ship's own fleet of Zodiacs, which are small but sturdy open-air boats holding 8-10 people each. To get into one of the Zodiacs, you'll need to go down a steep staircase—which can be wet and slippery—and then crew members will assist you as you step from the *World Traveller* into the Zodiac.
- **“Wet” landings:** Your landings will be “wet,” which means you'll need to step into cold water up to ten inches deep and wade ashore. We will provide you with rubber Wellington-type boots for the duration of your cruise from a stock selection of available sizes. Please see your Travel Handbook for more details.
- **Clothing note:** Since the Zodiacs are small open-air boats, they are more susceptible to being splashed by water. It is essential that you bring waterproof pants to protect your clothing while transferring from ship to shore.

**Important Note:** Due to guidelines set by the International Association of Antarctica Tour Operators (IAATO), on Antarctic expeditions there are limits to the number of travelers who are able to go ashore at the same time. This may mean that you will enjoy a zodiac cruise while other travelers are ashore, and vice versa. To learn more about the IAATO and their mission to promote environmentally responsible tourism in Antarctica, please see your Travel Handbook or visit their website at [www.iaato.org](http://www.iaato.org).

## Headsets

Please note that headsets are not available on this expedition.

## Internet Access and Email

Complimentary wireless Internet service is available in public spaces, but is not available in individual cabins. If you want to use the wireless Internet connection you'll need to bring your own device—a laptop, tablet, MP3 player, smart phone, etc.—because the ship does not rent or loan these devices. Please keep in mind that the wireless Internet access onboard is subject to the challenges of travel: ship location, signal availability, and usage volume onboard will affect connectivity and speed. Given the remote locations to which we will be traveling, you should expect that there will be times when the wireless Internet is either slow or not available.

## Laundry Services

Laundry services are available on the *World Traveller* for a fee (a price list for laundry services will be provided on board). There will be forms and laundry bags provided in your cabin which are collected every morning. Your laundry will be returned to you in 48 hours.

## Medical Services

There is an English-speaking doctor onboard, as well as all of the basic First Aid supplies. All physician's fees will be payable directly to the doctor. All specific medicines are the responsibility of each traveler, therefore we recommend that you bring a sufficient supply of any prescription medications. Should you have any medical problems while aboard the ship, the doctor will refer to your medical forms.

## Public Spaces

The *World Traveller* features a lecture room, a bar and lounge, an observation deck with a panoramic lounge, a spa and gym, reception area and gift shop, a pool and jacuzzi and a dining room, in addition to extensive open decks.

## Shipboard Payments

Payment for shipboard expenses can be made using U.S. dollars, debit cards, or credit cards such as Visa and MasterCard. All prices are in U.S. dollars and you will not need a PIN to use your credit card onboard. Personal checks and Discover are not accepted onboard.

## Ship-to-Shore Communications

The ship has satellite telephone connections which allows you to call anywhere in accordance with the current local tariffs. Calling costs will be advised on board.

## Smoking Policy

Smoking is prohibited on board, with the exception of a designated smoking area. Please see your shipboard crew to be directed to the smoking designated area.

## Wheelchairs

The ship is not built to accommodate wheelchairs.

## Ship Specifications

### *World Traveller*

- **History:** 2022
- **Size:** 413x62 ft
- **Capacity:** 170 passengers
- **Layout:** 86 cabins, 8 decks; Elevator—yes



## ABOUT YOUR DESTINATIONS: CULTURE, ETIQUETTE & MORE

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### O.A.T. Trip Experience Leaders: A World of Difference

During your adventure, you'll be accompanied by one of our local Trip Experience Leaders. All are fluent in English and possess the skills, certification, and experience necessary to ensure an enriching adventure. As locals of the regions you'll explore with them, our Trip Experience Leaders provide the kind of firsthand knowledge and insight that make local history, culture, and wildlife come alive. Coupled with their unbridled enthusiasm, caring personalities, and ability to bring diverse groups of travelers together, our Trip Experience Leaders ensure that your experience with O.A.T. is one you'll remember for a lifetime.

### The Culture of Scandinavia

Does Scandinavia even have a common culture? And how does it differ from Nordic culture? First off, Scandinavia refers to the lands originally occupied by the Vikings—which would be Norway, Sweden and Denmark. When referring to Nordic countries, it would be Norway, Sweden and Denmark, with Finland and Iceland added to the mix. While these northern lands differ in language and geography, their shared history and religion have given rise to several cultural similarities.

A belief that Scandinavians are sullen or aloof, however, is one of the most common cultural misunderstandings. If you are unable to engage in a conversation with a local, you might interpret it as someone being standoffish or even rude. But a Scandinavian would perceive it as being polite by not bothering a stranger with small talk. Broadly speaking, Scandinavians place a high value on being polite and do not wish to speak to anyone unnecessarily or even ask for help unless it's absolutely necessary.

A common thread woven throughout Scandinavian culture may be its focus on the wellbeing of the group rather than of the individual. While Americans admire even the most extreme efforts of individuals to achieve success, Scandinavians strive for moderation—in themselves, the community, and the workplace—to achieve a sense of balance. There are reasons why they always make the lists of the “happiest people on earth”. Scandinavians attribute it to their focus on life/work balance—while they do pay high taxes, the generous social programs they get in return take all the fear out of losing their livelihood or growing broke. This allows them to focus on enjoying life.

Scandinavia's concern for group wellbeing expresses itself in a variety of ways. The Danes have the centuries-old concept of “hygge,” which is a general state of mind that embraces life. The Finns have their saunas, whose bonding rituals are intertwined in national culture. And the Swedes consider “fika,” a type of mandatory coffee hour, to be an essential part of each day in order to bond with friends and colleagues.

Workplace culture is far less stressful in Scandinavian countries, too. Everyone expects everyone else to perform to the same standard. Since it's a common practice among Scandinavians to say what they mean, no one has to search for hidden meanings. And dealing with fewer office politics

makes for a far more relaxed and comfortable workplace environment. Scandinavian culture discourages those seen as aiming too high or being too ambitious. In an attempt to make society as homogenous as possible, measures like private schools using the same curriculum as public schools are put in place to ensure equal opportunities for all. And Scandinavians believe that wealth should have no bearing on how you are treated.

Scandinavians love the outdoors and take full advantage of the breathtaking beauty of their landscapes by escaping into nature and enjoying the solitude at every opportunity. Come to think of it, no wonder they're so happy.

### Keep an Open Mind

- This is not a typical tour, and the itinerary you follow is subject to change. This is the Arctic—weather, migration of wildlife, and flight schedule changes may all impact your trip.
- In some cases, they may change the sequence of places visited, or we may not follow the trip itinerary exactly as published.

### Wildlife Viewing

There can be no guarantee that you will see every animal that you hope to see. Our expedition leaders and experts are among the best in the Arctic, and no one knows the animals better. But, unlike the inhabitants of zoos and aquariums, the wildlife of the Arctic roams free. An animal your guide spotted three days ago may not be seen again for weeks.

### Language

There are two official languages in Norway: Norwegian is spoken as a first language by about 99% of the population; the second official language, Sami, is only spoken by about 0.9% of the population, mainly in the northern part of the country. Other minority languages include Kven, Finnish, and Romani, spoken only by small pockets of the population. Norwegian is a Germanic language that is closely related to Swedish, Danish and Faroese, and in general, speakers of all four of these languages can understand each other.

Importantly, there are two ways of *writing* Norwegian – Bokmål and Nynorsk. Bokmål is based on written Danish, which was the official language of Norway from 1380 to 1814. Nynorsk was created in the 1850s, and is based on a mix of mostly western Norwegian dialects. Both are taught in schools, but Bokmål is more common: it is somewhat associated with urban culture and is used for most business, technology, advertising, pop music, fashion, entertainment and news media. Though it is a written form of the language, Bokmål has influenced speech as well.

The good news for you as a traveler is that Norway ranks among the world's top five countries in terms of English proficiency. It has been taught in schools for more than 50 years, beginning in primary school, and today more than 90% of Norwegians speak English at a very high level.

## Meals in Flight

Flights to Iceland are shorter than to the rest of Europe, so airlines **rarely provide** meals during the international flight. You might want to have something to eat before boarding the plane (we will provide breakfast on your first day after you arrive at the hotel).

## Meal Prices

Iceland is an expensive country in general, but especially when it comes to food—which makes sense given that many ingredients need to be imported or are grown in special greenhouses. To give you a sense of what to budget, here's some sample prices in USD. Please keep in mind that these are guidelines only and are subject to change.

- Light takeaway lunch (sandwich, soup): \$11–\$17 per person
- Lunch in a cafe: \$20–\$30 per person
- Dinner entrée in a high-end restaurant: \$40–\$70 per person

Previous travelers have suggested lowering costs by hitting up local grocery stores; choosing dishes with ingredients from Iceland (i.e. fish, lamb); looking for happy hour deals in local pubs; and trying one of Iceland's Thai restaurants (which is kind of like their version of a Chinese takeout place).

## Hotels

With an emphasis on minimalism and functional design, you'll discover that hotel rooms in this region are traditionally much smaller than in the United States, and tend to feature a sleek, modern look. Rooms are comfortable, clean, and well-equipped, but you should expect to experience how locals make use of limited space, which may mean that the bathrooms are smaller, or the beds are closer together, than you'd find at home.

## Taking Photographs

When taking photos of people in most countries, be polite and ask permission to take a close-up. In many countries, you should not be taking photos of children or older women without permission. Do not take photographs of military personnel, military compounds, or other official institutions/personnel (such as police). This may result in the confiscation of your camera.

Please obey any signs regarding photos at museum or sites; the no-flash rule protects the fragile artifacts and artwork from damage by repeated exposure to light. Occasionally, there may also be a small fee levied by the museum or site for the privilege of taking photos.

## Safety & Security

As you travel, exercise the same caution and awareness that you would in a large American city. Carry a one-day supply of cash, and your passport, in a travel pouch. Don't leave valuables unattended in your hotel room – use a room safe as needed. In any sort of puzzling street situation, try to keep one hand on your wallet or money belt.

## Norwegian Cuisine

Most modern Norwegian households eat much as we do in the States, enjoying simple but easy to prepare traditional favorites; the occasional ethnic treat like tacos or Asian stir-fry; or even a fast-food meal like the phenomenally popular *Grandiosa*, Norway's best-selling frozen pizza.

And in case you haven't heard, since the early 2000s, the Scandinavian (and worldwide) restaurant scene has been utterly transformed by the rise of **New Nordic cuisine**, a cooking style that stresses sustainability, freshness, and extremely local and seasonal ingredients. In practice, that means celebrating unique flavors that might previously have been overlooked. So yes, you might find carefully composed plates of grilled duck hearts on a bed of moss, but you'll also find creative reinterpretations of traditional Nordic classics, like these:

- **Røkelaks:** Norwegian smoked salmon served with a dollop of creamy dill sauce.
- **Sursild:** Herring that has been pickled, just one of the many methods used to preserve fish.
- **Rakfisk:** A trout that is covered with spruce branches and fermented in barrels. The smell is pungent, but the taste is not.
- **Lutefisk:** Dried cod that's preserved in lye, and then triple washed and steamed (all of the caustic lye is gone by the time you're served it). If you're from Minnesota or Wisconsin, you may have seen this at your state fair or in restaurants, so you already know it's better with butter or sauce. In Norway, it is often paired with bacon, mashed peas, boiled potatoes, and golden syrup.
- **Finnbiff:** Sautéed reindeer stew.
- **Fårikål:** Boiled dinner of mutton or lamb, whole black pepper, cabbage, and potatoes. This is the national dish of Norway.
- **Pinnekjøtt:** A Christmas Eve classic, a hearty meal of salted, air-dried sheep ribs. They are rehydrated by steaming them over birch sticks, and eaten with sweet mashed rutabaga.
- **Kjøttkake (or kjøttballer):** A classic Norwegian comfort food. They are balls of minced beef seasoned with onions, nutmeg and ginger, then pan fried and simmered in gravy. (Yes, they are virtually the same as Swedish meatballs, but you won't make Norwegian friends if you call them that.)
- **Lefse:** Crepe-like flatbreads that are slathered with butter, and sugar, then rolled up or folded for eating on the go.
- **Krumkake:** A delicate, waffle-like cookie, shaped like an ice cream cone and filled with cream or fruit.
- **Lingonberry:** A ubiquitous fruit that tastes similar to cranberries and is used in compotes, juices, and preserves. As a jam, it's a great accompaniment to **brunost**, a family of brown goat's milk cheeses (like **gjetost**) that have the consistency (and a little of the sweetness) of fudge. Or just go straight to dessert heaven and order some fluffy **trollkrem**—a meringue of lingonberries whipped with sugar, vanilla, and egg whites.

## Icelandic Cuisine

Most visitors are surprised by the freshness, variety, and overall quality of Icelandic cuisine. For a small island whose arable land is limited by climate and geography, ecology-minded Iceland has developed ingenious techniques for raising and preparing produce, fish, and livestock that is organic, non-GMO and free of chemicals. In Reykjavik you'll find innovative chefs experimenting with New Nordic and other cutting-edge cuisines, plus plenty of ethnic eateries. But here are some traditional specialties to try.

- **Reykjavik Hot Dogs:** A hot dog usually consisting of a blend of beef, pork, and sometimes lamb.
- **Kjötsupa:** *Traditional Icelandic lamb served with roasted herbs such as **blóðberg** (Arctic thyme).*
- **Skyr:** A creamy Icelandic yogurt similar to Greek yogurt in taste and served with berries.
- **Plokkfiskur:** Mashed fish stew made with potatoes, onions and cod or haddock, mashed up with herbs (such as dill or parsley), and white pepper.
- **Hardfiskur:** Fish jerky that is often served with Icelandic butter and **rúgbraud**, a dark rye bread baked in an earthen pot buried next to a hot spring
- **Hákarl:** Shark meat that has been fermented underground till nearly (but not quite) rotten, then hung to dry for four to six weeks.

## Danish Cuisine

Twenty years ago one might've described Danish food as peasant cooking—hearty, stick-to-your-ribs Viking fare that would get you through a long day of farming, fishing, or raiding. Today, Denmark is the epicenter of the New Nordic cuisine, a movement begun by Danish chefs René Redzepi and Claus Meyer, who helmed Copenhagen's Noma restaurant (considered the world's best) and influenced chefs everywhere with their philosophy that celebrates sustainable, locavore, and seasonal ingredients—many of which are foraged and were previously forgotten. It has inspired many cooks to revisit and refine some of the classics of Danish cuisine, like these:

- **Smørrebrød:** These best-known Danish delights are open-faced sandwiches built on a base of buttered *rugbrød*, a dense, dark rye bread. These are not random sandwiches, they are artfully composed, so the dish is colorful and the garnishes are complementary. Toppings might include *syltede sild* (pickled herring) with micro greens; shrimp and egg with dill; or roast beef with pickles, onions, and horseradish. A favorite is *dyrlægens natmad*, which translates as “veterinarian's midnight snack” and includes corned beef, sky (Danish meat aspic), and *leverpostej* (liver pâté) topped with slivered red onions, sprouts, and parsley or dill.
- **Stegt flæsk:** The national dish of Denmark. Crispy pork belly chunks served with boiled potatoes and parsley sauce.

- **Brændendekærlighed:** So many Danes have a “burning love” for bacon, they named this dish after this affliction. This dish is mashed potatoes topped with oven-roasted cubes of bacon, caramelized onions, and butter.
- **Forloren hare:** A Danish meatloaf made with ground pork, leeks, and egg. Bacon strips are woven around the loaf, which is then baked till it looks like an elegant brown basket.
- **Rødspættefilet:** A filet of plaice (a mild white fish) that is breaded and fried. It can be eaten as an entrée, or as the *stjernesked* (“shooting star”) of a *smørrebrød* topped with shrimp, lettuce and caviar from the Limfjord.
- **Tarteletter:** These are flaky pastry tartlets filled with chicken and asparagus in a creamy béchamel sauce.
- **Andesteg:** This dish is a holiday favorite. A roast duck stuffed with apples and prunes, then roasted until golden-brown and served with a sauce made with reserved duck fat, whiskey, and wine.
- **Wienerbrød:** For something sweet to go with your coffee (*bica*), order a Danish but call it by its proper name, *wienerbrød*, which means “Vienna bread” and is a more accurate reflection of its provenance. Even though Danes did not invent them, they love these flaky, croissant-like glazed pastries filled with cream or fruit.
- **Kransekake:** The cake that literally towers above them all. It’s a cone of concentric almond cake rings bound together with a white icing glaze, and sometimes decorated with berries or nuts. They are served at festive occasions (especially New Year’s), and the center of the tower might hold candies, chocolates, and even champagne or wine bottles.

## Responsible Travel in the Arctic

We do our best to have a minimum negative impact on local cultures and the natural environment in every country where we operate trips. Our goal is to leave no trace on the natural environment, or to leave places better than we find them. As you travel in the Arctic, your ship’s expedition staff will follow strict guidelines to protect the environment. Please cooperate enthusiastically, and make it your own priority to keep this uniquely unsullied wilderness intact in all its pristine beauty. Here’s what we ask of you as part of this effort.

**The #1 rule is: Follow all instructions given onsite faithfully.**

### Protect the Wildlife

Harmful interference with or taking Arctic wildlife is prohibited except in accordance with a permit issued by a national authority.

- Do not feed, touch, or handle wildlife, or approach or photograph them in ways that cause them to alter their behavior.
- Do not bring non-native plants or animals into the Arctic.



## Be Safe

Be prepared for severe and changeable weather and ensure that your equipment and clothing meet Arctic standards. Remember that the Arctic environment is inhospitable, unpredictable, and potentially dangerous.

- Keep a safe distance from all wildlife, both on land and at sea. For this reason, we will *not* explore on the Zodiacs if polar bears are nearby; instead, we will observe from the ship.
- Take note of, and act on, the advice and instructions from your leaders; do not stray from your group.
- Do not walk onto glaciers or large snow fields without the proper equipment and experience; there is a real danger of falling into hidden crevasses.

## Keep the Arctic Pristine

- Do not dispose of litter or garbage on land. Open burning is prohibited.
- Do not disturb or pollute lakes or streams. Any materials discarded at sea must be disposed of properly.
- Do not paint or engrave names or graffiti on anything.
- Do not collect or take away biological or geological specimens or man-made artifacts as a souvenir, including rocks, bones, eggs, fossils, and parts or contents of buildings.

**If in doubt, remember the famous saying: Leave nothing but footprints, take nothing but memories.**

## Oslo in Brief

### City Layout and Details

Oslo occupies a magnificent site, surrounded by hills on three sides and a fabulous fjord on the fourth. In general, the city's compact and straightforward design makes getting around on foot easy. The Aker River divides the city into east and west.

Karl Johans Gate is Oslo's main street, running the length of the city's downtown, from Central Station to the Royal Palace. Much of it is a car-free pedestrian thoroughfare, and many of the city's most important buildings, stores, and hotels make Karl Johans Gate their address. A pedestrian park is located between Karl Johans Gate and Stortingsgate, an important parallel street running from Parliament to the Royal Palace.

A couple of blocks south, City Hall fronts Oslo's active port, creating a triangle with Central Station and the Royal Palace. City Hall is across the street from the main Norway Information Center. Across the park from City Hall, ferries make regular runs to the Bygdøy Peninsula, site of several top museums. Frogner Park, with its famous Vigeland Sculpture Garden, lies about a mile northwest of the Royal Palace. The park and the palace sandwich an exclusive neighborhood of tree-lined streets and turn-of-the-century homes.

## Local Transportation

**Public Transit:** The Oslo public transit system is comprised of buses, trams, ferries, local and inter-city trains and an extensive metro system called the “T-bane”. A single ticket allows the transit user to make use of the full transit system within Oslo for a period of one hour. You can purchase a one-day or two-day “Oslo Pass,” providing free travel on the city’s buses, trams, and subway.

**IMPORTANT NOTE:** You may not be asked to show your ticket on public transit. As a result, some travelers have been tempted to not buy a ticket at all. However, we strongly recommend that you purchase tickets, despite the fact you may not be asked to show them. Evading fares is illegal in Norway, and can result in an on-the-spot fine of up to €1000. If you are unable to pay the on-the-spot fine, you may be escorted to a police station until payment is received.

**Bus and tram:** Jernbanetorget is Oslo’s major bus and tram terminal stop. Most buses and trams passing through the heart of town stop at Wessels Plass, next to the Parliament, or at Stortorvet, the main marketplace. Many also stop at the National Theater or University Square on Karl Johans Gate, as well as stopping through Oslo’s suburbs.

**The subway:** The T-banen has four branch lines to the east. The Western Suburban route (including Holmenkollen) has four lines to the residential sections and recreation grounds west and north of the city. Subways and trains leave from near the National Theater on Karl Johans Gate.

**Taxis:** Hiring a taxi is very expensive in Oslo—we recommend taking public transportation instead. In addition to regular fares, there are lethal surcharges between 5pm and 4am.

All taxis have meters, and Norwegian cab drivers are generally honest. When a cab is available, its roof light goes on. Taxis can be hailed on the street, provided they’re more than 298 ft. from a taxi stand. The most difficult time to hail a taxi is Monday to Friday from 8:30 to 10am and 3 to 5pm, and Saturday from 8:30 to 10am.

## Copenhagen in Brief

### City Layout and Details

Old Copenhagen is defined as a rough square by Nørreport Station to the north, Rådhuspladsen (Town Hall Square) to the west, and Kongens Nytorv to the east.

Strøget is Europe’s longest continuous pedestrians-only route. It runs east from Town Hall Square to Kongens Nytorv, and is composed of five interconnected streets: Frederiksberggade, Nygade, Vimmelskiftet, Amagertorv, and Østergade and roughly bisects Old Copenhagen. Strøget is a stroller’s and shopper’s heaven: lined with shops, bars, restaurants, and, in season, with sidewalk cafes it is a favorite of visitors and locals alike. On the Eastern end, Pistolstræde is a maze of galleries, restaurants, and boutiques, housed in restored 18th-century buildings.

Fiolstræde (Violet St.), closer to the western end of Strøget, offers antiques shops and bookshops and cuts through the university (Latin Quarter). At the end of Fiolstræde you can turn onto Rosengården where you'll find Kultorvet (Coal Square). Here you'll find join the third main pedestrian street, Købmagergade (Butcher St.) which runs gently south until it meets up with Strøget at the Amagertorv section.

At the eastern end of Strøget you approach Kongens Nytorv (King's Square), where you'll find the Royal Theater and Magasin, the largest department store in Copenhagen. Across the square you come to the beginning of Nyhavn, the former seamen's quarter that now features upscale restaurants, apartments, cafes, and boutiques.

Denmark's government is centered on the small island of Slotsholmen, which is connected to the center by eight different bridges. The island also features several museums, most notably Christiansborg Castle.

## Entertainment

Free time? Try strolling the Strøget, a three quarter mile stretch of shops between Rådhuspladsen and Kongens Nytorv . If you get peckish or thirsty midway, you can hop over a street to the Vestergade, lined with historic buildings, restaurants, stores and bars for a little more variety. Nynhavn (New Harbor) is the place to be on a good day – outdoor cafes abound, and classic buildings overlook the classic ships that line the harbor front.

In summer, a visit to Tivoli Gardens is a must. Tivoli's twenty-one acres encompasses impressive structures (the Chinese Tower, the Glass Hall Theater, and the Pantomime Theater among them), flower beds, fountains and lovely landscaping. The park features 5 roller coasters, including one of the world's oldest wooden coasters, as well as other rides. Locals and visitors alike find the ambience and experience a repeatable pleasure. If you're not interested in the rides or the performances you can simply stroll, take in the view and people watch. (There is an entrance fee, but many of the events inside are included).

You'll find the nightlife in several neighborhoods, including Strøget and nearby areas; in Vesterbro, with its main street on Vesterbrogade just across from Tivoli Gardens; and on Istegade — home to some of the today's trendier bars and cafés. The area just off Kongens Nytorv on Gothersgade is another busy nightlife spot.

The famed jazz venues of Copenhagen are largely closed. Nightspots now cater to a wider range of music — from ballroom music to house, rap, and techno. Restaurants, cafés, bars, and clubs stay open after midnight, a few until 5 am.

## Local Transportation

Copenhagen is sufficiently compact and inviting that most of your travel in the city should be as a result of a leisurely stroll. Many of the major sightseeing attractions are close to one another.

**By Bus:** Copenhagen's buses are an inexpensive way to get around a little further out, if necessary. Most buses leave from Rådhuspladsen. A basic ticket buys an hour of travel and unlimited transfers within the zone where you started your trip. For information, visit [www.visitcopenhagen.com/copenhagen/planning/public-transport](http://www.visitcopenhagen.com/copenhagen/planning/public-transport)

**Metro:** Copenhagen's Metro is almost 20 years old, and it connects the east to west of the city with the center. It operates 24 hours a day, and Metro fares are integrated into Copenhagen's zonal system. A joint zone fare system works with Copenhagen Transport buses, State Railway, and the Metro. You have the option to purchase a *grundbillet* (base ticket), 10 tickets, or a 24-hour bus and train ticket which allows you to travel through nearly half of Zealand.

**Discount Passes:** The Copenhagen Card entitles you to free and unlimited travel by bus and rail throughout the metropolitan area (including North Zealand) and free admission to many sights and museums. This card can be purchased for one to three days. In order to use the Copenhagen Card, you **must** have a smartphone and download the card to your smartphone so please ensure you bring one from the US. Your Trip Experience Leader will inform you of the app so you can download prior arriving into Copenhagen and can assist you in activating your card (once the card is downloaded and activated you do not need access to Wifi to use it on public transport, museums, etc). **We advise you wait until your arrival in Copenhagen to purchase the card.**

**Taxis:** Watch for the FRI (free) sign or a green light when hailing a taxi. Be sure the taxis are metered. Tips are included in the meter price and many drivers speak English.

**Bicycle:** In good weather cycling around the city is a great option. Getting through central Copenhagen can take around 30 minutes on a bike—and may be faster than the metro – and bikes are popular with the residents. Cycle paths are plentiful and quite safe.

## Shopping: What to Buy, Customs, Shipping & More

There may be scheduled visits to local shops during your adventure. There is no requirement to make a purchase during these stops, and any purchase made is a direct transaction with the shop in question, subject to the vendor's terms of purchase. O.A.T. is not responsible for purchases you make on your trip or for the shipment of your purchases.

### Returns

If you discover an issue with an item, you should contact the vendor directly and expect that any resolution will take longer than it would in the U.S. We recommend that you keep a copy of all your receipts, invoices, or contracts, along with the shop's contact information. Keep in mind, local practice may vary from U.S. standards, so don't assume that you have a certain number of days after the purchase to speak up or that you are guaranteed a refund.

### Crafts & Souvenirs

#### Norway

Popular items include trolls, jewelry, woolen items, glass, wood and leather goods, local brews, furniture, carpets, and other decor.

**VAT:** Although prices are inflated by a hefty 25% Value-Added Tax, non-European Union citizens can receive about an 18% refund. For more details and a list of all tax-free shops, ask at the tourist office for a copy of the Tax-Free Shopping Guide.

## **Iceland**

Hand-knit Icelandic sweaters and other woolens, including hats, mittens, and jackets, are widely available. Icelanders enjoy contemporary Scandinavian-style housewares and accessories so you'll find a good selection of these, many with Icelandic themes. The Laugavegur and Skólavörðustígur shopping streets in the heart of Reykjavík have contemporary boutiques and shops offering European fashions and accessories, plus unique Icelandic designs and jewelry.

**VAT:** Although prices are inflated by a hefty Value-Added Tax (between 11–24%), non-European Union citizens can receive a refund. For more details and a list of all tax-free shops, ask at the tourist office for a copy of the Tax-Free Shopping Guide.

## **Denmark**

A showcase for world-famous Danish design and craftsmanship, Copenhagen seems to have been designed with shoppers in mind. The best buys are such luxury items as crystal, porcelain, silver, and furs. Look for offers and sales (*tilbud* or *udsalg* in Danish) and check antiques and secondhand shops for classics at cut-rate prices.

**VAT:** Although prices are inflated by a hefty 25% Value-Added Tax (Danes call it *MOMS*), non-European Union citizens can receive about an 18% refund. For more details and a list of all tax-free shops, ask at the tourist office for a copy of the Tax-Free Shopping Guide.

## **U.S. Customs Regulations & Shipping Charges**

For all things related to U.S. Customs, the ultimate authority is the U.S. Bureau of Customs & Border Protection. Their website, **[www.cbp.gov](http://www.cbp.gov)** has the answers to the most frequently asked questions. Or you can call them at **1-877-227-5511**.

The top three points to know are:

- At time of writing, your personal duty-free allowance is \$800 for items brought with you. Items totaling more than \$800 are subject to duty fees.
- **Items shipped home are always subject to duty when received in the U.S.** Even when the shop has offered to include shipping and duties in the price, this typically means shipping to the nearest customs facility and payment of the export duties—not door-to-door shipping or payment of the import duties. All additional duties or shipping charges would be your responsibility. Unless an item is small enough to send by parcel service (like FedEx), chances are you will need to arrange shipping or pick-up once the item is in the U.S. and will need to pay customs duties.

- It is illegal to import products made from endangered animal species. U.S. Customs & Border Protection will seize these items, as well as most furs, coral, tortoise shell, reptile skins, feathers, plants, and items made from animal skins.



## DEMOGRAPHICS & HISTORY

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### Svalbard

#### Facts, Figures & National Holidays

- **Area:** 23,956 square miles
- **Capital:** Longyearbyen
- **Government:** Territory of Norway
- **Geography:** Svalbard is an archipelago, a series of islands, in the Arctic Ocean which features rugged mountains, icy terrain, and fjords along the north and west coasts.
- **Languages:** Norwegian, Russian, and English
- **Location:** About 800 miles north of the Arctic Circle
- **Population:** 2,583 (estimate)
- **Time zone:** Svalbard is 2 hours ahead of Greenwich Mean Time during daylight saving time, 6 hours ahead of Eastern Time. Daylight Saving Time is in effect in Svalbard from the end of March until the end of October.

#### National Holidays: Svalbard

As an archipelago of the Kingdom of Norway, Svalbard celebrates a number of national holidays as the mainland Norway, such as Easter, Constitution Day, and Christmas. To

find out if you will be traveling during these holidays, please visit **[www.timeanddate.com/holidays](http://www.timeanddate.com/holidays)**.

#### Svalbard: A Brief History

There is no conclusive evidence that early humans inhabited the Svalbard archipelago. But it is possible that Viking seamen may have sighted it, as it was mentioned in a Norse saga dating from 1194 that references “a land in the far north at the end of the ocean.” Officially at least, the polar archipelago now known as Svalbard was first discovered in 1596 by the Dutch explorer, navigator, and cartographer William Barentz, who was searching for a northeast passage to China. He named the islands Spitsbergen, meaning “pointy mountains.”

English, Dutch, French, Norwegian, and Danish companies began hunting for bowhead whales here by 1611. This first recorded visitors to attempt to overwinter here were English, establishing a camp at Bellsund in 1630. In the early 1700s, Pomors from coastal Russia came to hunt walruses, beluga whales, moose, polar bears, arctic foxes, and seals. But because they moved their camps seasonally, their practices were sustainable and did not deplete the area’s natural resources. By the end of that century, Norwegians dominated the hunting and whaling here, many of them Sami people from the Hammerfest region.

Exploration was initially focused on finding new whaling grounds, but it was known that there was coal on the islands and from the 18th century, more scientific expeditions took place. In 1906, a mining station was established at Longyearbyen, followed by stations at Barentsburg, Grumant, Pyramiden, Svea, and Ny-Ålesund. In 1925, Norway was granted sovereignty over the region, which it renamed from Spitsbergen to Svalbard. But per the Svalbard Treaty, mining rights were granted to all 40 signatories, and Svalbard was declared a demilitarized, free economic zone.

During World War II, mining was halted and all the Soviet and Norwegian settlements were evacuated during Operation Gauntlet. Still, the Nazis bombed several targets including Longyearbyen, whose No. 2 Mine continued to burn for 14 years. The Nazis built an airstrip and weather station here. Norwegian settlers returned in 1945, as did the Soviets, who resettled in Barentsburg and Pyramiden.

In the postwar years, relations between Norway and the Soviet Union were strained, especially when Norway joined NATO in 1949. As either side built research stations or attempted to launch infrastructure projects, tensions increased. Oil drilling began in 1961 by Caltex, a division of Chevron. The Soviet counterpart Arktikugol also began drilling, but by the 1980s no commercially viable wells had been found.

Also in the 1970s, Longyearbyen underwent a process of “normalization” to transform it from a company town to a regular community. After the fall of the Soviet Union, the Russian population dramatically decreased, while the Norwegian population grew. The first hotel was built in 1995, and nature tourism has become a major component of the economy. Today, more than half the archipelago is protected as four national parks, 15 bird sanctuaries, and six nature reserves. Svalbard is also on the tentative list for designation as a UNESCO World Heritage Site.

## Norway

### Facts, Figures & National Holidays

- **Area:** 125,049 square miles
- **Capital:** Oslo
- **Geography:** Nearly 70% of Norway is uninhabitable and covered by mountains, glaciers, moors, and rivers. It has a 1,700-mile coastline on the North Atlantic, raggedly indented with inlets, fjords, peninsulas, and islands. Because the coast is so well sheltered, and most of the country's land area is so rocky and mountainous, Norwegians have taken to the sea since prehistoric times.
- **Languages:** Two official forms of Norwegian: Bokmal and Nynorsk
- **Location:** The Kingdom of Norway stretches along the western edge of the Scandinavian Peninsula, bordering Sweden, Finland, and Russia to the east. It extends about 1,100 miles from the North Sea to more than 300 miles above the Arctic Circle. That makes it the farthest north of any European country.
- **Population:** 5,320,045 (estimate)

- **Religion:** Church of Norway (Lutheran) 71.5%, other Christian 3.9%, Muslim 2.8%, Roman Catholic 2.8%, other 2.4%, unspecified 7.5%
- **Time zone:** Norway is 1 hour ahead of Greenwich Mean Time during daylight saving time, 6 hours ahead of Eastern Time. Daylight Saving Time is in effect in Norway from the end of March until the end of September.

## National Holidays: Norway

In addition to the holidays listed below, Norway celebrates a number of national holidays that follow a lunar calendar, such as Easter and Ascension Day. To find out if you will be traveling during these holidays, please visit [www.timeanddate.com/holidays](http://www.timeanddate.com/holidays).

01/01 New Year's Day  
05/01 May Day  
05/17 Constitution Day  
12/25 Christmas Day  
12/26 Boxing Day

## Norway: A Brief History

In spite of its extreme geography and climate, Norway has been inhabited for about 10,000 years, starting when the last great ice sheets retreated. Migrations of the Nøstvet-Økser people of central Europe began arriving along the southern Norwegian coast, and by 5,000 BC, agricultural settlements appeared around the Oslofjord, and spread across southern Norway, then migrating north. The real story of Norway begins with the Vikings, dauntless seafarers who emerged from southern Norway, Sweden, and Denmark. Sailing their advanced longboats, they developed new trade routes from Newfoundland to Russia to Baghdad and beyond. The Viking Age was short, spanning about 300 years starting in 793.

Throughout history, the Vikings have been romanticized and vilified. Today, archeologists have constructed a more balanced picture. The Vikings certainly terrorized, murdered, and enslaved many people they overran; but they also often assimilated with them, rarely destroyed the native cultures, expanded the flow of goods and ideas, and left progressive legal codes. It can be argued that they were no more ruthless than their contemporaries, just more successful. Their legacy includes the first unification of Norway in 872; and the adoption of Christianity.

After 1066, a declining Norway became increasingly beholden to Sweden, Denmark, and the merchant cities of the Hanseatic League. In 1349, the Black Death killed more than 50% of the population. Norway entered a union with Denmark and for the next 200 years, most of its commerce was taken over by the Hanseatic League. Various disputes between the Danish Union and Sweden dragged Norway into the Seven Years War (1563–70), followed by the Kalmar War (1611–14). Up until 1720, Norway lost a good portion of its territory to Sweden.

Nationalist sentiments began growing in Norway during the waning years of the Napoleonic Wars, when the kingdom of Denmark–Norway and Sweden were once again on opposing sides. By the end of 1814, Norway was a constitutional monarchy in a union with Sweden. But while Norway had adopted its own constitution and chosen its own king, it would only achieve full independence after severing ties with Sweden as a result of a popular referendum in 1905.

Norway remained neutral during World War I, and its economy and confidence grew with the development of industry, hydroelectric power, and exports; and the enfranchisement of women. But when Norway stated its neutrality during World War II, Germany invaded anyway and occupied Norway from 1940 until the end of the war. The Norwegian Resistance was strong, and the Germans took revenge up until the end, retreating with a scorched earth policy that obliterated farms, forests, and entire towns. Norway joined NATO 1949 and became a founder member of the United Nations. Still, it remained one of Europe's poorest nations.

This changed when crude oil was discovered here in 1969. The standard of living and per capita wealth rose dramatically, and the windfalls (coupled with high taxes) enabled the government to develop one of the world's most comprehensive social welfare systems. Citizens enjoy free medical care; free higher education; generous family leave; childcare and eldercare supports; generous pensions; and more. Norway is arguably Europe's most egalitarian social democracy.

Norway has a strong presence on the international stage; has participated in peacekeeping missions; and plays a leading role in refugee assistance. But Norway has remained wary of joining the European Union.

## Iceland

### Facts, Figures & National Holidays

- **Area:** 39,769 square miles
- **Capital:** Reykjavik
- **Languages:** Icelandic is the official language; English, Scandinavian languages, and German are also spoken.
- **Ethnicity:** Norse/Celtic descent 82%, foreign-born 18%
- **Location:** Iceland is an island bordered by the North Atlantic Ocean.
- **Geography:** Poised atop the geologically active mid-Atlantic Ridge, where tectonic plates are separating as Europe drifts away from North America, Iceland is one of only two places in the world where an undersea mid-ocean ridge rises above sea level. Iceland's 3,088 miles of coastline are punctuated by numerous rugged fjords, while some 63 percent of the mountainous interior is treeless tundra.
- **Population:** 376,248 (estimate)
- **Religions:** Lutheran Church of Iceland 73.8%, Roman Catholic 3.6%, Reykjavik Free Church 2.9%, Hafnarfjörður Free Church 2%, The Independent Congregation 1%, other 3.9%, none 5.6%, and unspecified 7.2%
- **Time Zone:** Iceland is on UTC ("Greenwich Mean Time"), five hours ahead of U.S. EST. When it is 6am in Washington D.C., it is 11am in Reykjavik.

## National Holidays: Iceland

In addition to the holidays listed below, Iceland celebrates a number of national holidays that follow a lunar calendar, such as Easter. To find out if you will be traveling during these holidays, please visit **www.timeanddate.com/holidays**.

01/01 New Year's Day

Late April First Day of Summer (moves each year)

05/01 Labor Day

Late May Ascension Day (moves each year)

06/17 Icelandic Republic Day

12/24 Christmas Eve

## Iceland: A Brief History

Geologically speaking, Iceland is one of the youngest places on earth, and thanks to its ongoing volcanic and glacial activity, you can still see it being born. The first known human to take note of this roiling mass of fire and ice was the Greek explorer Pytheas, who wrote of an island he called "Ultima Thule." He described it as a realm of ferocious storms and even more ferocious, dog-headed people. That did not stop Irish monks (called *papars*) from settling here around 700 AD. They left after Norse settlers began arriving in the ninth century. Many were fierce Vikings, as you would imagine, but just as many were Scandinavian farmers, herders, and traders looking for better opportunities. It was one of these Norwegian farmers, Flóki Vilgerdason, who gave the island its current name, Ísland or Iceland.

By 930 AD, there were many settlements, all connected through commerce, intermarriage, and various agreements over land and resources. Realizing that they needed some sort of government to define and uphold laws, they wrote a constitution and created the Althing (*Alþing* in Icelandic), which exists today as the oldest active legislative assembly in the world. The Althing met at the natural amphitheater of Thingvellir, where local chieftains gathered annually to elect leaders. Among the decision made there was the adoption of Christianity by Iceland in 1000 AD, notable for the fact that it took place peacefully. The 11th and 12th centuries were a peaceful Golden Age when the literary tradition of the Icelandic saga developed. But by the early thirteenth century, Iceland descended into clan warfare.

That internal strife left an opening for Norwegian King Haakon to claim Iceland in 1262—a claim superseded in 1397 by Denmark, who held the island for the next 600 years. It was an era beset by trade restrictions, pirates, kidnappings, plagues, crop failures, and a series of devastating volcanic eruptions that caused about 20% of the population to die of starvation. By the 19th century, Icelandic nationalism was on the rise. Between 1855 and 1918, Iceland won increasing degrees of autonomy, with Iceland becoming a sovereign nation under the Danish Crown in 1918. In 1944, following a referendum in which 97% of Icelanders voted to sever ties with the Danish Crown, the establishment of the free Republic of Iceland took place in a ceremony symbolically located at Thingvellir, site of the ancient Althing.

During World War II, Iceland's vulnerability as a potential Nazi target led the British to occupy the defenseless island. The Icelandic government allowed US troops to move in in 1941. When the US military left in 1946, it retained the right to re-establish a base at Keflavík should war threaten

again. In the postwar years, Iceland only reluctantly became a member of NATO, with the provision that its citizens would not participate in any offensive action, and that no foreign troops would be based there during peacetime. That proviso fell apart with the Cold War. The US only relinquished its base at Keflavik in 2006. Today Iceland is a multi-party parliamentary democracy and a member of NATO.

At the dawn of the 21st century, Iceland enjoyed one of the highest standards of living in the world, but it was severely affected by the global economic downturn. In 2008, the government took over all three of Iceland's failing major banks, but weeks later had to apply to the International Monetary Fund for emergency aid. The coalition government was forced to resign, and the new Prime Minister formally applied for EU membership in 2009.

The ensuing years saw a series of banking scandals and controversies around the repayment of loans to the IMF and the Netherlands and the United Kingdom. Perhaps because of this, most Icelanders do not wish to pursue EU membership. Meanwhile, the Icelandic economy has been making a tremendous comeback, thanks to a surge in tourism.

## Denmark

### Facts, Figures & National Holidays

- **Area:** 16,640 square miles
- **Capital:** Copenhagen
- **Government:** Constitutional monarchy
- **Geography:** Denmark is the smallest of the Scandinavian countries (it's about half the size of Maine). The country occupies the Jutland peninsula, a lowland area, where the highest elevation is only 565 feet above sea level. But that doesn't mean that the country is entirely flat. Most of its terrain consists of folds, undulations, small, often steep hills, and long, low rises. There are also forests, rivers, lakes, and beaches, many of which are excellent for swimming, though the water may be too cold for some people.
- **Languages:** Danish, Faeroese, Greenlandic (an Inuit dialect), and a small German-speaking minority
- **Location:** Denmark consists of the peninsula of Jutland and a group of islands at the entrance to the Baltic Sea, between Sweden and Germany. The two largest islands are Sjaelland, site of Copenhagen, and Fyn. Denmark also has two self-governing dependencies—Greenland and the Faroe Islands.
- **Population:** 5,605,948 (estimate)
- **Religion:** Evangelical Lutheran 76%, Muslim 4%, other 16%
- **Time zone:** Denmark is one hour ahead of Greenwich Mean Time, six hours ahead of Eastern Time. Daylight Saving Time is in effect in Denmark from the end of March until the end of September.



## National Holidays: Denmark

In addition to the holidays listed below, Denmark celebrates a number of national holidays that follow a lunar calendar, such as Easter and Ascension Day. To find out if you will be traveling during these holidays, please visit [www.timeanddate.com/holidays](http://www.timeanddate.com/holidays).

01/01 New Year's Day

05/01 May Day/Labor Day

05/05 Liberation Day

06/05 Constitution Day

12/25 Christmas Day

12/26 2nd Christmas Day

## Denmark: A Brief History

About 10,000 years ago, the glacial ice sheets that covered northern Europe began to retreat, attracting huge herds of reindeer. These in turn attracted hunter-gatherers who arrived from southern and eastern Europe. As the climate further warmed, the reindeer migrated north, but the early Danes remained in this fertile land, establishing farming communities by 3000 BC.

By 1800 BC, these proto-Danes were trading weapons, jewelry, amber and furs with people as far away as Rome. They buried their dead in peat bogs and many of those bodies have been remarkably preserved. The first people identified as Danes came from Sweden around 500 AD. They had a written system of communication based on runes. (The symbol we now use for bluetooth devices is based on the runic signature of Harald Bluetooth, or Harald I, the Danish Viking who became king around 900 AD.)

The Viking Age began in 793 AD with the raid on Lindisfarne, an English island monastery. Sporadic raids had likely occurred before this, by Vikings from Sweden, Norway, and Denmark. They were not unified and the Danish Vikings primarily raided northeastern England, which at the time was a collection of warring Anglo-Saxon kingdoms. Danish Vikings had established a large settlement in Kent by 850 AD, and as more Danish colonists arrived, all of northeastern England fell under their control. The exception was Wessex, which reached an agreement with the Danes granting Wessex sovereignty, while the rest of the region was ruled as the Danelaw.

The Danish King Harald Bluetooth converted to Christianity in 965 AD, possibly to appease the Franks at Denmark's door. Harald forcibly established the new religion, and elevated the status of the Christian clergy. But Christianity did not bring peace. The Danes continued to fight to maintain and expand their territory, conquering parts of Germany and Estonia. After the Viking Age ended in 1066, Denmark's power declined. In 1397, the Union of Kalmar united Denmark, Sweden, and Norway under a single monarch, with Denmark as the dominant power.

Beginning in the 16th century, Denmark and Sweden began a lengthy rivalry. In 1658, Sweden took the Danish regions of Skåne, Halland and Blekinge, which are still Sweden's southernmost provinces. In the ensuing century, Denmark suffered more defeats: in 1814, it had to cede Norway to Sweden. But there were important domestic gains. . . . As 19<sup>th</sup>-century Europe was swept by nationalist fervor and revolution, Denmark had already abolished serfdom and established universal public education. By the 1830s, social and agricultural reforms had boosted the economy; there was a peasant landowner class; and a free press. In 1849, a new constitution created a legislative democracy, ending the monarchy's previous absolute power.

Denmark remained neutral during World War I, and tried to do the same during World War II. It signed a non-aggression pact with the Third Reich. But Germany invaded in 1940, threatening to bomb Copenhagen. With only a small military, the Danish government yielded. The Nazis at first allowed the Danes some autonomy. But when it began pressuring officials to comply with anti-Semitic policies, the Danish government resigned in protest. The Nazis took over in earnest, and the resistance movement grew. Tipped off by a Nazi diplomat that Germany was about to deport Denmark's Jews to concentration camps, the Resistance and many citizens managed to evacuate 7,220 of Denmark's 7,800 Jews to safety in Sweden.

After Germany's defeat, Denmark joined the United Nations in 1945, and became a founding member of NATO in 1949. The latter half of the 20<sup>th</sup> century saw Denmark's emergence as a prosperous, stable social democracy with one of the world's highest standards of living. In 2000, Denmark voted by referendum not to adopt the euro. It is one of only 5 countries in the world that meets the UN goal for wealthy nations to provide 0.7% of its gross national income for international development assistance. In addition, Denmark has established Danida, Danish Development Assistance, to fight poverty and improve education in developing countries. The current Prime Minister, Mette Fredericksen, is the second woman and youngest person (at 44) to hold that office. She is the leader of the center-left Socialist Democratic Party.

## RESOURCES

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### Suggested Reading

#### The Arctic & Svalbard

***Ice Station Zebra*** by Alistair MacLean (1963, Suspense) The crew of a U.S. submarine undertake a dangerous mission to save a group of British meteorologists trapped on the pack ice after their weather station suffered a fire. But could the fire—or even the whole mission—be sabotage?

***Dreams*** by Barry Lopez (2013, Natural History) The ecology, terrain, wildlife, and native cultures of the Arctic are covered in this book, which many readers praise for its poetic descriptions of the beautiful, icy world “up north”.

***True North*** by Gavin Francis (2011, Travel Narrative) Follow the author as he treks through the European Arctic—from Scotland’s Shetland Islands to Iceland, Greenland, Svalbard, and Finland.

***Erebus: The Story of a Ship*** by Michael Palin (2018, History) The true story of the HMS Erebus, a Victorian-era sailing ship that survived a trip to Antarctica only to mysteriously vanish in the Arctic. While the story takes place all over the world (and not just in the Arctic) it gives a good sense of the golden age of polar exploration. Or, if you prefer fictional maritime stories, you might consider *The Terror* by Dan Simmons, which takes the facts about the HMS Erebus and HMS Terror but adds a supernatural/horror twist in the style of Stephen King.

***Seeds on Ice: Svalbard and the Global Seed Vault*** by Cary Fowler (2016, Non-fiction) Deep in the Norwegian archipelago lies a vast storage system for nearly half a billion seeds. This coffee-table book features lots of photos of the facility (which is not open to the public) and describes how and why the vault exists.

***The Ice Master: The Doomed 1913 Voyage of the Karluck*** by Jennifer Niven (2000, History) The dramatic loss of the fishing vessel Karluck and the crew’s race to save themselves are covered in this engaging book that puts a spotlight on a lesser known hero—the ship’s captain Robert Bartlett, aka “The Ice Master”.

#### Norway

***Norse Mythology*** by Neil Gaiman (2017, Myths) Acclaimed author Neil Gaiman retells stories about the Norse gods Odin, Thor, and Loki in a modern way while still staying true to the originals.

***The Winter Fortress: The Epic Mission to Sabotage Hitler’s Atomic Bomb*** by Neal Bascomb (2016, History) It reads like a thriller, but it’s the true story of the race to prevent the Nazis from getting heavy water—which was the last piece they needed to create an atomic bomb—an item only produced in a fortress-like plant in Vemork, Norway.

***The Bat*** by Jo Nesbo (1997, Mystery) Norwegian novelist Jo Nesbo published 10 more thrillers featuring Harry Hole, a gifted investigator with the Oslo police. This is the first, introducing our hero who is an alcoholic and prone to depression, but a joy to know.

***Growth of the Soil*** by Knut Hamsun (1920, Fiction) Winner of the Nobel Prize for Literature, Hamsun captures the indomitable human spirit of Norway's early settlers like Steinbeck did for farm families during the Dust Bowl.

***A Doll's House, Ghosts, An Enemy of the People, and The Wild Duck*** by Henrik Ibsen (Plays) These works by Norwegian playwright Henrik Ibsen (1828–1906) changed theater forever with the first realistic dialogue and depictions of love, marriage, and the ills of contemporary society.

## Iceland

***Woman at 1,000 Degrees*** by Hallgrímur Helgason (2018, Fiction) Octogenarian Herra makes an appointment for her own cremation, then waits out her time in her garage. Here she occupies herself with a hand grenade, a Facebook account, anonymous digital attacks on her family, and a head full of memories that take us to World War II Europe, the Westmann Islands, Argentina, Reykjavik and back. A roller coaster of a ride that is at once bawdy, outlandish, gleeful and tragic.

***The Little Book of the Icelanders*** by Alda Sigmundsdóttir (2018, Nonfiction) Here are 50 lively essays on the quirks, habits, and inscrutable customs of Iceland.

***Seawomen of Iceland: Survival on the Edge*** by Margaret Willson (2016, Nonfiction). Margaret Willson, an anthropologist and former seawoman, dives into the maritime culture of seawomen in Iceland, who have been fishing in Iceland for centuries, a job deemed a predominantly male profession by most of Iceland and the rest of the world.

***Butterflies in November*** by Audur Ava Olafsdóttir (2014, Fiction) Things are going badly for our unnamed narrator, a young woman who gets dumped twice in one day and also finds herself the reluctant caregiver of her friend's four-year old deaf-mute son. But when the boy helps her choose a winning lottery number, the two set out on a picaresque adventure along Iceland's Ring Road.

***Burial Rites*** by Hannah Kent (2013, Fiction) A novel based on the true story of Agnes Magnúsdóttir, an Icelandic woman waiting to be executed for murder in 1829. Since there are no prisons for women she is sent to wait out her execution on a remote farm. Previous travelers highly recommended it, but also mentioned there are a few tough scenes.

## Denmark

***We, the Drowned*** by Carsten Jensen (2011, Fiction) An epic seafaring adventure that follows the inhabitants of the Danish town of Marstal from 1848 to World War II, when the men sail the world and the women who are left behind form a community. The book is long (600 plus pages) and deals frankly with war, violence, and cruelty. But it was a runaway international bestseller and lauded for its use of fantastical elements.

***Iceland's Bell*** by Halldor Laxness (2003, Fiction) Nobel Laureate Halldor Laxness reinvents the traditional Icelandic saga and injects it with a modern sensibility and a satirical undercurrent that speaks to our age. The plot pits an impoverished Danish colony – Iceland in the 17th century – against the grand historical workings of Danish and Icelandic history. Three interconnected stories reveal the political and personal conflicts of the day in historical context.

***On Tycho's Island: Tycho Brahe and his Assistants, 1570–1601*** by John Robert Christianson (1999, Biography/History) Chiefly famed as an astronomer, this book offers a fuller vision of Tycho Brahe as Renaissance man and scientist. From his private island in Denmark, Brahe assembled and manipulated the artists, nobility and the intelligentsia of the age to create breakthroughs in astronomy, science and research.

***Winter's Tales*** and ***Seven Gothic Tales*** by Isak Dinesen (1934, Stories) Best known for *Out Of Africa*, her memoir of 20 years running and living on a coffee plantation in Africa, Karen Blixen (pen name, Isak Dinesen) also wrote short tales based in her homeland, Denmark. *Winter's Tales* and *Seven Gothic Tales* are generally considered the high water marks of her shorter works.

***The Complete Fairy Tales*** by Hans Christian Andersen (1913, Folklore) There are several different anthologies of these fairy tales, written by Denmark's famous poet, novelist, and writer of short stories. Considered a genius for his inventiveness and imagination, his works continue to captivate both children and adults.

## Suggested Films & Videos

### The Arctic & Svalbard

***Frozen Planet*** (2011, Nature/Documentary) This seven-part BBC series won four Emmys for its spectacular storytelling and cinematography. Though it does not focus exclusively on Svalbard, the archipelago figures prominently in each episode. Narrated by David Attenborough. (There is also a US version narrated by Alec Baldwin.)

***Arctic*** (2018, Drama) After an airplane crash, a man must survive in the Arctic and make difficult decisions to survive.

***Arctic Tale*** (2007, Documentary) Learn about the struggles of two wildlife families in the Arctic: a polar bear and her cubs and a walrus and her calf.

***NOVA: Arctic Ghost Ship*** (2015, TV episode) This episode of NOVA follows a breakthrough in the mystery of two Royal Navy ships that disappeared in the Arctic in 1845.

***The Polar Sea*** (2016, TV series) This documentary series follows modern-day scientists as they venture through the Northwest Passage.

## Norway

***Kissed by Winter*** (2005, Drama) Set in Norway's snowy wilds, a woman runs from her difficult past and discovers love again. After a horrible accident, the guilt-stricken Victoria leaves her husband and flees to the country. She becomes entangled in an unusual murder investigation, and is pulled into the life of the main suspect.

***Kitchen Stories*** (2003, Comedy) Swedish efficiency researchers come to Norway to study the domestic habits of Norwegian men. But things go awry when Isak, a cranky farmer, decides to amuse himself by impeding the work of his fastidious Swedish researcher, Folke. The kitchen quickly becomes the scene of a sly battle of wits. Inspired by actual research done in the 1940s and 50s, this stylish film charmed audiences.

***Kristin Lavransdatter*** (1995, Historical Drama) An epic love story set in 14th century Norway. The beautiful Kristin dutifully takes herself to a convent to await her arranged marriage, but her beauty and devotion only inspire envy and violence. When she falls in love with young knight, it prompts a family and political crisis. Directed by Liv Ullmann and adapted from a trilogy by the Nobel Laureate Sigrid Undset, this is a clear-eyed depiction of Norse life, love, society, and redemption.

***Edvard Munch*** (1974, Biography) Peter Watkins' experimental biography of Norwegian artist Edvard Munch traces Munch's life between 1884 and 1894, from Christiania (modern Oslo) to Berlin and his relationships with August Strindberg. Watkins' uses sound, montage, close ups and a dark color palette to emulate Munch's stylistic approach to his art.

***Song of Norway*** (1970, Biography) This 1970 film adaptation of the operetta of the same name depicts the early struggles of composer Edvard Grieg and his attempts to develop an authentic Norwegian national music. With an international cast that included Florence Henderson and Edward G. Robinson, the film was an attempt to cash in on the success of *A Sound of Music*. Most critics agreed that it failed miserably—although British audiences liked it.

## Iceland

***Under an Arctic Sky*** (2017, Documentary) Can you imagine surfing the frigid waters of northern Iceland during the biggest storm in decades, along a beach ringed by frozen white mountains and illuminated by the shimmering green curtains of the Northern Lights? You will, after watching this crew of daredevil surfers go in search of the perfect wave.

***Of Horses and Men*** (2013, Drama) This cult classic examines the intense, funny, and almost spiritual relationships between men, women, and horses. Set amidst the colossal landscapes of rural Iceland, the story reveals how the horses enjoy more honest, intimate and unselfconscious connections than their neurotic human masters.

***The Secret Life of Walter Mitty*** (2013, Comedy) Ben Stiller plays James Thurber's famous daydreamer in this updated story of a meek functionary in the photo department at *Life* magazine. Mitty withstands the abuse of his boss, and lets his feelings for a co-worker go unspoken—until



some valuable negatives go missing and he sets out in search of them. Greenland and Iceland are the spectacular backdrops where Walter's real adventures finally surpass the ones he had previously only imagined.

***Journey to the Center of the Earth*** (2008, Adventure) This latest version of the Jules Verne sci-fi classic stars Brendan Fraser, and was shot in and around Snæfellsjökull National Park.

***Jar City*** (2006, Drama) In this tangled bit of Nordic noir, a Reykjavik detective tries to piece together the connections between a cold case from 1974 and a recent death. A good choice if you like gritty TV police procedurals like "Prime Suspect." In Icelandic with subtitles.

## Denmark

***The Danish Girl*** (2015, Drama) The Danish artist Einar Wegener (later known as Lili Elbe) was one of the first people to undergo sex reassignment surgery. This biopic depicts Elbe's early career and marriage to artist Gerda Gottlieb, and the Bohemian worlds of Copenhagen and Paris in the 20s and early 30s.

***A Royal Affair*** (2012, Historical Drama) The mentally ill King Christian VII comes to rely on his friend and physician, Johann Struensee (Mads Mikkelsen), a radical Enlightenment thinker from Germany. So, too, does the lonely Queen Caroline (Alicia Vikander), who begins a passionate affair with the doctor. The king learns of their liaison, but protects them, and makes Struensee a Royal Advisor who essentially rules in the king's name. But his reforms are cut short when plotting aristocrats use the affair and Struensee's foreign status to bring a tragic end to this true story.

***The Danish Solution*** (2003, Documentary) Filmmakers Karen Cantor and Camilla Kjaerulff, with Garrison Keillor narrating, reveal how the citizens of Denmark protected their Jewish population against Hitler's attempt to impose export his final solution into Denmark.

***Pele the Conqueror*** (1988, Drama) Directed by Billie August, this Danish-Swedish production won the 1989 Oscar for Best Foreign Film, and star Max von Sydow was nominated for Best Actor. It follows the early 19<sup>th</sup>-century widower Lasse, who emigrates with his 12-year old son Pelle to the Danish island of Bornholm in search of a better life. That is not what they find.

***Babette's Feast*** (1988, Comedy) Set on the rugged coast of 19th century Denmark, this film is from a short story by Isak Dinesen. Two beautiful daughters grow up with a clergyman father, who preaches self-denial. After his death, the sisters uphold his inflexible practices until the arrival of a French refugee, Babette. She cooks and for them, and introduces them to the deep pleasure of a gourmet French meal. Winner of the 1987 Oscar for Best Foreign Language Film.

## Useful Websites

### **Overseas Adventure Travel Frequently Asked Questions**

[www.oattravel.com/faq](http://www.oattravel.com/faq)

### **International Health Information/CDC (Centers for Disease Control)**

[www.cdc.gov/travel](http://www.cdc.gov/travel)

### **Electricity & Plugs**

[www.worldstandards.eu/electricity/  
plugs-and-sockets](http://www.worldstandards.eu/electricity/plugs-and-sockets)

### **Foreign Exchange Rates**

[www.xe.com/currencyconverter](http://www.xe.com/currencyconverter)  
[www.oanda.com/converter/classic](http://www.oanda.com/converter/classic)

### **ATM Locators**

[www.mastercard.com/atm](http://www.mastercard.com/atm)  
[www.visa.com/atmlocator](http://www.visa.com/atmlocator)

### **World Weather**

[www.intellicast.com](http://www.intellicast.com)  
[www.weather.com](http://www.weather.com)  
[www.wunderground.com](http://www.wunderground.com)

### **Basic Travel Phrases (80 languages)**

[www.travlang.com/languages](http://www.travlang.com/languages)

### **Packing Tips**

[www.travelite.org](http://www.travelite.org)

### **U.S. Customs & Border Protection**

[www.cbp.gov/travel](http://www.cbp.gov/travel)

### **Transportation Security**

#### **Administration (TSA)**

[www.tsa.gov](http://www.tsa.gov)

### **National Passport Information Center**

[www.travel.state.gov](http://www.travel.state.gov)

### **Holidays Worldwide**

[www.timeanddate.com/holidays](http://www.timeanddate.com/holidays)

## Useful Apps

### **Flight Stats**

Track departures, arrivals, and flight status

### **LoungeBuddy**

Get access to premium airport lounges around the world

### **Timeshifter**

Personalized tips for avoiding jetlag, based on neuroscience and your own data

### **GoogleMaps or Maps.me**

Maps and directions anywhere in the world

### **Triposo**

City guides, walking maps, and more – and it works offline

### **Rome2rio**

Where to go, what to see, and what to do in more than 160 countries

### **Flush or Sit or Squat**

Find a clean toilet anywhere

### **Uber or Bolt or Grab**

Ride sharing around the world

### **Visa Plus and Mastercard Cirrus**

#### **ATM locations**

Shows the location of the nearest ATM in your network

### **TunnelBear**

Provides a secure VPN (virtual private network) that will encrypt your browsing data when you use a public WiFi network

### **What's App or Skype or Signal**

WiFi calling anywhere in the world

### **Duolingo or FLuentU or Babbel**

Learn dozens of foreign languages

### **Google Translate**

Fast and simple translations

### **XE**

Currency conversions

### **SizeGuide**

Clothing and shoe sizes in all countries

### **Best Units Converter**

Converts currency, mileage, weights, and many other units of measurement

### **Tourlina**

For women only, it connects you with other female travelers

### **Happy Cow**

Locate vegan and vegetarian eateries in 195 countries

### **Eatwith**

Dine with locals all over the world

### **Meetup**

Connects you with locals who share your interests

### **Skyview**

Identifies constellations and heavenly bodies

### **Travello**

Find travel friends on the road

### **ALIX for One**

Created by and for women, it identifies solo-friendly dining spots in major international cities

### **TripWhistle**

Maps your location and provides emergency numbers for police, medics, and more

### **GeoSure**

Safely navigate neighborhoods around the world

### **Chirpey**

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