



SAILING EXPEDITIONS

GUIDE



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TRAVEL AGENCY & SHIPPING COMPANY

Swan Expeditions organizes special voyages and expeditions to remote destinations. Our adventures have changed the lives of thousands of people.

We are a travel agency and proud owner of our Tall Ships Wylde Swan and Noorderlicht. Because we organize worldwide expeditions and also own the Tall Ships we sail, we fully manage your experience with us.

In this Expedition guide you will read about our expeditions in Spitsbergen and you will find an overview of our voyages. If you have any questions regarding these expeditions, don't hesitate to [contact us](#).

Are you ready to start exploring?

[BOOK YOUR VOYAGE >](#)



PLEASE NOTE: All itineraries are for guidance only. Programs may vary depending on ice, weather, and wildlife conditions. Landings are subject to site availabilities, permissions, and environmental concerns per AECO regulations. Official sailing plans and landing slots are scheduled with AECO prior to the start of the season, but the expedition leader determines the final plan. Flexibility is paramount for expedition cruises.

VOYAGE OVERVIEW 2024

On this page you will find a chronological overview of all our scheduled expeditions in 2024. On the following page you can read more about Spitsbergen Svalbard.

- From Fjords to Arctic | Norway & Svalbard | 8 - 17 April
- Arctic Spring | 26 May - 2 June
- Arctic Spring | 2 June - 9 June
- Arctic Spring | 9 June - 16 June
- Northwest Svalbard | 18 June - 28 June
- Circumnavigation | 30 June - 15 July
- Arctic Summer | 23 July - 30 July
- Circumnavigation | 31 July - 15 August
- Circumnavigation | 15 August - 30 August
- Arctic Fall: Northwest | 1 September - 8 September
- Arctic Fall: Bellsund&Isfjorden | 8 September - 15 September
- Arctic Fall: Northwest | 15 September - 22 September
- Arctic Fall: Bellsund&Isfjorden | 22 September - 29 September

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SVALBARD

Tallship de Noorderlicht has 30 years of experience in Spitsbergen. Only with us, you can really experience the Arctic wilderness. Spectacular glaciers, encounters with Arctic animals and diving into the history of Spitsbergen.

We have several voyages in Spitsbergen. They take place from April to September. In spring, summer and the arctic autumn. Experience a life-changing journey with Swan Expeditions on Tallship Noorderlicht.

[VIEW VOYAGES](#)



SAILING AND SPITSBERGEN

Only with a sailing ship you can discover the real Spitsbergen on a voyage between 7 and 16 days. Larger and only motorized ships are increasingly banned from the most beautiful and vulnerable places.

Smaller Ship – better expeditions

In the past 30 years that we execute sailing expeditions in Spitsbergen, we have also seen mass tourism increase. Fortunately, the Norwegian government is making rules to protect vulnerable areas from the larger motorized ships with up to 200 passengers. Noorderlicht with only 20 guests is still allowed to visit those places.

Tall Ship

The characteristic appearance of our Tall Ship Noorderlicht makes an expedition to Spitsbergen a unique experience. Staying on our traditional, comfortable ship with its majestic masts and rigging creates a wonderful atmosphere. If there is wind, we will travel under sail as much as possible. Gliding through the Arctic waters driven by the wind is a magical experience.

If you are interested in sailing the ship and helping the crew, don't hold back. You can even take the helm and steer the ship to the next landing.



EXPEDITIONS

[View all of our expeditions >](#)

With our 30 years of experience in Spitsbergen, we anchor in the most beautiful, most remote fjords and bays of Spitsbergen. With an expedition zodiac we will take you ashore. Our certified guides will always ensure a landing you will never forget. The primeval ice, the glaciers, the wildlife. Because we sail with a maximum of 20 guests and we are a relatively small sailing ship, you are able to enter into the real untouched nature of Spitsbergen.

A shore-expedition lasts from a few hours to a maximum of half a day.

Polar bears

Anyone who goes to Spitsbergen hopes to see a polar bear. With our 30 years of experience, but also with up-to-date knowledge, we do our utmost to achieve this. Polar bears are wild animals that we don't want to disturb. If we have polar bears close by, we are on board the Noorderlicht. We don't want to encounter polar bears on land. That is too dangerous. You will notice that our guides always carry a rifle against polar bears. Never in the last 30 years have we had to use that weapon. We always make sure we will not have a close encounter with a polar bear on shore. But, we just can't rule it out completely. Therefore this security measure of a weapon is needed.



Zodiac

When we go on a shore-expedition, the Noorderlicht is usually anchored near where we will go ashore. You and the other guests board the expedition zodiac with outboard motor. You will then drive close to the water away from the Tall Ship. The image of the magnificent Tall Ship at anchor in the beautiful bay is always a feast for the eyes. The journey with the zodiac is an experience in itself. The zodiac moors against the ice or slides a bit on the snow plate or on the beach. Then you get out and you are in a new place for a new adventure.



"FROM FJORDS TO ARCTIC"

Explore Norway's impressive coast and the wildness of the Svalbard archipelago. You will step aboard Tall Ship Noorderlicht in Tromsø, Norway and sail to the Arctic wilderness of Longyearbyen, Svalbard.

An adventure through the Norwegian Fjords up to the white Arctic world of Svalbard. We are in the Northern region of the Norwegian Lofoten, so be ready for spectacular views of these impressive fjords as we set our course to Spitsbergen.

Day 1: Embarkation in Tromsø

Day 2 – 11: Crossing to Spitsbergen

Places we might visit:

Lofoten Islands

Bear Island

Fjords around Longyearbyen

Day 10: Goodbye Noorderlicht



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"ARCTIC SPRING"

The trips in the Arctic spring are one of the most beautiful and purest trips that sailing ship Noorderlicht makes. It is the best time to discover the polar region in its most Arctic form. The landscape is still pristine white and because there is often floating ice in the fjords, there is a great chance of spotting polar bears, seals & walruses.

From the end of April in Svalbard we experience the midnight sun, which means that there are 24 hours of daylight. In the mornings and evenings, the light is phenomenal, making these trips extremely suitable for photography enthusiasts.

Day 1: Embarkation in Longyearbyen

Day 2: Trygghamna

Day 3: Seabird cliff Alkhornet

Day 4: St. Johns towards 14th Julibukta

Day 5: Walruses and Murray points

Day 6: Ghost town Barentsburg

Day 7: Sailing towards Longyearbyen

Day 8: Goodbye Noorderlicht



Are you ready to start your next adventure?

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"NORTHWEST SVALBARD"

Midnight Sun, the sun doesn't set between 20 April and 22 August. During this expedition spring turns into summer and we're still enjoying the long days. Bird populations like the razorbills, kittiwakes, skuas and puffins are making their way back to the Arctic and the first nesting seabirds can be seen.

This voyage is comparable with our Arctic Spring 8-day expedition, but with this trip even more adventure is guaranteed! Because the journey is longer, three extra days means visiting more places and spending more time ashore.

Day 1: Embarkation in Longyearbyen

Day 2: Visit to seabird cliff Alkhornet

Day 3 - 10: Sailing North-West of Svalbard

Places we might visit:

Forlandsundet
Fuglehuken
Magdalenafjord
Smeerenburg
Zeeuwsche Uitkijk
Spitse bergen
Glaciers of Kongfjord & Krossfjord
Blomstrandhalvoya Peninsula
Ny Alesund
Barentsburg
Cape Bohemanflya
Raudfjorden
Hamiltonbukta
Sallyhamna

Day 11: Goodbye Noorderlicht



Are you ready to start your next adventure?

More info & pricing >

"CIRCUMNAVIGATION"

Be amazed at the versatility of the Arctic wilderness with spectacular glaciers, encounters with Arctic animals and delve into the history of Spitsbergen.

A circumnavigation around Spitsbergen offers you the best opportunity for a complete Arctic experience. Step aboard the sailing ship Noorderlicht and join us in searching polar bears, walruses, whales, arctic foxes and special bird species such as the ivory gull and puffins. Also, we will visit the historic whaling stations.

Day 1: Embarkation in Longyearbyen

Day 2: Glacier Fridtjofbreen and the historic sights in the Bellsund

Day 3-4: Around the South Cape towards the east of Spitsbergen

Day 5: Visit the impressive Negribreen, Heleysundet & 'Noorderlichtbukta'

Day 6: The famous bird cliff Alkefjellet

Day 7: Nordaustlandet – the northeastern limit of our trip

Day 8-9: 80 degrees north towards the 'de Zeeuwse Uitkijk'

Day 10: Whaling history at Smeerenburg

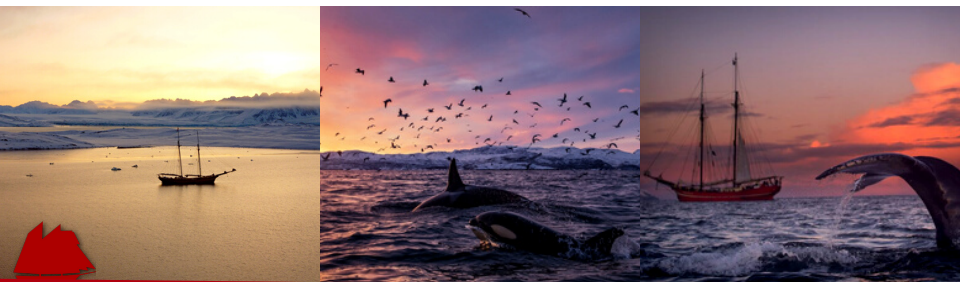
Day 11-12: The glaciers of Kongsfjord and Krossfjord

Day 13: Walruses and a panoramic view on the Prins Karls Forlandet

Day 14: Ghost Town in Soviet style: Barentsburg

Day 15 : Sailing towards Longyearbyen

Day 16: Goodbye Noorderlicht



Are you ready to start your next adventure?

More info & pricing >

"ARCTIC SUMMER"

Northwest Svalbard during summer. You have the chance to witness the transformative beauty of Svalbard through 24 hours of daylight.

Explore the wonders of the polar region and encounter polar bears, walruses, whales, arctic foxes and rare bird species while also delving into the rich history of Spitsbergen with visits to historic whaling stations. Be inspired by the Arctic wilderness with its majestic glaciers, magnificent mountains and the magical midnight sun phenomenon. Which is defined by the sun's continuous presence above the horizon, blurring the lines between day and night. This encompasses the pleasure of observing the diverse wildlife during Svalbard's endless summer days.

Day 1: Embarkation in Longyearbyen

Day 2: Visit to seabird cliff Alkhornet

Day 3 - 7: Sailing North-West of Svalbard

Places we might visit:

Forlandsundet

Fuglehuken

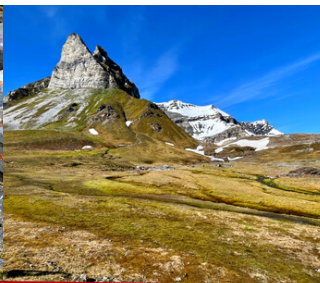
Magdalenafjord

Smeerenburg

Zeeuwsche Utkijck

Spitse bergen

Day 8: Goodbye Noorderlicht



Are you ready to start your next adventure?

More info & pricing >

"ARCTIC FALL"

BELLSUND & ISFJORDEN

Enjoy the nature and culture during this voyage to the South of Svalbard. Autumn is in the air!

Isfjord & the Bellsund: a varied journey where lovers of nature and culture can indulge themselves. During this trip we will visit perhaps the 2 most accessible and versatile fjord systems of Spitsbergen: the Isfjord and the Bellsund.

Day 1: Embarkation in Longyearbyen

Day 2 -7: Sailing towards Bellsund & Isfjorden

Places we might visit:

Ghost town Pyramiden

Nordenskiöldbreen

Skansbukta

Historic Kapp Thorsden

Trygghamna

Alkhorner bird cliff

Akseloya

Midterhuken

Recherchefjord

Barentsburg

Colesbukta

Borebukta

Day 8: Goodbye Noorderlicht



Are you ready to start your next adventure?

[More info & pricing >](#)

OUR TEAM

Our ships are sailed by an international, professional crew. On board we have a captain, mate, cook, deck crew, and 1 or 2 guides. Total maximum 5 crew members and 2 guides. They are together responsible for a safe trip and are therefore trained and certified on the basis of internationally applicable regulations. Our cook provides daily breakfast, an extensive lunch (often hot) and dinner. Dietary preferences can also be taken into account, such as meatless and allergies.

Guides

Our guides are fully certified and have extensive experience leading landings and expeditions. They have different areas of expertise. One knows a lot about flora and fauna, the other knows a lot about the history of Spitsbergen or about the impact of the changing environment in the polar regions. Because we have one guide for every 10 guests, we can provide customized expeditions and landings. One guest simply has different wishes than another guest.



Our guides will give briefings about the expeditions before and after the various expeditions. They will also give lectures and presentations about their various fields of expertise. With a maximum of 20 guests and two guides, these are pleasant and informative moments.

The crew and guides usually sleep in their own part of the ship. They eat and live in the same areas as our guests. That gives a pleasant informal atmosphere on board. That way we are really experiencing the expedition together.

[MEET OUR TEAM](#)



WHO ARE OUR GUESTS

Noorderlicht is the most famous sailing ship in the world that sails to Spitsbergen and she welcomes guests from all over the world from all age categories.

Age

We welcome guests of all ages. It doesn't matter how old or young you are. A certain level of being physically fit is important. We are on an adventurous expedition where you will get in and out of a zodiac, hike in spectacular terrain over different soils such as sand, stone, rocks and snow. Also on board there are stairs and somewhat higher thresholds.

Alone or together?

The guests that join us sometimes travel alone or together. Very occasionally there is a group of three to four guests that embark together. Anyone who wants to visit Spitsbergen with a Tall Ship has an adventurous attitude. The spectacular appearance of our sailing ship makes it easy to get in contact with fellow travelers. Everyone loves adventure and nature. There is always very good contact between our guests. Sometimes it even results in friendships that last a lifetime.

Nationality

Our guests arrive from various countries. There is usually not one predominant nationality on board. Our crew also comes from different countries. The language on board is English.

Curious for the
availability of our
voyages?

[CHECK IT HERE](#)



LIFE ON BOARD

What immediately stands out is the warm and cozy atmosphere in the ship. There are nice common areas that can be heated well for the arctic areas. There are also 10 comfortable double cabins. Living together on board is a fantastic experience, regardless of your age. The group process is one of the most important parts of an expedition.

Want to know more about our voyages or do you have a question? You can either talk to our Expedition Manager Christian, fill out our contact form or visit one of our online webinars.

[SCHEDULE A CALL](#)



SLEEPING

Noorderlicht has 10 cabins for 2 people. The cabins are spacious and comfortable. Some cabins share a shower and toilet with one other cabin. Other cabins have the shower and toilet in the sanitary room. A double bed on a sailing ship is not a good idea. As soon as there is some heel, this is not pleasant. We therefore have two single beds in a bunk bed arrangement.

If you want more privacy, you can choose to book one cabin for one person. We only have a limited number of this option.

FOOD

Every day our chef and crew prepare a delicious breakfast with various cereals, fresh bread, sweet and savory spreads with coffee, tea, juice, milk. At the coffee and tea moments, something tasty is usually provided.

Lunch is an important meal with bread where something extra or warm is often served. Dinner usually consists of three courses and is prepared with great care.

Because we have a relatively small group of passengers, our cook can always add a personal touch to the food for our guests.

Our crew and our guides join in with our guests. This ensures that we are all really sailing the expedition together.

DAILY ROUTINE

After breakfast usually follows the first excursion or landing of the day. Lunch on board is after the first landing/excursion, between 12 noon and 2 pm. Depending on what the day offers, we will then sail to the next destination.

Sometimes we use the whole afternoon for that. Another time we go on a second excursion or landing. Dinner takes place between 6 and 8 pm. In the evening there is room for a lecture or briefing from the guides and of course to chat or read a book. Sometimes there is still sailing in the evening or at night and it is nice to participate in the sailing of the ship.

Do you have any questions regarding diets or allergies?

Send an [email](#) or visit our online webinar.

ENVIRONMENTALLY FRIENDLY



We are proud that we are a sailing ship and we try to use our sails to reach the expedition areas under sailing. Only that aspect already makes Noorderlicht unique in Spitsbergen. Most other ships are motor ships with all its consequences.

We also need electricity on the Noorderlicht. But compared to the big ships with up to sometimes 200 passengers, our footprint is very low. We get the energy that we need from our powerpacks. We have 3 generators on board, two small ones and one larger generator. This way we can always choose which one needs to be running for what we are doing. This way we always have the configuration with the smallest impact on the environment.



COMMUNICATION

As soon as the Noorderlicht is a few miles out to sea, a sense of calm descends on the ship: there is no longer a cell phone connection. Can you imagine? A day without your phone? This is your life aboard the Noorderlicht. There is no contact with the outside world.

Of course there are other ways in which the Noorderlicht can be in contact with the outside world 24/7. For example, we have an iridium LT 3100 satellite telephone connection which we can always use to call and be called in case of emergency.

During the voyage, the captain provides updates at least once a day about what is going on, where the ship is sailing and what the plans are. These are always pleasant moments.

And there is always, 24/7, someone you can ask questions or discuss matters with.

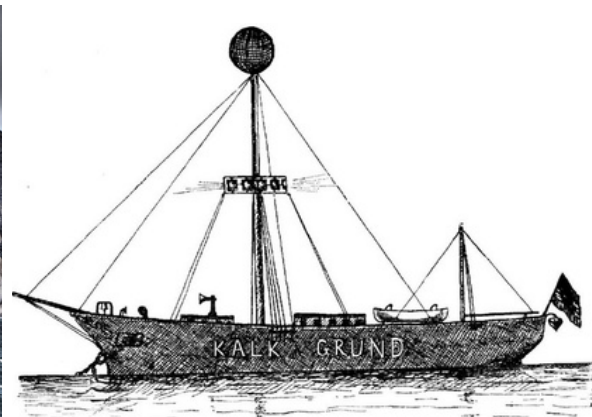
Do you want to see where Noorderlicht is located right now? [View location >](#)



HISTORY

The history of the Noorderlicht begins a century ago as the lightship Kalkgrund II. The ship was originally rigged as a three-masted schooner and not equipped with an engine. The ship already has a really beautiful hull.

After being used as a lightship for a while, the ship was converted into a houseboat. Unfortunately, it fell into a bad condition... But the rusty hull was refitted into an expedition ship in 1992. We are then one of the first ships to take guests to the still unknown Spitsbergen. After years of wonderful expeditions in to Spitsbergen, the ship is frozen during winter in 2003 as a kind of hotel ship to house researchers with sled dogs. Due to the rising temperatures, this came to an end in 2015. The ship started a new period as an expedition ship again to unique and remote destinations. In total we have more than 30 years of experience on Spitsbergen.



NOORDERLICHT

Length	46,2 m
Width	6,5 m
Mastheight	43 m
Hullspeed	12 knots
Sailing plan	550 m2
Flag	Holland
Homeport	Enkhuizen

Built	1910
Rebuilt	1993
Certificates	Worldwide
Crew	5-7 persons
Trainees	20 persons
Engine	460 HP Caterpillar C12 Diesel

SAFETY

The Noorderlicht meets all safety requirements set by the International Maritime Organization (IMO). The crew and guides are well trained in dealing with emergencies, but especially in preventing them. Every year, the entire ship and crew are inspected by various government agencies.

Do you have any questions about safety during our expeditions?

[Contact us](#)



BOOKING AND COSTS

Costs

Although our expeditions on our sailing ships are the most unique of all the voyages you can make on Spitsbergen, they are still very affordable. An 8-day expedition costs 3299 euros and a 16-day circumnavigation 6499 euros. (VZR garant has secured the paid travel money. [Read more about it here](#)).

Full board

That is based on full board, coffee, tea, juice, etc. Only your personal (alcoholic) drinks are for your account. Your flight and transfer from Longyearbyen airport to the ship (15 min) is not included.

Merchandise

We have a number of unique items for sale on board. Think of small souvenirs like magnets and keychains or clothing like socks, sweaters, polos and caps. Fun to have or to wear as a reminder of your extraordinary expedition on the Noorderlicht with Swan Expeditions. Or you can even surprise family and friends back home with a thoughtful and adventurous little gift. It's for you or your friends or family at home where everyone is curious about all your stories.

Tipping

It is customary for guests to tip the crew. This can be arranged when paying for your drinks and merchandise on the last day. For example, consider 5% of the travel sum.

Book your expedition

When you have found your expedition of choice, you can start booking. For expeditions of more than 3000 euros that are booked more than 60 days in advance, you only pay 30% first. If the expedition is already within 60 days of booking or for less than 3000 euros you pay the entire travel sum direct. With your booking you will receive a link to your personal account. There you will find all information about your expedition. We also ask you to complete your personal information in your account. Do you pay in parts? Then you will also find the second invoice in your personal account 2 months before the trip.

Are you ready to start your next adventure?
View the availability and pricing of our voyages

[OUR VOYAGES >](#)

