

# Canada: Newfoundland & Labrador Cruise With Naturalist Journeys & Caligo Ventures



**July 24 – August 3, 2017**

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Naturalist Journeys, LLC



Cruise Newfoundland and Labrador's waters on an unforgettable journey in search of a plentiful array of seabirds, stunning and dramatic glacial landscapes, and iconic Arctic mammals like Polar Bear, Walrus and Caribou. Nutrient-rich, ocean current upwellings power food-chains that feed whales and multiple species of seal (Ringed, Hooded, Harbor, and Harp) and support massive breeding colonies of Atlantic Puffin, Northern Gannett, and Razorbill.



Cross from Nova Scotia to Newfoundland, watching for shearwaters, storm-petrels, and Northern Fulmar. Visit Gros Morne National Park, known for its fascinating geology and healthy population of Moose; explore Torngat Mountains National Park, the crown jewel of the Canadian National Park network; learn about Inuit culture. Visit Monumental Island and stop at the historic sites of Hopedale, Hebron, and l'Anse aux Meadows. Immerse yourself in stunning landscapes, colorful towns, and charismatic wildlife along the way.



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## Tour Highlights

- Observe large diversity and numbers of seabirds throughout the cruise, including Sooty and Manx Shearwater, Northern Fulmar, Wilson's and Leach's Storm-Petrel, Northern Gannet, Common Murre, Razorbill, and Atlantic Puffin
- Visit the Tablelands of Gros Morne National Park, a UNESCO World Heritage Site known for its unique geology and carnivorous plants
- Cruise through the deep and lengthy Noxvaik Fjord, surrounded by the tallest mountains in Atlantic Canada and home to multiple species of seal such as Ringed, Hooded, Harbor, and Harp
- Enjoy the spectacle of thousands of seabirds
- and marine mammals feeding near the nutrient-rich upwellings that surround the Button Islands
- Observe Walrus and Polar Bear at Monumental Island

## Tour Summary

11-Day / 10-Night Canadian Cruise with Peg Abbott

\$3695 - \$9895 based on cabin selection, from Louisbourg, Nova Scotia, Departing Ottawa

Arrival Airport is Sydney/J.A. Douglas McCurdy (YQY), Departure Airport is Ottawa-Macdonald Cartier International (YOW)



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## Tues., Jul. 24 Arrival in Louisbourg

Our adventure begins in the historic port town of Louisbourg, Nova Scotia.\* The English first visited this site in 1597; it was then fortified by the French in 1713 in recognition of its strategic maritime location. During the 18<sup>th</sup> Century, Louisbourg was the third busiest seaport in North America.

The Fortress of Louisbourg, a partially reconstructed historic site that reflects the town's history, also happens to provide habitat for some bird species not likely to be seen elsewhere on our journey, including Barn and Cliff Swallows. The marshes around the fortress may also host a variety of shorebirds and waterfowl.

We board the ship in the late afternoon, and then enjoy a dinner of local lobster while we sail out into the Atlantic on our way to Newfoundland.



## Wed., Jul. 25 Gros Morne National Park

Although the journey by boat between Nova Scotia and Newfoundland occurs mostly overnight, an early morning watch from our comfortable ship can produce a wealth of interesting seabirds winging over the sea: hulking Northern Gannet, aerobatic Great and Manx Shearwaters, delicate Wilson's and Leach's Storm-Petrels, and more.

This morning, we anchor off the tiny fishing community of Trout River, the access point for Gros Morne National Park — the second largest in the Canadian Maritimes. A quick Zodiac ride takes us ashore to visit the Tablelands, an incredible example of this park's fascinating geology. Here we find an almost Martian landscape! Forced up from the depths of the Earth's mantle several hundred-million years ago, this stark, iron-rich UNESCO World Heritage Site lacks soil nutrients needed to sustain plant life. But life always finds a way — several species of carnivorous plants occur on this rocky terrain, including pitcher plants and Common Butterwort.



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In the surrounding areas, lush bogs and wetlands provide habitat for a richer variety of birds, including boreal specialties such as Yellow-bellied Flycatcher, Gray Jay, and Boreal Chickadee. The iconic Moose, successfully introduced to Newfoundland in 1900, is also possible. We re-board the ship in the afternoon to continue our voyage northward.

## **Thurs., Jul. 26 L'Anse Aux Meadows**

Founded around the year 1000 AD, the settlement of L'Anse aux Meadows is notable as the only known archaeological evidence of Norse settlement in North America — physical evidence that Vikings discovered

North America five hundred years prior to the arrival of Christopher Columbus. Found at the northernmost tip of the island of Newfoundland, archaeologists theorize that it played a part in Leif Erikson's founding of the colony "Vinland" in the Canadian Maritimes.

We spend the day exploring the reconstructed sod huts and Norse ruins with the site's resident archaeologist, while noting observations of the area's wildlife. Common Eider are common near the shore, while verdant thickets and grassy areas on land harbor breeding Fox Sparrow, White-crowned Sparrow, Common Redpoll, and Blackpoll Warbler.



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## **Fri., Jul. 27 Battle Harbour**

Today, we explore the summer fishing station of Battle Harbour, once the economic and social center of the Labrador coast. Formerly inhabited year-round, the town declined following the collapse of the local cod fishery and a major fire.

We venture ashore to explore the colorfully restored fishing, whaling, and commercial buildings found in this remote community. While doing so, we may also observe a variety of seabirds just offshore — Common Murre, Razorbill, Black Guillemot, cormorants, and a variety of gulls are all likely.



## **Sat., Jul. 28 Hopedale**

The community of Hopedale finds itself at the edge of the Canadian Shield, an exposed portion of the Earth's crust weathered by glaciers from the last Ice Age. As we sail through a narrow network of channels that lead to the town, we have the opportunity to admire this fascinating treeless landscape.

Once we set anchor, we venture ashore by Zodiac. Originally known by its Inuktitut name Arvertok, which translates to "the place of whales," the small community of Hopedale received its new name after the arrival of Moravian missionaries from Germany in 1782. Today, it serves as the legislative capital of the Inuit Land Claims Area of Nunatsiavut and contains the oldest wooden-frame building in the Canadian Maritimes. While we explore this site's history, we also keep an eye out for northerly breeders such as Northern Wheatear, Common Redpoll, and Common Raven.



## **Sun., Jul. 29 Hebron**

As we continue our journey northward, we stop at the historic site of Hebron, once the northernmost settlement in Labrador. The Moravian missionaries established Hebron in the early 1830s, and the architecture of the buildings clearly shows Germanic influences.



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In 1959, Moravian leaders decided to close the mission due to outbreaks of tuberculosis and shortages of firewood. The local Inuit families relocated to various other communities, but the original buildings still stand today in surprisingly good condition.

Today, it is designated a National Historic Site. We hope to meet Buddy and Jenny, Nunatsiavut Government ambassadors, who have been looking after the historic site for years and have many absorbing stories to tell.

Botany on each of the islands is fascinating, with long summer sunlight pushing forth blooms.

## **Mon., Jul. 30 Torngat Mountains National Park**

Midway through our exploration of Newfoundland and Labrador, our attention turns to the magnificent wilderness of Torngat National Park. Officially established in 2008, this largest national park of Atlantic Canada covers 3,700 square miles of rugged mountains, breathtaking fjords, glacial systems, and stunning landscapes. It is also home to Canada's highest mountains east of the Rockies. These lands are also of great spiritual importance to the Inuit. In fact, "Torngat" is the Inuktitut word for "place of spirits."



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In these remote and pristine lands, polar bears hunt seals along the coast and caribou herds migrate to and from their calving grounds. The Arctic terrain also provides nesting habitat for Harlequin Duck, Red-necked Phalarope, Rough-legged Hawk, Lapland Longspur, Snow Bunting, American Pipit, Northern Wheatear, and more. There is also a good chance for Black-legged Kittiwake, Black Guillemot, and Glaucous Gull along the coast. We have some terrific opportunities over the next couple of days to explore this productive area in order to observe many of these species.



## **Tues., Jul. 31 Torngat Mountain National Park — Nachvak Fjord**

Today we cruise through the grandiose Nachvak Fjord in Torngat Mountains National Park, a deep fjord over 12 miles in length. The surrounding mountains are the tallest in Labrador, and the rocky walls of the fjord often soar over 3,000 feet above us.



In addition to the spectacular scenery, many marine mammals migrate through the area during the short boreal summer. We may encounter numerous seal species, including Ringed, Hooded, Harp, and Harbor Seals.

Minke Whale often linger in the fjords, while larger species such as Fin and Humpback tend to stay offshore. Watch for a wave or a tail fluke!

The stunning landscapes, plentiful subjects, and interesting lighting combine to make this an outstanding photography location. For those that wish, we can meet on deck to capture images in glowing sunrise and sunset light.



## **Wed., Aug. 1 Martin Bay & the Button Islands**

As we reach the far northern stretches of coastal Labrador, we cruise by Martin Bay — the site of the only known armed landing by Nazi Germany in North America during World War II. In 1943, a German

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U-Boat anchored here, and the crew established an automated weather station. No one knew it existed until the late 1970s when a German historian came across a reference to it in the German naval archives. The Canadian Coast Guard subsequently collected in the equipment in the 1980s and it is now on permanent display at the Canadian War Museum.

We continue onward, reaching the Button Islands at the northern tip of Labrador. The waters surrounding the islands feature nutrient upwellings. These upwellings feed an especially rich and productive food chain featuring thousands of marine birds and mammals, including a variety of whales, seals, gulls, alcids, and shearwaters.

## **Thurs., Aug. 2 Monumental Island / Frobisher Bay**

On our last full day, we sail across the mouth of Frobisher Bay to reach Monumental Island. This small, steep-sided outcrop off the southeast coast of Baffin Island is well known for potential close sightings of two of the Arctic's most iconic creatures: Walrus and Polar Bear. The two species coexist on the island in an uneasy truce. Polar Bears are no match for a fully-grown male Walrus, although they may target a young individual. Various seabirds also breed on the island, including the dapper Black Guillemot.

We enjoy our final zodiac cruise here, before enjoying a sumptuous farewell dinner attended by the captain of the ship. During this special meal, we reflect on the last 10 days of exploring Newfoundland and Labrador. The ship cruises overnight through Frobisher Bay to reach Iqaluit, the provincial capital of Nunavut.

## **Fri., Aug. 3 Iqaluit & Departures**

We bid farewell to our crew and disembark the ship by Zodiac. After a short tour of Iqaluit (if time and tides permit), we transfer to the airport for our flight back to Ottawa. On arrival in Ottawa, there is an airport transfer available to a central downtown location

## **Cost of the Journey**

We travel in partnership with One Ocean Expeditions. We travel on one of Peg Abbott, our company owner's favorite ships, the *Akademik Sergey Vavilov*, a modern, comfortable, safe, and ice strengthened. On the top deck, a separate lounge and bar hosts panoramic views, and a separate cozy

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library provides an ideal place to sit and relax or catch up on some reading. Extensive details about the ship are available on their website, and we can refer you to that on request.

The cost of the cruise is \$3695 - \$9895 based on the type of cabin selected. There is an option to add on a guided kayaking program with instruction.

There is a charter flight returning to Ottawa, Canada that will be booked and billed to you, \$995pp. Waiver of this flight cost is a benefit of early enrollment, ask us for details!

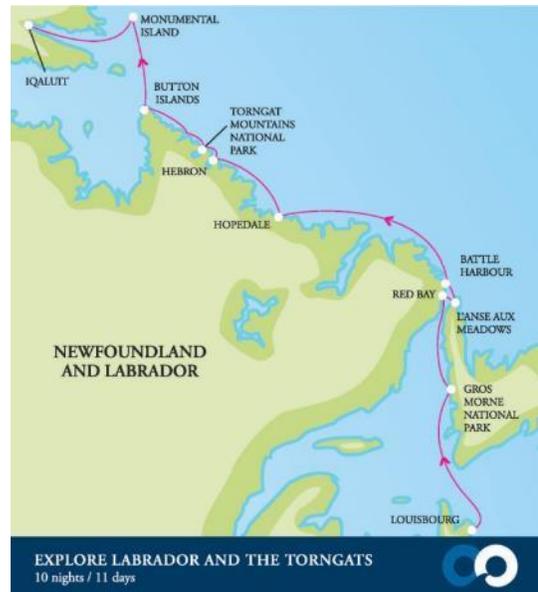
## Travel Information

The tour begins on the north coast of Nova Scotia, at Louisbourg, a port city. Flights go into Sydney and this is where we have a hotel booked for you if you wish to use it, for the night ahead of the trip so you are there and ready. Once at this hotel all transport to the fort for sightseeing and to the dock are provided. The hotel is an additional expense of approximately \$150 per room, including breakfast. Others of the cruise will join us at this hotel, the night before our voyage, July 23.

Included with our cruise is a visit to the historic fort there the morning of July 24. Flights to Sydney typically route through Toronto. Another option is to go early to enjoy Halifax, and then take a short flight up to Sydney. Going to Halifax, you can go through Boston or New York rather than Toronto. It is about a five hour drive on the most direct route between the two cities, longer for the scenic route.

It is best to plan to be in Sydney the night ahead of your voyage to take advantage of going to see the fort, and to make sure you don't miss the boat! All must arrive in Nova Scotia in time to be at the dock by early afternoon (1-2PM) on July 24. We are happy to arrange your hotel in Sydney the night previous.

We will return to Ottawa by flight on August 3, timing is such you will most likely need to stay overnight. If you want to fly out that night, they recommend not booking ahead of 8PM as the small airport we charter from can experience weather delays. We have blocked space for you at a downtown hotel if you wish to stay there, or



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you can book something near the airport if you prefer. There is a shuttle from the ship to downtown or to an airport location. Hotels and meal expenses outside of the cruise will be additional, to be determined by choice of hotel.



## Photo Credits

Acadia, Greg Smith (GS [www.flickr.com/slobirdr](http://www.flickr.com/slobirdr)); Common Murre,GS; Polar Bear with cubs, Mark Robinson, courtesy One Ocean Expeditions (OOE); Atlantic Puffin, Tony Beck/OOE; Small Purple-fringed Orchid, GS; Red Boats, Willy Waterton (WW)/OOE; Northern Gannet, Jocelyn Pride/OOE; Fortress of Louisbourg, WW/OOE; Great Shearwater, GS; Fish House Gros Morne, WW/OOE; Colorful Boats, WW/OOE; Bog Boardwalk, WW/OOE; Tablelands Waterfall, WW/OOE; Shorebirds, GS; L'Anse aux Meadows National Historic Site, courtesy of the park; Humpback Whale tail, GS; *Vavilov* cabin, courtesy OOE; Island Landscape Hebron, Barrett and Mackay/OOE; Stunning village landscape, Kyle Marquardt/OOE; Hebron Island, Tony Beck/OOE; Torngat Scenic, courtesy Labrador Tourism; Inukshuk, Labrador, Barrett and MacKay/OOE; Whale Tail, PA; Common Raven, Peg Abbott (PA); Red-necked Phalarope, GS; Polar Bear, Boris Wise/OOE; *Vavilov* and Walrus, OOE; Polar Bear on rock field, Beth Brown/OOE; Map, OOE; *Vavilov*, OOE; Red Bay Village Scenic; WW/OOE.