

Labrador, Torngats & Greenland With Naturalist Journeys & Caligo Ventures

August 7 – 18, 2020

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Tour Summary

12-Day / 11-Night North Atlantic Cruise

Starting at \$5995

Arrival Airport is Sydney/J.A. Douglas McCurdy (YQY),

Departure Airport is Ottawa-Macdonald Cartier International (YOW)

Tour Highlights

- ✓ Explore remote ports and local communities along the coast of Labrador and Greenland
- ✓ Visit Inuit and Greenlandic history and culture plus early Viking settlements
- ✓ Witness towering mountains, wildlife, and wilderness of Torngat National Park
- ✓ Experience the fascinating transition from the Atlantic provinces into the north
- ✓ See seabirds throughout the cruise, including Manx and Sooty Shearwater, Northern Fulmar, Wilson's and Leach's Storm-Petrel, Northern Gannet, Razorbill, Common Murre, and Atlantic Puffin
- ✓ Discover the Tablelands of Gros Morne National Park, a UNESCO World Heritage Site known for its unique geology and carnivorous plants
- ✓ Cruise the deep and lengthy Nachvak Fjord, surrounded by the tallest mountains in Atlantic Canada and home to multiple species of seal
- ✓ See the spectacle of seabirds and marine mammals feeding near the nutrient-rich upwellings that surround the Button Islands

This exciting journey into the North links numerous historic locations on Canada's East Coast, including a French-built fortress, a known Viking settlement, remote mission locations and isolated fishing ports. We journey northwards from the more temperate climate found in the Maritimes, onto higher latitudes. Subtle changes to vegetation and wildlife species are noticed and our expert on-board guides interpret and explain these changes throughout the journey.

The region features strong cultural diversity and we encounter the Nunatsiavut people in small communities along the coastline of Labrador. Numerous wildlife species are found along this coastline including bears, seals, whales and both migratory and resident birds. A particular highlight of our voyage is a visit to Torngat Mountains National Park. Leaving Canada, we navigate across the Davis Strait to the spectacular coast of Greenland—home to colorful villages, rich culture, friendly locals, and stunning icebergs that break off the immense glacial systems.

Our luxurious expedition vessel is the perfect platform for exploring the remote bays and fjords of this spectacular wilderness; many locations can only be accessed by ship. A final highlight awaits as we venture into one of the world's longest fjords and take a walk on the icecap itself! This is remote, small-ship expedition cruising at its best.



Fri., Aug. 7 Sydney | Louisbourg, Nova Scotia

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 18th 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 sail out past the lighthouse, across the Gulf of St Lawrence towards Newfoundland, Labrador and eventually Greenland.

Sat., Aug. 8 Gros Morne National Park, Newfoundland

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.

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.

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 visit the Discovery Centre before arriving at Woody Point, located in Bonne Bay. We meet the ship here and continue our voyage northwards.

Sun., Aug. 9 L'anse Aux Meadows, Newfoundland

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. Tonight we leave the coastline of Newfoundland, crossing the Strait of Belle Isle towards Labrador.

Mon., Aug. 10 Wonderstrands, Labrador

Overnight, we sail along a historic stretch of coastline, named the Wonderstrands. The location appears in the Viking saga of Eric the Red, which calls the location "furdustrandir"—the Wonder Strands. Other than one rocky promontory, the sandy beach is almost 50km long—a rarity on the famously rocky east coast of Canada. There are some excellent hiking options along the shoreline and hinterland while Zodiac cruising and exploring in the sea kayaks provides additional means of discovering the area. Resident wildlife includes black bear and Timber Wolf; it is not uncommon to see their paw prints when walking on shore. Puffin, razorbill, guillemot, and gannets are also local inhabitants.

Tues., Aug. 11 Hopedale, Labrador

Today we venture ashore by Zodiac to visit the Hopedale Moravian Mission – built in 1782 and said to be the oldest building east of Quebec. It's a fascinating place and we learn of the influence of the early Christian missionaries on the Inuit people of Northern Labrador. This location has been designated a Canadian National Historic Site. We plan a visit to the local museum for a deeper insight. The local Inuit produce ornate carvings and other crafts which make for wonderful souvenirs.

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.

Wed., Aug. 12 Torngat Mountains National Park, Saglek Fjord, Labrador

As we sail into Saglek Fjord, we arrive at the southern gateway to the Torngat Mountains National Park Reserve. The Park covers almost 10,000 square kilometres of Northern Labrador. It is bordered by Quebec on one side, and the Labrador Coast on the other. It is home to Canada’s highest mountains east of the Rockies, and features breathtaking fjords, remnant glacial systems and stunning landscapes. The Inuktitut word Torngat means “place of spirits” and the Torngat Mountains have been home to Inuit and their predecessors for over 7500 years. This place represents a deeply spiritual connection for the Inuit.

Polar bears hunt seals along the coast, and both the Torngat Mountains and George River Caribou herds cross paths as they migrate to and from their calving grounds. Inuit continue to use this area for hunting and fishing, and are present in the park throughout the year. We explore the area on foot with both various hiking options, and along the shoreline in the Zodiacs and sea kayaks. 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. Wildflowers are spectacular when in bloom and bears feast on local berries found among the sedges and grasses on the raised beaches along the shores of the fjords.



Thurs., Aug. 13 Torngat Mountains National Park, Nachvak Fjord, Labrador

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.

Fri., Aug. 14 Button Islands, Nunavut

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 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 marine birds and mammals, including a variety of whales, seals, gulls, alcids, and shearwaters.



Sat., Aug. 15 At Sea—Davis Strait Towards Greenland

We awaken to the vast expanse of the Davis Strait, which separates Canada from Greenland. Throughout the day our onboard experts offer us a series of presentations about the environment, the wildlife, and history and the locations we hope to visit in the coming days. This is an important migration corridor for birds and whales and we keep our eyes out for signs of wildlife from the outer decks. Large icebergs of all shapes drift on the currents of the Davis Strait. These icebergs calve from the large glaciers that tumble down off the Greenland icecap and out into Baffin Bay, where they drift on the currents. Be sure to visit the ship's bridge and watch the Captain and officers navigate our modern expedition ship. Enjoy the wonderful facilities onboard the ship, spend time with the photography guide, or relax with a book or your journal.

Sun., Aug. 16 Nuuk, Greenland

Nuuk is the small capital of Greenland, and home to a population of around 18,000—almost a third of the entire population of the country. Built overlooking a beautiful fjord, the city was founded in 1728 by the Danes and today many historic buildings can be seen around town. The small city is a fascinating blend of both the historic and contemporary. The National Museum of Greenland is located right by the harbor and is home to a fascinating collection of artifacts, traditional costumes and textiles, and other items including traditional boats, kayaks, and dog sleds. Cafes and restaurants showcase local cuisine and there is even an emerging craft beer scene to discover. Nuuk is easily explored on foot and there are plenty of options for you to choose from today.

Mon., Aug. 17 Sondre Stromfjord & Greenland Icecap

By morning we have navigated north and into one of the longest fjords on the planet. At the head of the fjord sits the town of Kangerlussuaq—a key outpost on the west coast of Greenland. An exciting day lies ahead as experienced guides take us to view and experience the vast expanse of the Greenland icecap. Covering roughly 80% of the surface of Greenland the ice sheet measures approximately 1.7 million square kilometers. It's the second largest ice mass on Earth after Antarctica. Our trip takes us through fabulous scenery and there's a good chance of seeing Musk ox, Reindeer, and local birdlife. Our guides take us walking on the actual icecap itself,

which is a major thrill. We return to the ship and tonight our chefs have prepared a special farewell dinner attended by the Captain of the ship. It's a wonderful time to celebrate and reflect on a memorable journey.

Tues., Aug. 18 Kangerlussuaq, Greenland

This morning we say farewell our expedition team and make our way to the airport. A special charter flight returns us to Canada's capital city of Ottawa where our journey comes to an end. A transfer is also provided from the airport to a downtown location for those staying on.

Ship Details: *RCGS Resolute*



In November 2018, a purpose built polar expedition vessel RCGS *Resolute* joined the *Akademik Ioffe* and *Akademik Sergey Vavilov* under our operator's banner to offer the most capable, safe, and exclusive expedition cruise fleet in the industry. Designed for comfort, *RCGS Resolute* is modern, well appointed, safe and ice-strengthened. From small group sessions to briefings for all passengers, we have public spaces onboard the ship ideally suited for each and every need. Two separate bar and lounge areas featuring 180 degree views and a wonderfully stocked library provides ideal places to relax or catch up on some reading. The sumptuous meals prepared for you by our culinary team are enjoyed in either of our two dining rooms, one of which features our popular bistro menu offering quick and easy meals for those prioritizing time on with modern furnishings and large picture style presentation room, gift-shop, gymnasium, pool.



Cabin Categories

One Ocean Suite | \$11,595 The One Ocean Suites are situated on Deck 6 and offer an indulgent amount of space. Sleeping quarters feature a queen size bed with upgraded linen/pillows. Included is a comfortable sectional lounge with matching club chairs, a large desk, expansive floor to ceiling cabinetry, and spacious washroom facilities with both a shower and bathtub. A flat screen entertainment system is also included. These suites provide easy access to the ship's bridge, the bistro, and outdoor observation spaces. The panoramic observation lounge and recreation facilities are located nearby on Deck 7.

Shackleton Suite | \$9,595 The Shackleton Suites are situated on Deck 6. Suites include the comfort of a sectional lounge, writing desk, substantial floor to ceiling cabinetry, and washroom facilities with shower. A flat screen entertainment system is also included. Sleeping quarters feature the option for either a queen or two single beds with upgraded linen/ pillows. These suites provide easy access to the ship's bridge, the bistro and outdoor observation spaces. The forward panoramic observation lounge and recreation facilities are also located nearby on Deck 7.

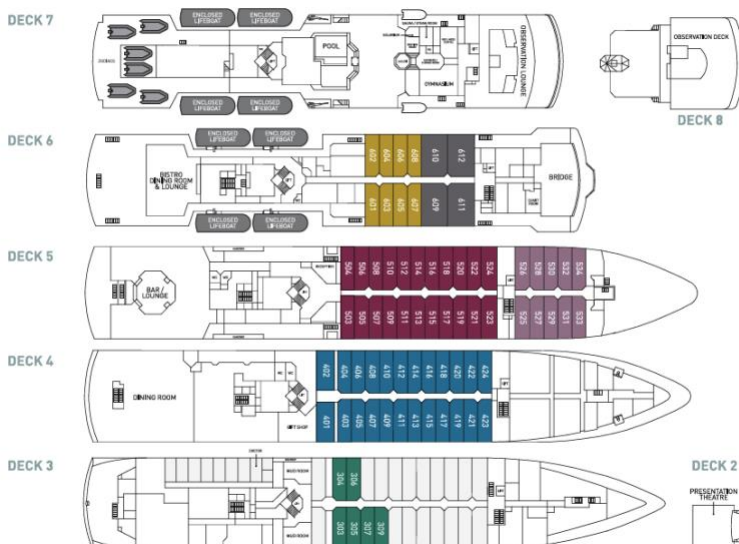
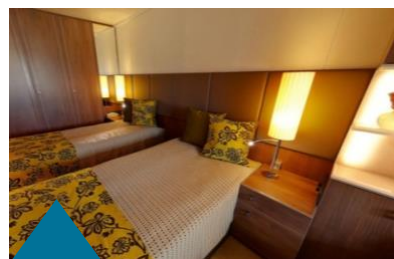
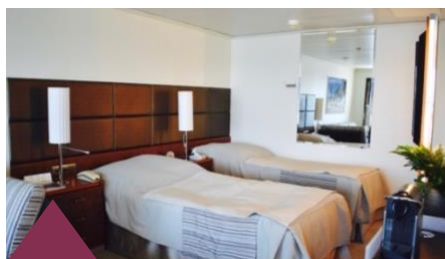
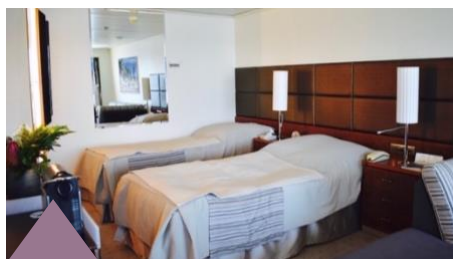
Superior Plus Cabin | \$8,395 Superior Plus cabins are located midships on Deck 5. They are spacious and well-appointed with the option for either a queen or two single beds. A comfortable lounge is placed by the large picture window, writing desk and chair, ample floor to ceiling cabinet storage, and private washroom facilities with shower. A flat screen entertainment system is also included. Centrally located on the ship, these cabins provide easy access to the aft observation lounge featuring 180 degree views and the ship's dining areas.

Superior Cabin | \$8,095 Located forward on Deck 5 the Superior cabins have the option for either a queen or two single beds. Features include a comfortable lounge adjacent to the large picture window, writing desk and chair, ample storage, and private washroom facilities with shower. A flat screen entertainment system is also included. These cabins provide easy access to the forward stairs leading up to the bridge on Deck 6 and the forward observation lounge located on Deck 7.

Twin Private Cabin | \$7,395 Spacious and well-appointed, these cabins are situated on Deck 4 and have the option for either a queen or two single configured beds. Features include a comfortable lounge adjacent to the large picture window, writing desk and chair, ample storage, and private washroom facilities with shower. A flat screen entertainment system is also included. These cabins provide easy access to the main dining room on the ship, as well as the gift shop.

Main Triple Deck | \$5,995 These cabins are a popular choice for solo travelers willing to share, a family, or a group of friends travelling together. Located on Deck 3, cabins feature three single beds, one of which can convert to a sofa and lounge during the day. These cabins feature a writing desk and chair, ample storage, and private washroom facilities. A flat screen entertainment system is also included. These cabins provide easy access to the expedition room and gangway.





Cost of the Journey

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The cost of the cruise is \$5995 - \$11,595 based on cabin type, plus \$995 charter flight. There is an option to add on a guided kayaking program with instruction, additional \$695 per person.

Tour price includes airport transfers to and from the ship, all meals on board the ship with daily afternoon tea and 24-hour tea, coffee, hot chocolate in bar/lounge plus in cabin tea and coffee making facilities, professional guide services, port fees and permits, and miscellaneous program expenses. Kayaking program available at an extra cost—must be reserved at the time of booking your voyage (there are limited spots available) and you must have some prior paddling experience.

Cost of the Journey, continued

Tour cost does not include airfare to and from Sydney, cost of the flight from Nuuk to Ottawa, visa and/or passport expenses, pre- or post-cruise hotel accommodation unless noted in the itinerary, personal expenses such as laundry, telecommunication (ie. email, satellite phone), drinks from the bar, and gratuities for luggage handling or other services, baggage, cancellation or medical travel insurance related expenses (travel insurance is mandatory on all voyages), a voluntary gratuity at the end of the voyage for expedition staff and ship crew (suggested amount: \$US12 – 15 per day).

Travel Information

We recommend you arrive in Sydney, Nova Scotia on August 6 or earlier at the J.A. Douglas McCurdy Sydney Regional Airport (YQY). The tour begins in Louisbourg. If you wish to visit Halifax and then take a short flight to Sydney, many routes go through Boston or New York. You can drive from Halifax to Sydney, too, about five hours.

We will return to Ottawa by flight on August 18, 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 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

Boat and Glacier, Dave Sanford (DS), courtesy OOE (OOE); Common Murre, Greg Smith (GS); Small Purple-fringed Orchid, GS; Red Boats, Willy Waterton (WW)/OOE; Polar Bear with cubs, Mark Robinson/(OOE); Fortress of Louisbourg, WW/OOE; Fish House Gros Morne, WW/OOE; Colorful Boats, WW/OOE; Bog Boardwalk, WW/OOE; Tablelands Waterfall, WW/OOE; Northern Gannets, Jocelyn Pride/OOE; Shorebirds, GS; Atlantic Puffins, Tony Beck (TB)/OOE; Island Landscape Hebron, Barrett and Mackay/OOE; Torngat Mountains NP, Barrett and Mackay/OOE; Stunning village landscape, Kyle Marquardt/OOE; Torngat Scenic, courtesy Labrador Tourism; Ship, DS/OOE; Polar Bear, OOE; Muskox, Stimpson Photo/OOE; Walruses, DS/OOE; Resolute, OOE; Whale Flukes, TB/OOE; Resolute Cabins, OOE.

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