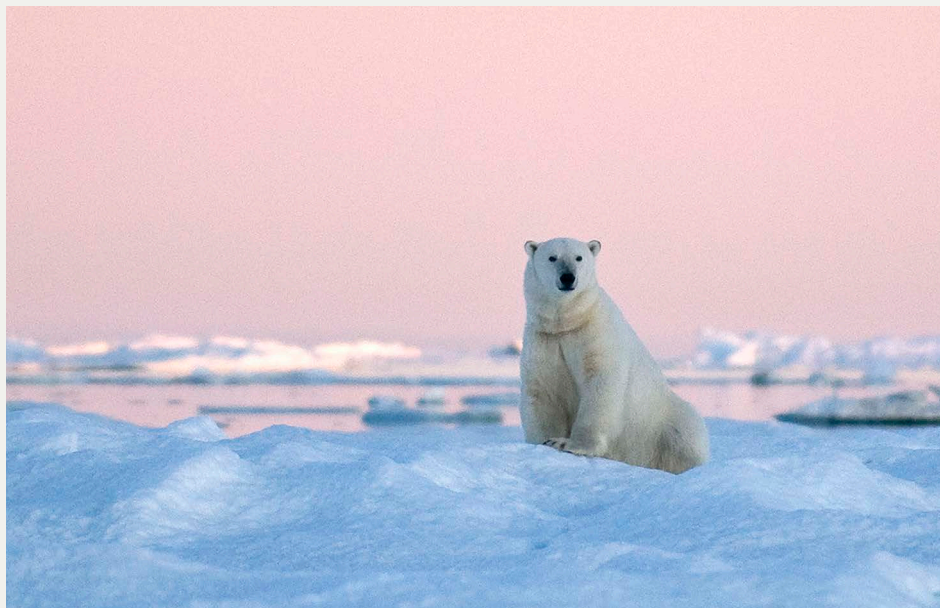


WRANGEL ISLAND



"The cliches just keep coming 'trip of a lifetime', 'ultimate Arctic expedition cruise', 'boundless possibilities', but the astonishing reality is that we have an excellent chance of seeing lots of Polar Bears. The thought sends a tingle down my spine!"
Julian Sykes

Dates Sat 23 Jul - Mon 8 Aug 2022
Price £12,750
Deposit £2,500 Single Supp £7,350
Price is for sharing a Superior Plus Twin cabin

Leader Julian Sykes
Flights Aeroflot, scheduled
Outbound: Overnight, Heathrow-Moscow
Inbound: Evening, Moscow-Heathrow
Internal flights, Utair airlines
Overnight, Moscow-Anadyr
Afternoon, Anadyr-Moscow
Weather Variable, may be mild and dry but also cool with showers (1°-15°C)
Walking Easy to moderate walking on good tracks, some of reasonable length, but none too strenuous
Meals All included from dinner on Day 1 to dinner on Day 17
Insects Biting insects should not be a problem
Accom Well appointed comfortable cabins on the ice-strengthened ship Spirit of Enderby. Holiday price is based on sharing a Superior Plus Twin cabin. Other cabin types available, please ask for details
Visa/Fees Russia Tourist Visa required, approx £100. Must be obtained before travel in person at local visa centre. Gratuities on board are extra, approx \$15pp per day
Group 7

Just some of what we hope to see:

Polar Bear	Snowy Owl
Pacific Walrus	Snow Goose
Musk Ox	Harlequin Duck
Arctic Fox	Rough-legged Buzzard
Arctic Ground Squirrel	Sandhill Crane
Northern Pika	Tufted Puffin
Bowhead Whale	Pigeon Guillemot
Humpback Whale	Sabine's Gull
Grey Whale	Ross's Gull
Beluga Whale	Snow Bunting
Fin Whale	

A unique opportunity to join an expedition that crosses the Arctic Circle, visiting the pristine Wrangel and Herald Islands, along with the wild North East Siberian coastline.

- Polar Bears! – lots of them with a good chance of cubs
- Beluga, Humpback and possibly Bowhead Whales
- Snowy Owls on their breeding grounds
- Incredible, desolate landscape at the top of the world
- Musk Ox, Reindeer, Arctic Fox, Pacific Walrus
- Fantastic island cliffs full of breeding seabirds
- The ultimate in expedition cruising!

1-3 Fly overnight London to Moscow then we have day rooms booked at an airport hotel. We then change airports and take an overnight flight to Anadyr, where we join our ship. However, before boarding we shall check the bay, where it's possible to find Beluga Whales close inshore, making a good start to the expedition.

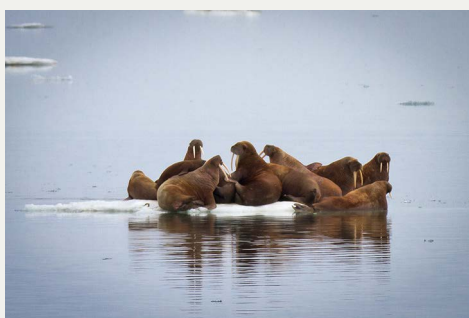
4-7 As we sail across Anadyrskiy Bay towards the Bering Strait, there will be introductory lectures and a series of compulsory briefings and drills, but we can relax and enjoy some birding and cetacean watching and settle into ship's life.

We arrive in Lavrentiya Bay the next morning and will explore the township and local museum, giving an insight into Yupik and Chukchi cultures. Sea conditions permitting, we shall land at Cape Dezhnev in the afternoon. This is the north eastern-most point of the Eurasian continent,

where it is sometimes possible to see the coast of America. It is also a historic landmark named after the Siberian Cossack, Semyon Dezhnev, who in 1648 became the first European to sail from the Arctic to the Pacific.

We head onwards to Kolyuchin Inlet, so huge it is visible from satellite photos! It contains vast numbers of waterfowl and migratory waders and we'll concentrate our visit on Belaka Spit near the mouth of the inlet. It is a wild, desolate landscape that is strangely beautiful. We'll search the dunes and tidal areas for rare species including Emperor Goose and Spoon-billed Sandpiper: Gray Whales frequent the area and are sometimes spotted feeding only metres offshore, with Bowheads and Humpbacks also possible, the latter sometimes in large groupings.

Later, we arrive at Kolyuchin Island; once an important Russian Polar Research Station, one





of a number dotted across the Arctic. Near the derelict buildings are some of the most spectacular bird cliffs in the Arctic, where Horned and Tufted Puffins, Brunnich's Guillemots and Glaucous Gulls nest. We then continue across the Chukchi Sea, with the possibility of sea ice to negotiate as we get closer to Wrangel Island. This could very well offer us our first opportunities to see Polar Bears, Larcha Seals and Pacific Walrus.

8-12 Ice and weather conditions permitting, we shall spend the next few days on Wrangel Island and will also attempt to include a visit to nearby Herald Island. There are many landings that can be made as we search out the wildlife, wild flowers and Arctic landscapes. Polar Bears will be high on our list and with a little patience we should be rewarded with several encounters, hopefully with cubs!

Musk Ox and Reindeer have been introduced to the island, though reindeer numbers remain low. Wrangel Island is a Russian Federal Nature Reserve of international significance, particularly as it is a major Polar Bear denning area. Also, each summer, thousands of birds migrate here to breed, including Snowy Owls, Snow Geese and Pomarine and Long-tailed Skuas, plus large groups of Walrus haul out on rocky inlets.

13-16 As we sail back through the Bering Strait we shall pass the Diomed Islands, sometimes called Tomorrow Island and Yesterday Isle, because they straddle the International Date Line. Here Russia and America are separated by only 2.3 nautical miles of ocean. We continue south, hugging the North

Siberian Coast. Bounded by narrow sand ridges with numerous lagoons and inlets, this area offers plenty of places to land and explore the extensive coastline. One afternoon we may visit Masik Village, an archaeological site at Mechigmen Bay which is part of Beringia National Park. This site consists of subterranean dwellings, food caches and possible ceremonial structures, where materials used in construction were whale skulls, ribs and jawbones.

Yttygran Island is home to the monumental ancient aboriginal site known as Whale Bone Alley. Whalebones stretch along the beach for nearly half a kilometre. Gray Whales are frequently seen around the island. We shall also cruise by Nuneangan and Arakamchechen Islands where seabirds nest and Walrus can be found.

On our last full day at sea, we shall be near Preobrazheniya Bay, with its outstanding 'bird cliffs' which we can cruise past by zodiac. The rock faces, ridgelines and soaring granite spires, are home to an abundance of bird life. Species that can be seen include Common and Brunnich's Guillemots, Least and Crested Auklets, Vega Gulls and Arctic Tern. Horned and Tufted Puffins are normally here in vast numbers, completing this seabird spectacle.

17 After breakfast, back in Anadyr; it will be time to say farewell to the ship and board our flight back to Moscow, transferring airports again for the final leg back to the UK.

Other cabin types are available; Superior Twin, Mini Suite and Heritage Suite. Please contact us for details if these are of interest.



Outline Itinerary

Days 1-2 Fly overnight Heathrow to Moscow SVO, use day rooms at an airport hotel then transfer to Moscow VKO airport for an overnight flight to Anadyr

Days 3-7 Arrive Anadyr, with maybe time to explore the town before we transfer to the ship. Sail across Anadyrskiy Bay towards the Bering Strait. Visit the Chukchi Region's administrative centre Lavrentiya. Possible landing at Cape Dezhnev. Spend time at Kolyuchin Inlet. View the spectacular bird cliffs of Kolyuchin Island. Sail across Chukchi Sea

Days 8-12 We spend the next few days on and around Wrangel Island, with a visit to Herald Island. Polar Bears are high on the list and there should be many viewings

Days 13-16 Visit Dragi Harbour then sail through the Bering Strait, pass the Diomed Islands, continue along the North Siberian Coast, with landings to explore the coastline. Visit Masik Village then on to Yttygran, Nuneangan and Arakamchechen Islands. Zodiac cruise past bird cliffs at Preobrazheniya Bay. Sail across Anadyrskiy Bay to Anadyr

Day 17 Disembark in Anadyr for flight to Moscow, transfer between airports for flight to the UK, arriving late evening

A Terauds: Polar Bear, Arctic Fox
Agnes Breniere: Wrangel Island
K Ovsyanikova: Walrus, Horned Puffin, Snowy Owl

