

6-DAY ADVENTURE

KAYAK AND HIKE IN SVALBARD

Svalbard

Immerse yourself in the remote isolation of the Svalbard wilderness where the silence is broken only by the call of the Arctic tern or the distant thundercracks of calving glacial ice. Spend four days and three nights at our camp in Ymerbukta, sandwiched between jagged peaks and crystal-clear waters of Isfjorden.
The rich variety of arctic flora and fauna forms a decorative blanket across the otherwise barren tundra whilst in the ocean, floating chunks of ice create a daily puzzle as you explore the depths of the bay and the glacier that stands guard over it. Either by boat or on foot this strange and fascinating world delights, as day melts seamlessly into the glow of the midnight sun and you take turns to sit on bear watch.
No previous experience of camping is required but you do need to have a good level of fitness and mental stamina.

TRIP HIGHLIGHTS

- Spend three nights camping under the midnight sun in the Svalbard wilderness
- Spot arctic wildlife from your sea kayak
- Scale the mighty Esmark Glacier like a true arctic explorer
- Explore the stunning Ymerbukta coastline


Boat
Kayak
Hike
KANDOO
ADVENTURES
Esmark
Glacier
Ymerbukta
Longyearbyen

ITINERARY

DAY 1

ARRIVAL IN LONGYEARBYEN

Welcome to Longyearbyen! After collecting your luggage, make your way to the airport where you will see the airport shuttle waiting. The bus will stop right outside the guesthouse. After checking-in, you will have the rest of your day to explore the town and find somewhere to sample some local cuisine. This evening, you will meet your guide and the rest of the group.

Accommodation: **Guesthouse**

DAY 2

KAYAKING IN YMERBUKTA

We will be leaving our accommodation at 7.30am so, after an early breakfast, we will meet with our guide for a briefing and equipment check before we head off to the harbour. The boat trip across Isfjorden takes around 1.5 hours. Wrap up warm and stand on deck to get the full experience! Everything calms as we slow down to land on the silent coastline of Ymerbukta.
Now that we've arrived, we can have something to eat and familiarise ourselves with the camp. This evening, we will don our drysuits and take to the water again – this time under paddle power. Your guide will teach you everything you need to know and, in no time at all, you will be using your kayaking skills to explore the rugged coastline. At the end of the afternoon, we return to camp and prepare dinner. Your guide will talk through the plan for the days ahead and, this evening, you will take your first shift on polar bear watch.

Transport: **Local boat (1 - 2 hours)**
Accommodation: **Camping**
Meals included:
Breakfast / Lunch / Dinner

DAY 3

ESMARK GLACIER HIKE

The next morning, as we enjoy a filling breakfast and plenty of fresh coffee, we make our preparations to hike the mighty Esmark Glacier. The hike will involve using crampons and harnesses to allow us to trek on the smooth, shiny surface of the glacier. As you climb higher, the landscape begins to reveal itself in front of you and your eyes. Today, we will take our lunch break on the glacier, above the bay and our camp before making our way back to camp for another homecooked dinner, discussion about what we will do tomorrow and drawing up tonight's polar bear watch rota.

Accommodation: **Camping**
Meals included:
Breakfast / Lunch / Dinner

DAY 4

KAYAK OR HIKE (YOUR CHOICE)

There is no set itinerary for today – it is up to the group to decide how they spend this last full day in the Arctic wilderness. One possibility is a longer hike such as the Värmlandsryggen ridge (550m). From here you have breathtaking views over our camp and of the bay. Alternatively, the group can take to the water again and explore the turquoise blue glacial waters further in the kayaks. Whichever option we choose, spending another morning emersed in this magical environment is one you will never forget.

Accommodation: **Camping**

Meals included:
Breakfast / Lunch / Dinner

DAY 5

RETURN TO LONGYEARBYEN

We take our time this morning as we pack everything away and say our final goodbyes to the camp at Ymerbukta. As we board the boat and head back over the icy waters of Isfjorden, filled with memories that will stay with us for a lifetime. We reach Longyearbyen at around lunchtime and have time this afternoon to explore the town. Lunch and dinner are not included tonight but your guide will be able to make recommendations.

Transport: **Local boat (1 - 2 hours)**

Accommodation: **Guesthouse**

Meals included: **Breakfast**

DAY 6

DEPARTURE

Depending on your flight time, have the morning to relax and explore Longyearbyen and its 'edge of the world' atmosphere. Visit Svalbard museum or choose from a variety of optional activities such as summer dog-sledding (additional charges apply). The airport shuttle bus stops just outside the guesthouse and will take you the short journey to the airport for your departure flight.

PLEASE NOTE

It is in the nature of a trip of this kind that arrangements and participants have to be flexible. While we use all reasonable endeavours to ensure a trip runs according to your itinerary, the day-to-day agenda and ultimate goal of the trip are taken as aims and not as contractual obligations. It is a necessary condition of your joining any of our trips that you accept this flexibility. Occasionally, we may have to make changes and we reserve the right to do so at any time.

TRIP INFORMATION

DIFFICULTY

Having a set base in Ymerbukta, this trip offers plenty of scope for flexibility when it comes to distances travelled per day. However, although the kayaking and hiking is not highly demanding, we have rated this trip as level 4 due to the non-stop nature of any adventure in Svalbard.

In good weather adventuring around the glacier can feel easy but if you encounter strong winds, rain or freezing conditions, it could feel very difficult indeed. As well as kayaking and hiking you will also be assisting with cooking, loading and unloading kayaks, fetching water and taking turns on "bear watch". There are no porters, cooks or waiters on this trip, you are part of the team and must do your share of the work. Although this makes the adventure more demanding, it also adds to the enormous sense of satisfaction and achievement at the end of your journey.

We are camping in the wilderness where there is the possibility of polar bears roaming near the camp. A member of the team must be on "bear watch" at all times day and night and this is normally done in rotating 2 hour shifts. As it never goes dark in Svalbard in the summer months, some people may find it difficult to sleep.

If you have any questions about your suitability for this trip or would like more specific information about what to expect, please do not hesitate to contact us.

FOOD & DRINK

Staying well-fed on your trip is absolutely vital to keep up energy levels, so that you can enjoy your activities. This adventure in Svalbard is full board whilst you are camping. Your guesthouse in Longyearbyen is booked on a Bed and Breakfast basis. We are proud of the fresh and frankly delicious food we provide despite being in such a remote location. Because everything we need for this adventure must be brought over on our initial boat journey, we are limited on what we can carry and must choose our ingredients carefully. Fresh produce is used nearer the start of the trip with the more basic foodstuffs such as pasta and rice used towards the end. The guesthouse in Longyearbyen is used to having visitors from all over the world and caters well for vegetarians and intolerances. Please inform us of any dietary requirements when you book so that we can plan appropriate meals for whilst you are camping.

Your help in the kitchen is expected and much appreciated, particularly in the evenings with food prep and washing up. We like the whole group to work as a team to cook dinner, it creates a pleasant atmosphere as we reflect on the days
adventures together.

Each day begins with a hearty breakfast. There will be oatmeal, bread and a choice of spread such as chocolate spread, jam and honey and, of course plenty of tea and coffee.

Lunches typically include freeze-dried meals such as 'Real Turmat' which provide a quick, warm and nutritious meal as they just need boiling water and a few minutes before they are ready to eat! These are also perfect for an expedition trip like this where space is at a premium. If you would like to bring along some snacks for in-between meals there is space to do so, however these must stay in the group food bag and not in your personal belongings.

In the evenings, you can expect dishes of quinoa, lentils, salmon fillets, tofu and reindeer. Some evening meals will be vegetarian and we will carry as much fresh veg as possible. There will also be deserts of fruit yogurt, cake or chocolate. If it has been a challenging day and we are later back for dinner, we may also have some of the freeze-dried meals in the evening.

You will have access to safe drinking water direct from the glacier at your basecamp. All water collected will be boiled and then cooled so you can use this to fill your reusable bottles.

Alcohol and cigarettes are heavily taxed and expensive in Scandinavia. If you plan on bringing either of these into Svalbard, they must be left in the storage in Longyearbyen as they are not permitted on the expedition.

ACCOMMODATION

Your full day-by-day itinerary shows what is included in terms of hotel accommodation and meal basis.

LONGYEARBYEN: Our pre and post trip accommodation is based in Longyearbyen and will be in a cosy local guesthouse where you will stay in twin rooms with shared bathrooms. If you have a dietary requirement then please let us know when you book so that we can let the hotel know. The hotel is located within 30 minutes' walk to the main town and restaurants.

CAMPING: We provide comfortable teepee-style tents for 2 people, fully equipped with camp beds and foam sleeping mats. We also provide sleeping bags suitable for the Arctic conditions. For our expeditions we use light equipment which is appropriate for Svalbard's winter conditions. We will also provide a spacious mess tent for meal-times, fully equipped with a paraffin heater and kitchen equipment. Please be aware that our adventures in Svalbard involve full participation. You are joining an arctic expedition and will need to do your share of the work, this will include pitching tents, fetching water and preparing meals. There are no porters or chefs up here in the frozen north, this is adventure in its purest form.

At all times while camping in Svalbard, there is the possibility of polar bears roaming near the camp. "Bear watch" is shared amongst everyone in the group in 2 hour shifts. Your guide will provide instruction on what to do if you see a bear and how to use any equipment provided.

TOILETS: In Longyearbyen your accommodation will have flushing toilets. Whilst camping, a designated toilet tent will be setup within the camp. We provide toilet paper and a lighter to burn it after use.

YOUR GUIDE

All of our qualified guides are highly experienced locals who have have been working in this environment for many years.

Once you are on your trip, you should speak to your lead guide about any problem, whether it relates to food, equipment or health. We would much prefer you to sort out any problems with them on the spot, rather than allow them to spoil your trip. Your guide is in contact with the office if further assistance is required.

If the lead guide is the source of your concern, you will have the opportunity to speak to one of the office representatives when you return to the guesthouse.

TRANSPORT

We insist on using a high standard of vehicle and driver for all of our transfers. In Europe, it is a legal requirement to have seatbelts fitted in the back of vehicles. If you are unhappy about any aspect of the vehicle or the standard of driving, please speak to the driver or our local office immediately.

This trip involves transfers by boat between Longyearbyen and Ymerbukta. These transfers are provided by a local company and all safety equipment is provided.

LUGGAGE

You may bring a hold bag (up to 15kg) as well as a cabin bag. For your hold luggage please bring a soft bag like a rucksack, duffel bag or gym bag. **Do not bring a wheeled suitcase** as you will need to carry this across rugged terrain between the boat and the camp (approx. distance of 200m). Your main luggage will remain in your tent at the main camp whilst on the trip. Please bring a small rucksack to use as a day bag. You can bring this as hand luggage on the plane. You will carry your lunch, water, spare layers and any personal medication with you each day.

We would recommend packing your clothes and personal belongings in drybags inside your larger luggage.

HOW DO I GET THERE?

To reach Longyearbyen, there are direct flights from Oslo (3 hr journey). Some flights are direct and others will land in Tromso on Norway's west coast and you will be asked to disembark to go through the Svalbard immigration before re-embarking on the plane once more and continuing your journey. This means that you will be flying at a low altitude when passing over the jaw dropping Lofoten islands. If you wish to get a birds eye view of these out of the plane window then make sure to be seated on the left hand side of the plane for both the outgoing and return flight. Direct flights do not operate every day of the week so you may also need to spend a night in Oslo before continuing your journey the next day.

To reach Oslo from the UK, there are direct flights with British Airways from Heathrow and Norwegian Airlines have direct flights from Gatwick and Edinburgh. SAS have direct flights from Manchester.

If you are travelling from the US, SAS operate direct flights to Oslo from New York. From the west coast there are good flight options with Air France, KLM and Lufthansa.

If you are changing airlines or re-checking your luggage at an airport on route, please ensure you leave a minimum of 3 hours between flights. This will account for any delays on arrival, travel time across airports (this can take longer than you think) and time taken to re-check baggage.

ON ARRIVAL

Once you have landed and collected your luggage, Make your way to the exit where you will find the airport shuttle bus waiting. The shuttle buses are scheduled to match flight arrivals and leave the airport either 30-40 minutes after the flight has landed or when the luggage bet is empty. The transfer costs 125NOK and payment is made by card once you are on board. The shuttle will stop right outside your guesthouse accommodation. Check your itinerary for the address. You can find more information on:
https://svalbardbuss.no/en/airport-shuttle/

PRE-TREK BRIEFING

It is a requirement of joining any of our trips that you attend a briefing before the trip begins. This gives our guide the opportunity to review the plans for the trip with you, make sure you have all the right gear and answer any questions you may have. This will take place in the morning of day 2. Your guide will meet you at the guesthouse.

BUDGET & CHANGE

The currency in Svalbard is the Norwegian Krone (NOK).

Please be aware that Svalbard is nearly cash free due to the absence of banks. Payments are made with credit or debit cards so it is important you take a card with you for any incidental purchases. Please inform your card provider that you intend to travel to Svalbard (Norway) before departure, this will ensure that your card continues to work properly while overseas. A lunch in Longyearbyen will cost you roughly £20 (265 NOK) and dinner will be £30 (350 NOK). Therefore, our recommended guidance for spending budget in the Svalbard would be roughly £100-150 (1300-2000 NOK) on top of any tips, to give you ample souvenir spending money.

TIPS

Tipping customs vary all over the world and can be very confusing when travelling to a new country. Tipping in Svalbard is always appreciated, however it is not obligatory and should be left to the discretion of each individual. If you are satisfied with your guide's services we recommend a tip between 350-450 NOK per person. As Svalbard is almost cashless, PayPal is the preferred method of tipping.

FORMALITIES & HEALTH

PASSPORT

Most travellers require a passport that is valid for at least six months after the return date. It is your responsibility to confirm your specific passport requirements and please be aware that proof of onwards travel may be required. You can check your requirements on the website provided by the Norwegian government

VISA

Travelling to Norway is visa free for up to 90 days, for UK and US citizens. Please be aware that the new EES (Entry Exit System) is now active for all Non-EU nationals. This means your biometric data (photo and fingerprints) will be taken at the border on arrival. Those travelling from the UK may have have their biometric data taken at the time or boarding, rather than on arrival in the EU.

VACCINATIONS

No vaccinations are required.

INSURANCE

It is your responsibility to ensure that you are fully and adequately insured for the duration of your trip. Please ensure that all activities, excursions and destinations in your itinerary are included in your travel insurance policy, in addition to your regular cover for cancellation and medical expenses.

We ask that you keep a copy of your policy summary (containing policy number and the emergency contact number for your insurer) in your day sack at all times, so that we can access this information should we need to contact the insurer on your behalf.

OTHER INFORMATION

Departure transfers are not included with this trip but are easy to organise yourself. The airport shuttle bus makes regular stops just outside your guesthouse that correlate to all outbound flights. The friendly staff at your guesthouse will help you plan your departure transfer. Simply let them know the flight you are taking and they will tell you the time of your transfer. The transfer costs 125NOK and payment is made by card once you are on board.

If you prefer, we can book taxis for your transfers for an additional cost. Please let us know at the time of booking.

EQUIPMENT & CLOTHING

EQUIPMENT SUPPLIED BY KANDOO ADVENTURES

We will provide you with all of the technical equipment you will need for this amazing adventure. Our tandem sea kayaks were chosen for their stability and comfortable seating, they are suitable for first-time kayakers. In the unlikely event of capsize, they are surprisingly easy to right; even at sea you would be back on board and paddling in no time. Your guide will give full briefings for kayaking and use of crampons and ice axes. We provide the following equipment:

GROUP EQUIPMENT

- Teepee-style mess tent with paraffin heater
- Emergency beacon
- Satellite phone
- Equipment for polar bear protection (rifle, flare gun, ammunition)
- First aid kit
- Aluminium thermos flasks
- GPS

INDIVIDUAL EQUPMENT

- Tandem kayak, drysuit, paddle, personal floatation device, kayak shoes
- Teepee-style tent with 2 flatbeds and sleeping mats
- Suitable sleeping bag
- Drybag to use whilst kayaking
- Crampons, axes, harness and helmet for glacier hike

CLOTHING TO BRING

HEADGEAR

- Warm beanie-style hat - knitted or fleece
- Neck gaiter or scarf - useful for keeping the sun off your neck and staying warm
- Sunhat / peaked cap
- Sunglasses - high UV protection
- Buff

UPPER BODY

- Thermal base layer x 3 (preferably merino - one to sleep in)
- Fleece or jumper)warm midlayer)
- Insulated jacket (down or primaloft)
- Water and windproof hardshell outer jacket (Gore-tex or similar)
- Liner gloves (lightweight)
- Gloves - warm fleece pr wool gloves or mittens

LEGS

- Breathable, fast-drying underwear
- Thermal base layer x 3 (preferable merino - one to sleep in)
- Trekking trousers
- Wind and waterproof hardshell over-trousers (Gore-tex or similar)

FEET

- Hiking boots with ankle support and stiff sole
- Gaiters (recommended for glacier hike)
- Warm, thick socks x 3 (preferable wool)
- Trainers / light shoes to wear at camp

EQUIPMENT TO BRING

- Water bottle, preferably wide mouthed and able to carry at least 1 litre of water
- Mini toiletry kit including wet wipes
- Small quick-dry towel
- Camera and spare batteries
- Personal medication
- Suncream (high factor)
- Small daysack (30-40 litres)
- Drybag / plastic bag to line drybag
- Swimwear (if you want to take a dip in the Arctic waters)
- Plastic bags for wet / dirty clothing
- Sleeping bag liner
- Sleeping mask

GEAR RENTAL

There are no rental shops in Longyearbyen but it is possible to purchase items if you have not brought them with you. Please be aware that buying clothing or equipment in Svalbard will be expensive. Please ask us if you have any questions about the clothing and equipment required for this trip.

HOW TO BOOK THIS TRIP

1 CHOOSE YOUR DATE AND CHECK AVAILABILITY

A full list of available dates can be found on our website.

2 CONTACT US

Contact us by phone, email or through our website. We will answer any questions you may have and send you a personalized itinerary and quote.

3 COMPLETE BOOKING AND PAYMENT

When you are ready to book, we will send you a link to our online booking forms and participation agreements. We accept all major credit and debit cards and require a low 20% deposit to secure your place.