



NORTH POLE SKI THE LAST DEGREE HIGHLY SUPPORTED

2024 EXPEDITION NOTES





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2024 EXPEDITION DETAILS

Dates: April 3–17, 2024*

**Dates to be confirmed*

Duration: 15 days

Departure: ex Longyearbyen, Norway

Price: Available on application

▲ Ensure the best chance of success on our Highly Supported option. Photo: Leifur Orn Svararsson

For those wishing to Ski the Last Degree to the North Pole in a shorter timeframe and with a higher level of support, Adventure Consultants offers exclusive ski expeditions to this iconic destination. To make the trip as safe and comfortable as possible, we only take two participants on each trip and a maximum of four each year.

ABOUT THE LAST DEGREE

A degree of latitude is 110km/60 nautical miles and on our journey, we traverse the final degree of latitude over the polar ice to arrive at the North Pole.

The trip begins in Longyearbyen in Norway where we initially partake in a 2-day polar training programme. From here, we fly by fixed-wing aircraft to an ice runway which serves as our starting point for the journey ahead.

We take between 6–9 days to reach the Pole, depending on the amount of ice drifting and open water that we encounter. Each day we ski with our laden sleds for 5–7 hours—the walking is strenuous and the terrain demanding, so you need to be in good physical and mental shape. A camp is established each night where the focus is on having a hearty meal and a good sleep in preparation for the days ahead.

At the culmination of our days of hard effort, we arrive at the North Pole, top of the earth and it's time to celebrate! When we're satisfied with our festivities, we get picked up by helicopter and return back to Longyearbyen.

GETTING STARTED

We meet in the town of Longyearbyen on the island of Spitsbergen in the far north of Norway. After introductions, we prepare for the journey by running a 2-day Polar Training Program to get the group skilled in all of the techniques that we will use on the expedition. On completion of this phase, the group is well equipped to take on the challenge. We finalise packing and fly by fixed-wing aircraft towards the North Pole.

The flight takes us to Barneo Camp, a major tent camp that is established each season on the ice to support aircraft activities. This becomes the staging point for the expedition and our departure point as weather and logistics allow.



▲ Camping on the polar icecap. Photo: Leifur Orn Svavarsson

DAILY ROUTINE ON THE EXPEDITION

Each team member will be towing a sled loaded with their personal gear and a share of the expedition equipment. We will begin slowly on the expedition to bring everyone up to an optimum pace for the remainder of the journey. There will be no rushing, as it is vital that we avoid injury and burnout, and that we have the stamina to finish the expedition.

Each day we will awake around 7.30am for breakfast and hydration before we begin to break camp and pack our belongings. We travel for around 5–7 hours with a break every hour for food and drink. Everybody travels together and the pace will be slow, steady and unhurried. The objective is to maintain an optimum body temperature; too cold and we burn too much energy, too hot and we sweat, promoting hypothermia when we stop.

At the day's end, we will have travelled 10–15km/6–10mi. On arrival at a camp site, the group will set up tents and it is important to manage our body temperature well, especially hands, as we will have stopped pulling the sleds and will have cooled down quickly. Once inside our tent, we will be sheltered from the wind. Expedition members will share a tent with the guide, who will manage the stove and cook meals.

PREREQUISITE EXPERIENCE

To partake in the Ski the Last Degree Expedition, you need to be physically fit, have strong mental stamina and be capable of strenuous exercise in an extreme environment for several days duration. You don't necessarily need to be an experienced skier as there is little technical requirement, however, the days will be physical and you must train well before joining to ensure you have an enjoyable trip. Expedition members can expect to be exerting themselves for about five to seven hours per day with another hour establishing camp.

YOUR RESPONSIBILITY AS A TEAM MEMBER

Your guides will train you in the techniques required to enjoy the adventure. They are there to guide you and to educate you in the requisite skills. It is however up to you to absorb that training and to follow their leadership and instructions. Failing to do so will likely lead to serious consequences.

Your survival and well-being require you to manage yourself responsibly and to be extremely vigilant in your personal self-care. It is up to you to regulate factors such as your food and hydration levels to ensure you have sufficient energy to complete the journey. There will be sufficient food and fluids available for you to ingest, but you must discipline yourself to eat and drink. Insufficient intake can lead to a deteriorating condition.



▲ A team celebrates at the North Pole. Photo: Leifur Orn Svararsson

You must take extra care when exposed to the elements to not remove gloves and other protective layers at the wrong time, as this may lead to frostbite. Your feet will also require diligent attention to ensure you do not get blisters. You will have to pay particular care to not allow a single blister to occur, as they will likely get worse rather than better as the trip progresses. A seemingly small oversight by you in looking after yourself can lead to you failing to complete the trip or suffering personal damage. These considerations consume us as we travel and our responsibility to the group is to ensure we stay in good shape to continue on towards the objective.

You also have social responsibilities to the other team members. There may be stresses on the journey that you are not familiar with and it is important that you join the expedition on the understanding that you will contribute to the emotional and physical well-being of the other team members. Conviviality and respect for others are tantamount to a successful expedition outcome.

TEAM SIZE

The highly supported team will have 2 members and 1 guide.

ADVANTAGES OF JOINING ADVENTURE CONSULTANTS ON AN EXPEDITION

Adventure Consultants is renowned for the quality of its service and strategy applied to high altitude expedition climbing and polar travel. Our reputation is attributed to meticulous planning and experienced logistics coordination. We have a philosophy of investing in every expedition to offer our climbers the best possible chance of success.

We employ strong and specialised Expedition Leaders and support staff, who are some of the most pre-eminent in the industry. We pride ourselves on operating with small teams, the best back-up and support available. This includes nutritious and ample quantities of food, comfortable base camp facilities, reliable communications systems and the necessary medical back up.

Many of our expedition members come to us because they have seen us in action on a previous trip and decide to opt for our level of service and proven experience. Others return because they know we do our very best to make expeditions safe and successful.

MEETING POINT

The expedition members will meet in Longyearbyen, Svalbard, Norway. SAS (Scandinavian Airlines) is the only airline operating regular flights into Longyearbyen with connections via Oslo in Norway.

ITINERARY

Dates: April 3–17, 2024 *Dates to be confirmed

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| Day 1 | Meet in Longyearbyen, Norway |
| Days 2–3 | Polar training |
| Day 4 | Fly to polar icecap |
| Days 5–12 | Ski towards the North Pole |
| Day 13 | Arrive at the North Pole! |
| Day 14 | Helicopter pick up at the North Pole, return to Longyearbyen |
| Day 15 | Trip ends, depart for home |

NOTE: Flights to and from the Arctic are subject to weather. Delays can and often do occur therefore it is important to allow some flexibility with airline travel arrangements at the end of the expedition.

Every effort will be made to ensure the expedition itinerary is adhered to but the Arctic is one of the most remote and isolated regions on earth. The above program is subject to change as we may be affected by weather conditions, aircraft serviceability and other factors out of the hands of Adventure Consultants, its staff or its contractors. Acceptance onto the expedition is based on your acceptance of those conditions. Having stated that, our expeditioning track record is unparalleled but it is a sign of our respect for the Arctic’s environmental omnipotence that we alert you to these possibilities.

DETAILED ITINERARY

Day 1

Arrive in Longyearbyen, transfer to the hotel. You’ll have time to time to unpack and relax before our official welcome reception and dinner.

Day 2

In the morning, the expedition leader will conduct a full briefing and gear check and answer any questions about the upcoming programme. After lunch we will begin our polar training course, learning the basics of Arctic travel.



▲Loaded and ready for take off! Photo: Leifur Orn Svavarsson



▲Celebratory photo taking at the North Pole! Photo: Alexander Pancoe



▲The icecap stretching far into the distance. Photo: Leifur Orn Svavarsson

Day 3

A full day of polar training covering sled hauling, camp management and thermal regulation, focussing on dressing according to the conditions to stay warm, but not sweating as we walk. We return to the hotel for a third night to prepare our equipment for the expedition.

Day 4

We fly firstly to the blue ice runway and then transfer by helicopter to the 89th degree, the starting point for our North Pole journey.

Days 5–12

Ski to the North Pole. The surface ranges from large, old flat and snow covered ice sheets to newly broken surfaces. Pressure ridges form when large ice sheets press together and pile on top of each other. In some places, we may find sections of open water, or recently frozen sea ice that force us to take a detour in order to find a safe way to continue. As much as possible we try to walk with the natural drift of the sea ice, although this changes with the wind as we get closer to the Pole.

On the first day, we walk for about 5 hours, gradually increasing this to 7 hours over the coming days. Temperatures are typically $-30^{\circ}\text{C}/-22^{\circ}\text{F}$, so we put the skills learnt during our training into practice. After setting up camp, we settle into our tents and enjoy a hot drink and a three-course meal cooked by your guide.

Day 13

Arrive at the geographic North Pole! Enjoy a polar celebration, call home and share the moment with friends or family and of course take plenty of photos! We enjoy our final night at camp on the ice close to the North Pole.

Day 14

We fly by helicopter back to the Barneo base before taking the charter flight back to Longyearbyen for a well-deserved hot shower and celebratory meal.

Day 15

Breakfast at the hotel. Transfer to the airport before our flights home!

EQUIPMENT LIST

A full clothing and equipment checklist will be sent to all expedition members once their booking is confirmed. The expedition leader will be available prior to the trip to discuss individual equipment questions.



▲ Looking out across the sea ice. Photo: Icelandic Mountain Guides



▲ A team loads their gear into the waiting helicopter. Photo: Leifur Orn Svararsson



▲ Amazing features. Photo: Adventure Consultants



▲ Frozen faces!. Photo: Leifur Orn Svararsson



HOTELS

We stay in a small and modest hotel in Longyearbyen. If you would prefer a greater degree of comfort we can arrange this for you—please advise us at the time of booking. Meals and hotel expenses in Longyearbyen are not included in the trip cost.

VISA REQUIREMENTS

Citizens of the European Union and countries with whom Norway have signed a visa waiver agreement do not require a visa for stays of fewer than 90 days. Please check with the Norwegian authorities or your travel agent.

MEDICAL EXAMINATION

You will be provided with pre-trip medical advice and a medical questionnaire. You will be asked to visit a physician for a full medical examination. This information will be sighted only by the Expedition Leader and our medical adviser and treated with full confidentiality.

DOCUMENTATION & PHOTOGRAPHS

Expedition members must provide 2 passport photographs, a copy of their outdoor résumé and a completed medical questionnaire. You must also provide proof of rescue insurance to the value of US\$300,000.

THE EXPEDITION FEE

The cost of the expedition ex Longyearbyen, Norway is available on application.

This is an inclusive cost and covers the following:

- Flights to and from Barneo Camp in the Arctic
- Flights from the North Pole back to Barneo
- All group equipment including sleds, tents, etc.
- All food while on the ice
- Adventure Consultants Polar Guide(s)
- Access to our satellite telephone for outgoing calls
- Regular written and photo internet dispatches for families and friends to watch your progress
- Transport of 23kg/51lbs of personal equipment

The expedition fee **does not** include the following:

- Air travel to and from Longyearbyen, Norway
- Hotel accommodation and meals in Longyearbyen
- Norwegian visa and airport fees
- Personal insurance—full travel, medical and rescue insurance to the value of US\$300,000 is required, as well as personal trip cancellation insurance
- Personal clothing and equipment
- Excess baggage transportation charges exceeding the personal equipment weight limit
- Cost of satellite telephone calls
- Personal expenses incurred on the expedition
- Gratuity

PAYMENT DETAILS

All payments should be made by bank transfer to the following Euro bank account:

Bank of New Zealand
Offshore Branch
1 Willis Street
Wellington
New Zealand

For the account of Adventure Consultants Limited

Account Number: 1000-594771-0002

Account Type: Euros

Swift Address: BKNZ22

NOTE: Bank transfer charges are for the remitter's account.

We also accept payment by credit card (Visa, Mastercard or Amex), plus a 3% credit card fee.

DEPOSIT

A non-refundable deposit of €5,000 is payable to secure a place on the expedition.

BALANCE

The balance is payable 150 days prior to the commencement of the trip.

CANCELLATION & REFUND POLICY

An expedition member may cancel their participation on the following basis:

- Cancellations outside of 150 days will result in the loss of the trip deposit.
- For cancellations made within 150 days of the trip commencement date we reserve the right to retain 50% of the balance payment fee.
- For cancellations within 90 days of the departure date a cancellation fee of 100% of the full fee applies.

We strongly recommend you take out trip cancellation insurance via your travel agent if you wish to be covered against cancellation due to medical or personal reasons.

HOW TO JOIN THIS EXPEDITION

If you would like to join one of our North Pole Ski the Last Degree Highly Supported Expeditions, please feel free to book online booking at <https://www.adventureconsultants.com/expeditions/arctic/north-pole-ski-the-last-degree/book-now> and return your completed booking form to us with a deposit along with your climbing and polar travel résumé.

CONTACT US

If you require more information please contact us at:

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▲ Fine tune your sled hauling technique during our polar training days. Photo: Alexander Pancoe



▲ Navigating through broken sea ice. Photo: Leifur Orn Svavarsson



Adventure Consultants is affiliated to the New Zealand Mountain Guides Association (NZMGA), New Zealand Alpine Club (NZAC) and a corporate member of the American Alpine Club (AAC). Adventure Consultants is a supporter of the dZi Foundation in Nepal for their 'Revitalise a Village' programmes.

Adventure Consultants perform to IFMGA/UIAGM standards and are world leaders in high altitude guiding.

