



Cruise Details

Name:	Expedition Circumnavigation Of Spitsbergen - Myths, Magic, Midnight Sun
Reference:	HAPAGINS2412
Operator:	Hapag-Lloyd Cruises
Cruise Type:	Ocean
Cruise Rating:	Expedition
Ship:	Hanseatic Inspiration
Regions:	Arctic
Departs On:	15 Jun 24
Departs From:	Longyearbyen
Arrives On:	25 Jun 24
Arrives At:	Tromsø
Cruise Nights:	10
Total Vacation Days:	11

Itinerary

Day 1: Longyearbyen (Svalbard and Jan Mayen)

Arrives On: 15 Jun 24

Departs On: 15 Jun 24

Day 2: Spitsbergen (Svalbard and Jan Mayen)

Make a once-in-a-lifetime trip to Spitsbergen. Kindle the myths with your own adventures. Go where few people have been before. Discover a world of fascinating other-worldliness that is still in the spotlight of geopolitics and climate policy. The archipelago of around 400 islands – of which Spitsbergen is the largest – is officially called Svalbard, which means “cold coast”. In this nautically challenging expedition territory, the HANSEATIC inspiration can take full advantage of its small and manoeuvrable design with the highest ice class for passenger ships. The route will be determined by nature and the flexible itinerary will be decided by the weather and ice. Whereas the west coast is navigable almost all year round, the waters in the north are covered with solid sea ice into June

some years. If the conditions allow, the HANSEATIC inspiration will forge a path through the fields of drifting ice in the Hinlopen Strait and attempt the circumnavigation. Alternatively, your ship will sail to the ice edge and then explore the west of the archipelago in greater depth. Shaped by mighty glaciers, deep fjords and unspoilt wilderness, the icy habitat of polar bears, Arctic foxes, whales and walrus will awaken true feelings of discovery. No two days are the same here. The captain and crew will constantly adapt the route and decide where the Zodiacs will land next. The unpredictable nature and spontaneous reactions create a feeling of pure expedition. Follow in the footsteps of Willem Barents, for instance, who discovered the island group around 400 years ago. The past and present are particularly closely intertwined in Ny-Alesund. In 1926, this was the starting point for the airship Norge, in which the polar explorer Roald Amundsen and airship designer Umberto Nobile became the first people to reach the North Pole. From the 1960s, the world's northernmost settlement was transformed from a former mining town into an international centre of science with several research stations. Find out the fascinating importance of this place for climate research and weather forecasting on a walking tour with your experts – perhaps you'll also spot Arctic terns putting on a sensational aerial display. The archipelago's more than 2,000 glaciers make fascinating research subjects. The spectacular 14th July Glacier is one such specimen. Its gleaming blue edge showcases its untameable natural power as huge chunks of ice break away from it and fall into the sea, thunderously interrupting the silence of the Arctic. Arctic flowers bloom on the nearby slopes, while kittiwakes and thick-billed murres nest on the cliff. The Smeerenburgfjord is equally impressive. Cruising into the fjord, the HANSEATIC inspiration will open up fantastic glacier panoramas. Mountain peaks frame the Liefdefjord as the majestic, shimmering blue Monacobreen rises at its end. This is a birthplace of icebergs, which begin their journey through the Arctic Ocean from here. Immerse yourself in the awesome experience as you approach the glacier's edge, which towers up to 40 m (131 ft) in places, and enjoy the best views from the inspiration Walk. There is a good chance of spotting polar bears from the deck at a respectful distance throughout your Spitsbergen expedition. Protected fjords and ice floes off the islands are the preferred habitats and hunting grounds for *Ursus maritimus*. When a shout goes up of "Polar bear spotted!", the experienced crew will step in and bring the ship about so that you can enjoy this unforgettable sight. If the conditions allow it, you'll venture forth into the waters of north-east Spitsbergen, where a sense of pure expedition prevails. At only around 1,000 km (621 mi.) from the North Pole, every extra kilometre may be increasingly difficult to negotiate. Will the ice grant a passage through the eye of the needle in the Hinlopen Strait? Pack ice often builds up here, making this a challenging route. The ability to complete a circumnavigation depends on this passage. Will the adventure be successful? If the HANSEATIC inspiration can forge its way safely through the area with its steel-reinforced hull, more days of adventure await on the east coast of Spitsbergen. The captain and officers will constantly look for impressive scenes such as the cliffs of Alkefjellet: the "bird mountain" is inhabited by thousands of birds from numerous species, including thick-billed murres, kittiwakes, glaucous gulls, Arctic terns and eider ducks. The Zodiacs will take you ashore in Palanderbukta on the island of Nordaustlandet, which is largely covered in ice caps. With a little luck, you might spot reindeer, Arctic foxes, Svalbard poppies and purple

saxifrage on a hike through the sparse tundra. Walrus herds like to lie on the flat ledges of rock in Torellneset. The mighty bulls are a formidable sight even from a respectful distance – they can weigh over 1,000 kg (2,205 lb) and grow to 3.5 m (11.5 ft) in length. Weather and ice permitting, you will pass through the narrow Freeman Sound between Barents Island and Edgeoya. Can you see reindeer in blooming nature on Barentsoya? However, the sight of surfacing whales beats all of this. These giants of the oceans seek out protected biotopes off Spitsbergen and will happily follow ships that are passing the archipelago from time to time. If you're lucky, the world's largest and heaviest creature – the blue whale – will make an appearance. Last but not least, the sight of the edge of the Samarinbreen in Hornsund will become one of your many lasting memories from this cruise – framed by imposing mountains. You'll now join Barents, Amundsen and modern-day researchers in the hall of fame of Spitsbergen's explorers.

Arrives On: 16 Jun 24

Day 11: Tromsø (Norway)

Arrives On: 25 Jun 24

For more information on this cruise, please call +44 (0)1202 767926.

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