



CHURCHILL'S BELUGAS, POLAR BEARS & ARCTIC WILDLIFE

July 30 – August 5, 2027

DAILY ITINERARY

DAY 1: JULY 30, WINNIPEG, MANITOBA

Arrive in Winnipeg and transfer to the Fort Garry Hotel, built in 1913 by the Grand Trunk Pacific Railway. The French-style chateau is still the grande dame of Winnipeg, offering gracious hospitality in Manitoba's capital. Once a fur-trading post and trade hub where the Assiniboine and Red rivers meet, today Winnipeg is a thriving cultural and commercial center on the eastern Canadian prairie. Gather with your Expedition Leader for a welcome dinner and introduction to the remarkable ecosystems and wildlife of Canada's subarctic, setting the stage for the days ahead.

Overnight Fort Garry Hotel—Winnipeg

DAY 2: JULY 31, WINNIPEG / PRIVATE CHARTERED FLIGHT TO CHURCHILL / NATURE & CULTURE INTRODUCTORY TOWN TOUR

Fly north this morning by private chartered plane to Churchill, a remote community inaccessible by road and the gateway to Manitoba's Arctic. Spend the day exploring this remote outpost, whose history, cultures and landscapes provide an important gateway to understanding western Hudson Bay. Photogenic murals cover many of the town buildings, and the Itsanitaq Museum, showcasing the region's Indigenous cultures with artifacts collected from centuries of habitation, is a highlight of our tour. We also meet with local residents to learn more about the region's Indigenous and northern cultures, hearing firsthand how people have lived in close relationship with this land for generations. These captivating storytellers share tales from their personal histories, offering a window into the enduring cultures that have flourished in this daunting environment for thousands of years.

Our Expedition Leader introduces the natural history and ecology as we explore one of North America's most fascinating ecological transition zones. Churchill sits at the meeting point of three distinct ecosystems – the boreal forest (taiga), Arctic tundra and the marine waters of the Hudson Bay. This ecotone supports an exceptional diversity of plant and animal life, making Churchill one of Canada's premier destinations for avid naturalists. Churchill also lies directly beneath the auroral oval, making it an ideal location for Northern Lights activity. While aurora sightings are never guaranteed during summer months, if the skies are clear and dark, we'll keep our eyes on the skies just in case we are lucky enough to witness this remarkable natural phenomenon.

Overnight Seaport Hotel—Churchill

DAYS 3–5: AUGUST 1-3, BELUGA ENCOUNTERS, WILDLIFE WATCHING & NORTHERN HISTORY

With Churchill as our base, we spend three days exploring the tundra, river and seacoast of Hudson Bay.

Each summer, more than 3,000 beluga whales gather in the Churchill River estuary, making this the world's most accessible place to observe these highly social marine mammals. We make four separate outings to observe these gentle whales with exceptional close-range viewing opportunities. View belugas on three Zodiac trips, then meet them at eye level from a kayak. These inquisitive whales often nudge our paddles or follow in our wakes. With their unusual ability to turn their heads from side to side, belugas seem to be as curious about us as we are about them. Using a hydrophone, we can also listen to their complex vocalizations.

We also spend time searching for Arctic wildlife, including Arctic and red foxes, caribou and, at times, polar bears. During summer, females with cubs are occasionally seen waiting along the rock outcroppings of the coastline, waiting until the cold temperatures of late autumn freeze Hudson Bay, allowing them to return to the sea ice to hunt seals. Churchill's summer months are an excellent time to spot both endemic and migratory bird species, among them the ptarmigan, Harris's sparrow, Smith's longspur, sandhill cranes, and various waterfowl and shorebirds to name just a few. Summer also brings an abundance of wildflowers, adding vibrant color and life to the tundra.

On one day, we cross the Churchill River by Zodiac to reach Sloop Cove, once a sheltered haven for wooden sailing vessels used by the Hudson's Bay Company during the fur trade for exploration, whaling expeditions and northern trading attempts with the Inuit, Dene and Cree. Iron rings, which were driven into the rocks to secure the sloops, are still visible today, as are names carved into the lichen-covered stone by Company men. From the cove, take a scenic guided walk along the shoreline to view the exterior of Prince of Wales Fort, an important 18th-century HBC trading bastion. Built in 1717, its ruins occupy an area first scouted by Danish explorer Jens Munk in 1619 on his quest for the Northwest Passage. The fort became an important center for trade and cultural exchange, and a key locale in the opening of the Canadian West as British and French forces vied for territorial control. From here, we board a Zodiac for the return trip to Churchill.

Overnights Seaport Hotel—Churchill

DAY 6: AUGUST 4, SLED DOG EXPERIENCE / PRIVATE CHARTERED FLIGHT TO WINNIPEG

Our chartered flight back to Winnipeg leaves this afternoon, allowing plenty of time to do more in Churchill today. Meet a local musher and his lively team of sled dogs, learn about the longstanding role of sled dogs in northern travel and culture, and ride in a wheeled cart pulled by the avid huskies. If time permits, browse local shops featuring handcrafted works by northern artisans, including beadwork, leather goods and other regional crafts. Eventually, it's time to head to the airport for our chartered flight back to Winnipeg. Transfer to the Fort Garry Hotel, where we gather for a farewell dinner this evening.

Overnight Fort Garry Hotel—Winnipeg

DAY 7: AUGUST 5, WINNIPEG / DEPART

After breakfast, our northern journey comes to a close with a transfer to the airport to meet departing flights.

Our goal is to provide you with an exceptional, life-enhancing adventure. In order to achieve that goal, our Expedition Leaders are empowered to make reasonable changes to itineraries while a trip is underway. These decisions might be made to more closely follow the movements of wildlife, to accommodate extreme weather, to take advantage of unexpected opportunities, or generally to improve overall guest experience. For this reason, the above itinerary should be considered a general outline of your trip, but it is subject to change. After all, the very definition of adventure is "an exciting or remarkable undertaking involving the unknown."