



Svalbard Special

Photographic tour with tour leaders Danny Green & Ellie Rothnie

11th - 21st September 2027

Trip Overview

Group size:

The trip accommodates a maximum of 11 guests.

Due to the nature of the trip we will have to take an interim payment of £1,500 on the 30th November 2026 and the amount will be deducted from the final balance.

This includes:

Accommodation and all meals in Oslo/Longyearbyen. All Transportation to/from Longyearbyen airport, the hotel, and the boat. Local guides and relevant permits.

Cost excludes:

International flights to Longyearbyen, alcohol, sundry items, personal travel insurance.

Accommodation:

Hotel accommodation on the first night with a single supplement available. The cabins on the boat are based on a twin room basis. It is a clean and comfortable boat. There are three meals per day whilst we are onboard consisting of breakfast, lunch, and an evening meal. Alcoholic beverages will be available for purchase.

Level of fitness:

We've classified this trip at Level 3 in terms of fitness rating – not because of any excessive hiking/climbing involved as we won't be doing any landings so all our time will be spent on the boat. Living in the relatively confined space of a boat, the personal flexibility required on board and accessing the occasional zodiac excursion and the challenges that will bring.

LEVEL 3



Trip Overview

The Svalbard archipelago in the Norwegian Arctic is one of the most beautiful locations that we have had the pleasure of visiting, a land of towering mountains, impressive glaciers, and frozen sea ice. It is home to some of the high Arctic's iconic animals like Polar Bears. Finding an Ice Bear in this pristine Arctic wilderness is one of the best experiences in the natural world. As you travel further north in Svalbard, you start to hit the summer drift ice. This is the realm of the Polar Bear and drifting quietly along in a boat, watching for any signs of these iconic predators is a superb experience. Natures Images has organised trips in the past to this pristine archipelago and it has been our goal to arrange something again. New restrictions in Svalbard mean that around the island archipelago itself you must be a long distance away from Polar Bears but in the Pack Ice these restrictions are not needed. But it takes a special kind of boat to be able to go up to and into the pack ice and we are delighted to have secured the perfect boat to be able to run a trip like this. We have planned this trip to run in the Autumn months were the temperatures start to drop, and you can get some incredible light at this time of the year. The crew know the islands and knows what it takes to get us into the best locations and best positions. Together with our own experiences and knowledge of Svalbard we feel this is without doubt one of the best ways of visiting from a photographer's point of view. The group size is small with only 11 guests, and we have at our disposal two metal skiffs which can be launched at very short notice, so no waiting around. Our main Goal for this trip is to find Polar Bears amongst the ice. There are estimated to be around 3,000 Polar Bears in the Barents Sea population and approximately half of these reproduce in the Svalbard archipelago. Svalbard is a wonderful place and a photographers dream and to see and photograph the Polar Bear, one of the worlds most iconic species is fantastic experience.



Itinerary

Day 1: We will travel from our destinations to Longyearbyen, Norway and we will arrive in the evening, and we will transfer to a hotel in the town. We will have dinner in a local restaurant and discuss the plan of the trip ahead. (We will advise on the flight recommendations nearer the time but please note it may be that we have to overnight in Oslo en route and head to Longyearbyen the next morning depending on the schedules when they become available).

Day 2: We will board the boat this afternoon for our full briefing on life and safety on board before heading off on our adventure whilst settling into the ship

Days 3 - 10: This trip by its very nature in terms of just how wildlife photographic opportunities come about here, as well as the extremely variable conditions that will change throughout the trip means we cannot follow any precise or fixed itinerary as such. Our basic programme is to head as far north as the season's pack ice will allow us in search of the best and most dramatic locations for polar bear photography. Precisely where we end up and how long it takes to get there will very much depend on the ice conditions, but every trip here brings something different in terms of opportunity as well as conditions so we will need to remain flexible.

Our priority though will be polar bears on ice and there will therefore be times when we will be on board for several days continuously so we can get to the right locations.

Day 11: We will disembark the boat in the morning back in Longyearbyen and head to the airport for our flights back home.



Itinerary

Other Information:

The boat is first-class to work in these Arctic waters and has full safety equipment including immersion suits for each passenger, lifejackets for any zodiac expeditions you may embark on and a highly experienced captain and crew. There is power on board for re-charging camera batteries and laptops. Please note that your mobile phones won't work here and there is no Wi-Fi: there will be a satellite phone for emergency use only available on board.

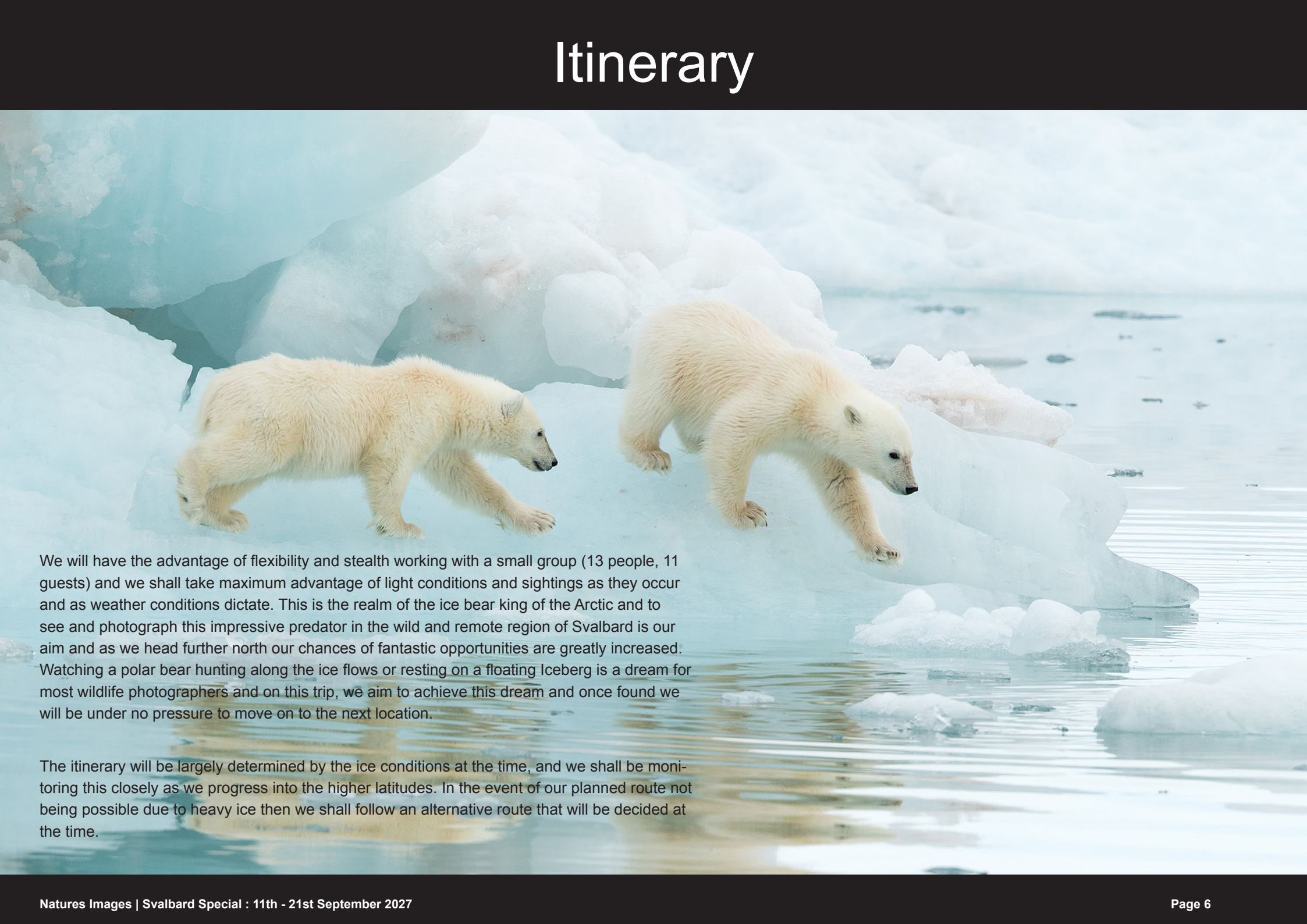
The weather in this area is very changeable. You should expect it to be no more than -20 degrees Celsius and often around -10 degrees. Wind chill on deck is another factor here so you should come prepared in terms of clothing but do feel free to ask about anything on that front. Sea conditions are unpredictable – we have experienced both rough days and flat calm periods on previous trips: if you do suffer from seasickness you will need to come suitably prepared for this.

We will be travelling in a remote area, so it is also essential that you advise of any pre-existing medical conditions that require regular or on-going medication upon booking. This will be treated in complete confidence but is very much to ensure your own safety and comfort as well as that of the group.

The trip is primarily aimed at the serious wildlife photographer where there will be unparalleled opportunities afforded for photography which are not available on the larger expedition cruise ships.



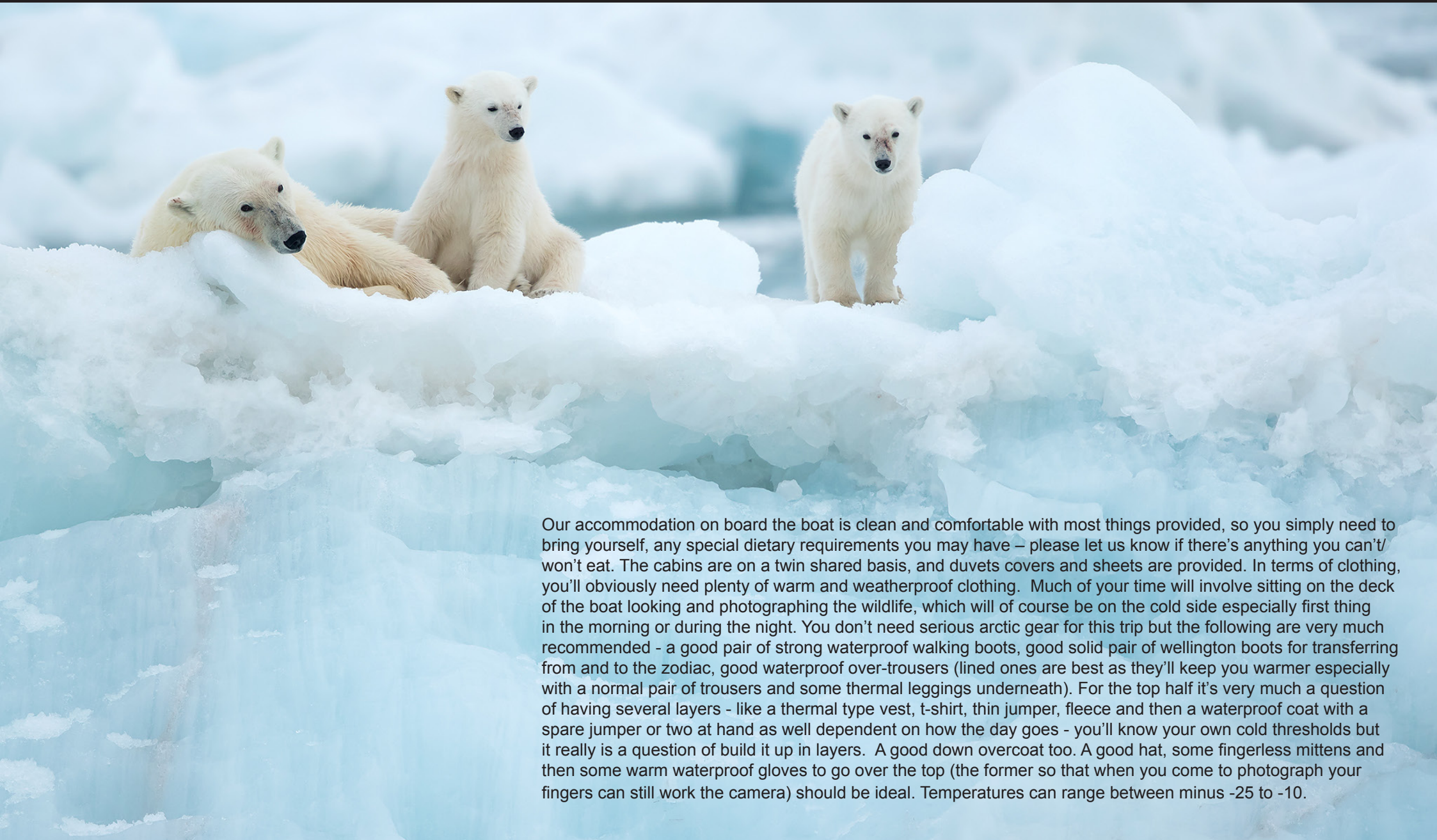
Itinerary

A photograph of two polar bears walking across a large, white ice floe in the Arctic. The bears are white with thick fur, and they are moving from left to right. The ice floe is surrounded by dark blue water, and there are other smaller ice floes visible in the background. The scene is captured in a wide-angle shot, emphasizing the vastness of the Arctic environment.

We will have the advantage of flexibility and stealth working with a small group (13 people, 11 guests) and we shall take maximum advantage of light conditions and sightings as they occur and as weather conditions dictate. This is the realm of the ice bear king of the Arctic and to see and photograph this impressive predator in the wild and remote region of Svalbard is our aim and as we head further north our chances of fantastic opportunities are greatly increased. Watching a polar bear hunting along the ice flows or resting on a floating Iceberg is a dream for most wildlife photographers and on this trip, we aim to achieve this dream and once found we will be under no pressure to move on to the next location.

The itinerary will be largely determined by the ice conditions at the time, and we shall be monitoring this closely as we progress into the higher latitudes. In the event of our planned route not being possible due to heavy ice then we shall follow an alternative route that will be decided at the time.

Things to bring



Our accommodation on board the boat is clean and comfortable with most things provided, so you simply need to bring yourself, any special dietary requirements you may have – please let us know if there's anything you can't/won't eat. The cabins are on a twin shared basis, and duvets covers and sheets are provided. In terms of clothing, you'll obviously need plenty of warm and weatherproof clothing. Much of your time will involve sitting on the deck of the boat looking and photographing the wildlife, which will of course be on the cold side especially first thing in the morning or during the night. You don't need serious arctic gear for this trip but the following are very much recommended - a good pair of strong waterproof walking boots, good solid pair of wellington boots for transferring from and to the zodiac, good waterproof over-trousers (lined ones are best as they'll keep you warmer especially with a normal pair of trousers and some thermal leggings underneath). For the top half it's very much a question of having several layers - like a thermal type vest, t-shirt, thin jumper, fleece and then a waterproof coat with a spare jumper or two at hand as well dependent on how the day goes - you'll know your own cold thresholds but it really is a question of build it up in layers. A good down overcoat too. A good hat, some fingerless mittens and then some warm waterproof gloves to go over the top (the former so that when you come to photograph your fingers can still work the camera) should be ideal. Temperatures can range between minus -25 to -10.

Camera equipment

I will be taking his longest Lens which is the 500mm and on previous trips I used this lens for over 90% of the time. Most of the wildlife will be in the 400-600mm range. I will also have my 1.4x Converter to hand as well just in case I need a bit more reach. The other lens I will be using a lot is my 100-400mm. I will always take this out on deck with me because sometimes the Polar Bears can come close and so I want to be able to still take pictures. When working on the deck of the boat I will have my 500mm and one camera mounted to a monopod. Monopods are much better than working with a tripod on a boat. You can work better with the movement of the boat, and the subjects can also move from side to side and so you can be much quicker. The other camera will be my 100-400mm and I will have this attached to a strap. I use a black rapid one which is excellent because it sits comfortably by my waist and I can just grab it quickly when needed. I have memory cards and spare batteries in my jacket pockets. You will get into a routine after a couple of days, but you need to react fast because we can come across subjects very quickly and if you are messing about with a camera bag or just grabbing stuff you can find yourself on deck not being prepared. I will also take a wide-angle 24-70mm for any landscape opportunities. We will hopefully get the chance to photograph Polar Bears from the small metal boats that we have on board. They can be launched very quickly, and they are best if we have a close encounter and you will then be on the same level. I will be mainly working with my 100-400mm from these boats as it will be much easier than hand holding a big lens. Going into these small boats with just a small camera will make it much easier for everyone and you don't want to be putting in a large camera bag with lots of stuff in. A 70-200mm with a converter is also a good combination if you don't own one of these lenses. One thing for sure you will spend a lot of time doing nothing on this trip because we must cover huge distances to get to our locations, Svalbard is a big place, and we are heading as far north as we can to the pack ice. So, take a laptop for looking at images and downloading. Put some films and music on them or just take a few books, it will pass the time away. There are plenty of places to charge batteries and laptops throughout the boat.



Useful Contact Information

Our contact numbers for the build up to and for the duration of the trip are:

Ellie: +44 (0)7879 480143



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Please don't hesitate to contact us even if you think it is a minor question, we're here to help.



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