



The Leader in Polar Adventures



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# BAFFIN ISLAND

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*Destination Guide*



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# BAFFIN ISLAND

## THE FIFTH-LARGEST ISLAND IN THE WORLD

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# 5 BAFFIN ISLAND HIGHLIGHTS

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## **STUNNING SAM FORD FJORD**

Granite peaks rise from the sea, making the Sam Ford Fjord on the east coast of the island a spectacular sight and a popular destination for climbers. Stretching 68 miles (110 km) inland, this rugged fjord is stark and beautiful.



## **SPECTACULARLY DIVERSE ARCTIC WILDLIFE**

Year-round, common species on Baffin Island includes arctic hare and fox as well as lemmings and polar bears. The ringed seal is the lone year-round marine inhabitant. In summer, the island is filled with the sounds and activity of nesting birds. Additionally, it's possible to catch a glimpse of whales and walrus in the water.





## RICH INUIT CULTURE & ARTS COMMUNITIES

Combining modern techniques with traditional values, many gifted artists living in the Arctic create amazing tapestries, limited-edition prints and soapstone carvings. Arts and crafts produced in the region reflect the realities of life in the land of the midnight sun and are valued by collectors worldwide.



## PANGNIRTUNG

Known as the Switzerland of the Arctic, this Inuit hamlet of just under 1,500 people is an arctic arts and culture paradise. Indigenous people have inhabited the region for up to 4,000 years, and the influence of their lifestyle, beliefs and traditions are evident in the local artwork. The Uqqurmiut Centre for Arts & Crafts houses an impressive collection of Inuit drawings and sketches, as well as paintings, carvings, tapestries and prints.



## ZODIAC CRUISING THE RUGGED SHORELINE

There's no better way to experience the rugged wildness of the largest island in Canada than by Zodiac. You'll visit isolated inlets and other areas inaccessible to bigger vessels, and listen carefully as our expert guides share their insights about life in the Far North. Intimate and exciting, this is one adventure you won't want to miss.





## *Things to See*

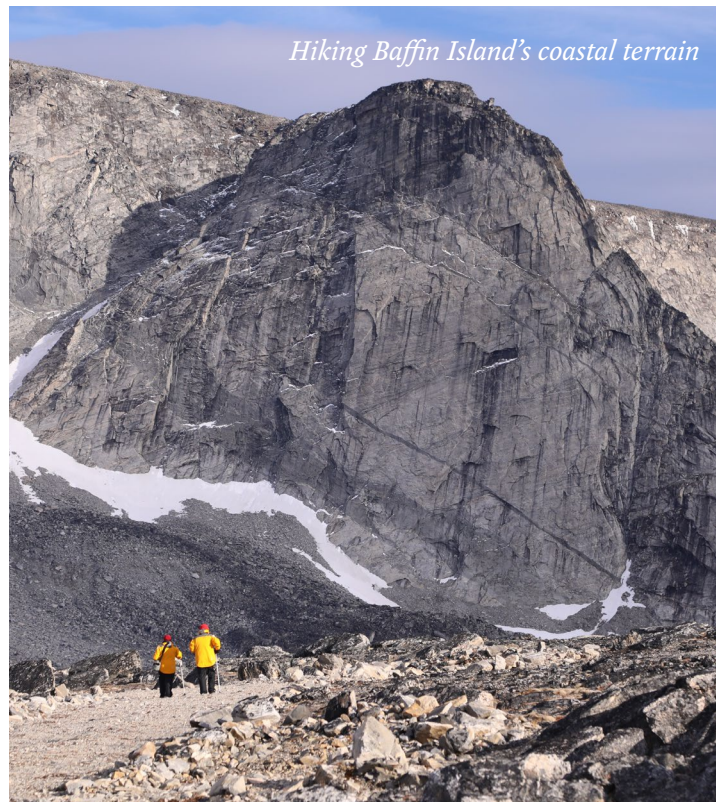
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# ENORMOUS BIG-WALL PLAYGROUNDS

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Situated about 380 miles (450 km) north of the Arctic Circle, in the land where the sun never sets, Sam Ford Fjord is truly one of the most isolated places on the planet. Yet this little-explored area of Baffin Island is one of the world's best big-wall playgrounds, attracting intrepid climbers eager to scale the sheer rock faces that shoot straight out of the sea.

Peaks with names like Beluga Spire, Polar Sun Spire and Walker Citadel tower hundreds of meters above the surrounding landscape. Lured by the challenging geography, glaciers and coastal tundra, visitors find this region spectacular.



*Hiking Baffin Island's coastal terrain*



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## ICONIC WILDLIFE

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Year-round common species on Baffin Island include polar bears and arctic foxes and their main food sources, lemmings and arctic hare. Although all are residents of the island, wildlife can be elusive so you need to keep your eyes open!

Zodiac cruising is a great way to see the ringed seal, which lives within 5 miles (8 km) of land all year long and provides nourishment to resident polar bears in winter. Harp seals migrate to Baffin Island

in summer, as do beluga and bowhead whales and the spiral-tusked narwhal. In summer, the island comes alive with nesting birds, including several types of geese, plus sandpipers, thick-billed mures, plovers and three species of gulls. Migrating from Antarctica each summer, the arctic tern travels approximately 44,100 miles (70,000 km) each year to return to this fragile and pristine environment.

### Did you know?

Female polar bears on Baffin Island reach sexual maturity at 4 or 5 years of age, and then typically deliver one to three bear cubs every 3 years.





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## WHALING STATIONS

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Explore the historic remains of a whaling station on the small, uninhabited island of Kekerten, and imagine what life was like long ago. Settled in 1840 by Captain William Penny, a Scottish whaler, the area is now a National Historic Site of Canada.

During the height of bowhead whaling in the late 1800s, the station was the most important one in the Cumberland Sound area (the slopes along the harbor were ideal for scouting whale activity). The site represents the impact that the industry had on the culture and economy of the Inuit in the sound as locals adapted to the rhythm of the whaler's year.



*Traditional tents created out of whale bone and skin*





## INTRICATE INUIT TAPESTRIES & CARVINGS

Inuit artists have been creating works of art using stone and walrus ivory for millennia, but in recent years, soapstone has become their medium of choice. As the Inuit gave up their nomadic lifestyle and settled in communities like Cape Dorset, block-printing hunting scenes and mythological images became a popular activity.

First introduced in 1957 by artist and government worker James Houston, printmaking gave locals a new medium by which to display the symbols and scenes internationally recognized as uniquely Inuit. Tucked beneath the snow-capped peaks of Mount Duval, Pangnirtung is a renowned artists' haven.

At the Uqqurmiut Centre for Arts & Crafts, one can view the traditional colorful tapestries that have attracted worldwide attention for decades. Here, you'll also get a sense of local Inuit activities, such as sealing, fishing and hunting.



*Local art from Pangnirtung*





## *Things to Do*

# KAYAKING

Gliding silently across the smooth and crystal-clear water beneath the towering peaks of a Baffin Island fjord is an awe-inspiring experience. Kayaking close to shore in a protected inlet offers a unique vantage point for possible sightings of polar bears and caribou. This is when a weather-sealed camera really comes in handy!

Kayaking is an optional adventure activity offered on select expeditions that explore

Baffin Island. As with all polar activities, kayaking excursions are weather dependent, but Quark Expeditions® guarantees at least one outing per voyage.

Basic kayaking skills are recommended prior to kayaking in Baffin Island.

## **Did you know?**

The ultimate time to adventure by kayak on Baffin Island is in August, due to open sea ice conditions.





## ZODIAC CRUISING & SHORE LANDINGS

Zodiacs are the workhorses of polar expeditions. Zodiacs transport us to remote islands, into shallow inlets, beneath steep bird cliffs and to fascinating areas otherwise inaccessible even to small cruise ships.

Off the southern coast of Baffin Island, Monumental Island is one such place—a small, isolated island completely uninhabited, except for groups of impressive arctic animals who are occasionally sighted on the rugged terrain. With your experienced expedition staff, you'll get up close, exploring the rocky shoreline in a Zodiac, scouting for walrus, plus polar bears prowling for food.

Dress to get wet and be sure to bring your camera! Be prepared for anything to happen

while you're out enjoying this iconic expedition activity. You just never know when a marine animal might decide to show off nearby.



*Cruise Frobisher Bay by Zodiac*





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## HIKING

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For thousands of years, the Inuit relied on the land—and the wildlife it provided—for their survival. The strength of the native Arctic peoples' relationship with the land is evidenced by the very name of the vast, remote Canadian province in which Baffin Island lies: Nunavut, which is the Inuktitut word for "our land."

Hiking the shores of placid glacial lakes, narrow inlets and streams set against a dramatic backdrop of some of the highest snow-capped peaks in eastern North America, you'll have ample opportunity to capture stunning landscape shots. Summer on Baffin Island brings a colorful and curiously vital blanket of yellow arctic poppies and purple saxifrage to the tundra.



*Hiking the shoreline of Baffin Island*

There are several opportunities for hiking various shore landings throughout your expedition, and you'll be offered a variety of options with varying degrees of physical exertion. Quark Expeditions® provides "muck boots," a waterproof all-terrain hiking boot, for all passengers. Hikes vary in difficulty and skill level, ranging from easy guided walks to challenging treks up and across the rugged and often mountainous terrain.





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## WILDLIFE & LANDSCAPE PHOTOGRAPHY

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The arctic sun shines warm and long into the night this far north in summer, providing excellent natural light for photographers. A wide-angle lens (18 mm) and a telephoto lens (70 mm or greater) will help you capture more of the incredible landscape, as well as home in on arctic fox, caribou or even the elusive polar bear.

The mountains, cliffs, weather and other factors can wreak havoc with light levels. Depending on the area you're exploring, you may want to experiment with low-light settings even in broad daylight. While cruising in the shadows of Sam Ford Fjord, for example, a higher shutter speed can help reduce shake and blur when the steep rock walls naturally block some of your light.

### QUICK PHOTO TIPS

- Pack extra batteries and memory cards
- Use a tripod
- Adjust the ISO
- Practice with your camera settings well before and bring your manual







*"The Quality of the expedition staff meant that their knowledge of the area, its structure, history and wildlife gave an experience way beyond my expectation."*

- Gerald William







## *Cultural Context*

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# HISTORY & CULTURE

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Baffin Island has been inhabited for thousands of years by the Inuit, descendants of the Thule people who migrated to Canada's far northeast in the 12th and 13th centuries.

Just a few years ago, it was believed that the first Europeans to have stepped foot in Canada's Far North arrived in 1576, led by British explorer Martin Frobisher; however, ancient artifacts, including a notched wooden stick used to record trading activities, discovered near the tiny community of Kimmirut, suggest that there was prolonged contact between the Baffin Island Inuit and the Vikings as early as AD 1000.

In more recent times, Baffin Island's Inuit conducted trade with Europeans who stopped by en route to Hudson Bay. Scottish and

American whalers discovered the Davis Strait in the 1820s and made Baffin Island a part of their annual pilgrimage. In the 19th century, Europeans began to establish more permanent whaling stations, and this increase in trade brought greater Inuit reliance on the European market. When whaling declined in the 20th century, many Inuit turned to trapping.

### Did You Know?

Many historians and researchers believe that Baffin Island and Helluland, a rocky land of glaciers that Vikings reported they'd discovered west of Greenland, are one and the same.





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## INUIT ARTS & HANDICRAFTS

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Baffin Island has been home to different groups of Inuit for more than 5,000 years, in what is perceived by many to be one of the most challenging places on earth, the treeless tundra of the Arctic coastline. Inuit knowledge, customs and teachings are passed down from generation to generation through oral storytelling, and their artistic styles are influenced by thousands of years of this knowledge, as well as by the materials accessible to them.

Soapstone, a relatively soft sculpting material, has been used by the Inuit to portray scenes of local animals and people for over 7,500 years. Historically, the Inuit took pride

in beautifying their rugged surroundings by decorating their garments and by carving items from bone, wood, antler, ivory and stone. Printmaking is also a popular Inuit art form. Today, these authentic Inuit pieces are much sought after by tourists visiting Pangnirtung (or Pang, as locals call it).

**To the Inuit, theirs is a beautiful land; their passion for it is expressed in the variety of their artistic works.**





## *Know Before You Go*

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## LOCAL TIPS

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### CURRENCY

Shops in Baffin Island do business in the national currency, the Canadian dollar. You may wish to purchase souvenirs from local artisans or craftspeople. Baffin Island is a safe place to visit, and we recommend that passengers carry cash on excursions where shopping may be a possibility, to avoid disappointment where credit cards or traveler's checks are not accepted.

### WEATHER

Temperatures on Baffin Island can reach as high as 48°F (9°C) in July, though the annual average temperature is a frosty 18°F (-7°C). In winter, temperatures plummet to an average of -27°F (-33°C) in February. On average, Baffin Island sees precipitation 97 days of the year; March is the driest month, and September has the greatest

rainfall. It can be incredibly windy here, particularly in unsheltered and higher-altitude areas. Dress in layers, with a moisture-wicking base layer and a waterproof outer layer, and keep extra socks and mittens handy.

### SHOPPING

Like other extremely remote regions, Baffin Island has a degree of food insecurity. Grocery goods are shipped to Baffin Island by sealift, boats that transport goods from the time the ice breaks in late June until the freeze in October makes the waters unpassable. Retailers also order supplies to be delivered on flights to the island, but the cost of these methods of transportation makes for prohibitive expenses for locals. We recommend that you avoid purchasing basic food items, including snacks and bottled water, as this depletes the supply available to residents.





## CONSERVING THE FRAGILE ENVIRONMENT

Visit the most remote places on earth and enjoy the trip in greater comfort and safety than the trailblazing arctic explorers could have imagined. At Quark Expeditions®, we take the conservation and protection of the natural and cultural environments we visit seriously, and we know you'll do the same when you travel with us.

Conservation is a central theme in our on-board education programs, each led by professionals in their respective fields. Many travelers return from their Baffin Island adventure with an enhanced sensitivity to the issues of polar conservation.

As a member of the Arctic Expedition Cruise Operators (AECO), we observe guidelines aimed at preventing adverse impacts from our visits by doing the following:

- Avoiding disturbing wildlife and its habitats
- Respecting archaeological and historical remains
- Respecting the sensibilities of local people
- Observing wilderness etiquette

Click here, to learn more about our sustainability efforts.



Association of  
Arctic Expedition Cruise  
Operators **AECO** 





## ***Itineraries***

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### **CANADA TO GREENLAND: BAFFIN BAY EXPLORER**

*13 days, from \$6,495 USD - 12 Sep 2017*

As you travel above the Arctic Circle from Canada to Greenland, our small expedition vessel and Zodiacs guarantee that you'll visit places few have gone before. Spectacular scenery, ice, arctic wildlife and quaint villages—as well as arts, culture and craft will keep you surprised and amazed every moment during this 13-day voyage.

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### **ICELAND, GREENLAND AND BAFFIN ISLAND: ARCTIC CIRCLE TRAVERSE**

*18 days, from \$8,995 USD - 28 Aug 2017*

Start with birdwatching in Iceland, and then explore the fjords and stunning scenery of Greenland before arriving at Baffin Island, home of the Inuit, on this 18-day exploration of the Arctic. Icebergs, whales, seals, the northern flora and fauna, plus the arts and crafts of the Inuit, create an experience you'll never forget.







# PACKING CHECKLIST

## GET READY FOR YOUR TRIP!

*The time has come to gear up for your expedition! Still need tips on what to pack? Here's a handy checklist to help you remember everything you might need.*

### TO WEAR ON LANDINGS

- ☐ Base layers (wool or synthetic)
- ☐ Mid-layer warm/fleece top
- ☐ Mid-layer warm/fleece pant
- ☐ Wool and synthetic socks (3 to 4 pairs)
- ☐ Glove liners
- ☐ Neck warmer or balaclava
- ☐ Warm hat that covers ears
- ☐ Waterproof pants
- ☐ Waterproof gloves
- ☐ Sunscreen
- ☐ Sunglasses with UV protection

### LIST OF SUGGESTED ITEMS

- ☐ Waterproof, lightweight backpack or dry sack
- ☐ Swimsuit (for the polar plunge!)
- ☐ Binoculars
- ☐ Camera with extra batteries
- ☐ Extra memory cards
- ☐ Earplugs (in case of noisy cabinmates)
- ☐ Eye masks for sleeping
- ☐ Seasickness, indigestion, headache or other medicine
- ☐ Voltage adapters

### ON BOARD

- ☐ Comfortable casual clothing (pants/jeans, shirts, sweaters)
- ☐ Lighter shirts (in case the ship gets warm)
- ☐ Comfortable shoes (without heels)

To help you get ready for your trip, visit Quark Expeditions® online Polar Boutique







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## GETTING THERE

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Getting to Baffin Island is easy with Quark Expeditions®. International flights abound to Iceland or Canada, two jumping off points for your Baffin Island adventure. Both of our Baffin Island expeditions begin or end in the Canadian capital city of Ottawa, where you can visit the Parliament buildings, the National Gallery or the Canadian Museum of Nature. On the morning of Day 2, a charter flight whisks

you off to the embarkation point where your ship awaits. As you plan how you will travel to your starting point, we recommend direct flights whenever possible, to avoid the risk of missing a connecting flight and jeopardizing your departure. Contact a Quark Expeditions® Polar Travel Adviser at 1.844.921.4835 to help you plan your trip to the Arctic, or visit [QuarkExpeditions.com](https://www.QuarkExpeditions.com).

Consult your local embassy or consulate if you need a visa.  
If so, make sure you submit your paperwork with enough time to spare.



# BOOK YOUR NEXT ADVENTURE TODAY

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*March 2017*