

Arctic

THE NORTH POLE

Why join this Voyage?

- Travel by icebreaker to one of the worlds most iconic yet little visited destinations. Pushing through the pack ice to the North Pole itself at 90 degrees North, stand where very few others ever have
- A chance to experience a view of the top of the world from the top of the world with an optional tethered hot air balloon flight over the North Pole. Helicopter flight-seeing is also included
- Travel comfortably aboard the *50 Years of Victory*, the largest, most sophisticated and powerful icebreaker ever constructed and the first Arktika-class icebreaker to have a spoon-shaped bow



Trip Summary

Travel by state of the art nuclear powered icebreaker to the top of the world on this North Pole cruise and join that exclusive club of those who have achieved this ultimate destination. The North Pole can only be reached by pushing through thick pack ice, metres thick in places; this is a challenging environment that very few vessels are capable of reaching. The duration of the journey will be determined by the ice conditions, the unpredictability adding to the achievement once you finally reach your goal. The onboard helicopters and an optional hot air balloon flight over the pole itself provide fascinating aerial perspectives, while the hardy traveller can utilise the holes created in the ice to plunge into the most exclusive swimming hole on Earth!

Itinerary



Day 1 London / Helsinki

Depart the UK and fly to Helsinki in Finland where you will meet up with your fellow adventures. Overnight in Helsinki.



Day 2 Helsinki / Murmansk/ Embarkation

This morning you will take a charter flight from Helsinki to Murmansk from where you will be transferred to the quayside to embark *50 Years of Victory*, the world's largest icebreaker and begin your voyage north.

Days 3 - 7 Arctic Ocean

In 2008, *50 Years of Victory* made the fastest ever surface crossing from Murmansk to the North Pole in 4.5 days. Arctic Ocean conditions are always unpredictable, so it could take as many as 8 days to reach our goal. Unpredictability heightens the sense of adventure that underlies all North Pole expeditions.



Watching *Victory* break through the formidable pack ice is a sight you'll never forget. Crushing through ice meters thick with the ease of a hot knife through butter, *Victory* can sail in conditions that would defeat most other ships. Be sure to take one of the included helicopter flights for a fascinating aerial view of the icebreaker's progress.

Day 8 90 degrees North

Although the moment that you reach the top of the world is shared with others, the experience is as individual as you are. Some travellers mark the occasion holding a special memento carried thousand of miles for that one brief event, some wave their national flags, others hold signs created on the spot. For those lucky few who have booked the hot air balloon flight, this will be your chance to view the top of the world from above. How will you celebrate?



Day 9 Southbound

Heading south again, hopefully there will be further polar bear sightings. Should a polar bear be sighted on your voyage, you will have a different story to tell. No two polar bear sightings or North Pole voyages are the same.

Days 10 - 12 Franz Josef Land

These massive flat topped islands, with steep cliffs where seabirds nest, are often surrounded by fast ice. A helicopter will transfer you ashore to hike, beach comb or to just sit quietly watching Snow Buntings feed.



Days 13 Murmansk/ Embarkation/ Helsinki

The return to Helsinki requires a flight from Murmansk and just the right tide conditions for docking the ship. Overnight in Helsinki, before departing for home.

Day 14 Helsinki/ London

Depart Helsinki and fly back to the UK

Important:

Please bear in mind that while accurate, this onboard itinerary is merely a guide to the route your voyage is likely to undertake, rather than a strict schedule to which you will always adhere, as local weather conditions and wildlife will ultimately influence your exact daily path. A flexible itinerary, making the most of local conditions and opportunities is one of the great advantages of expeditionary cruising and should always been borne in mind.



The Boat



50 years of Victory

Capacity: 128 passengers

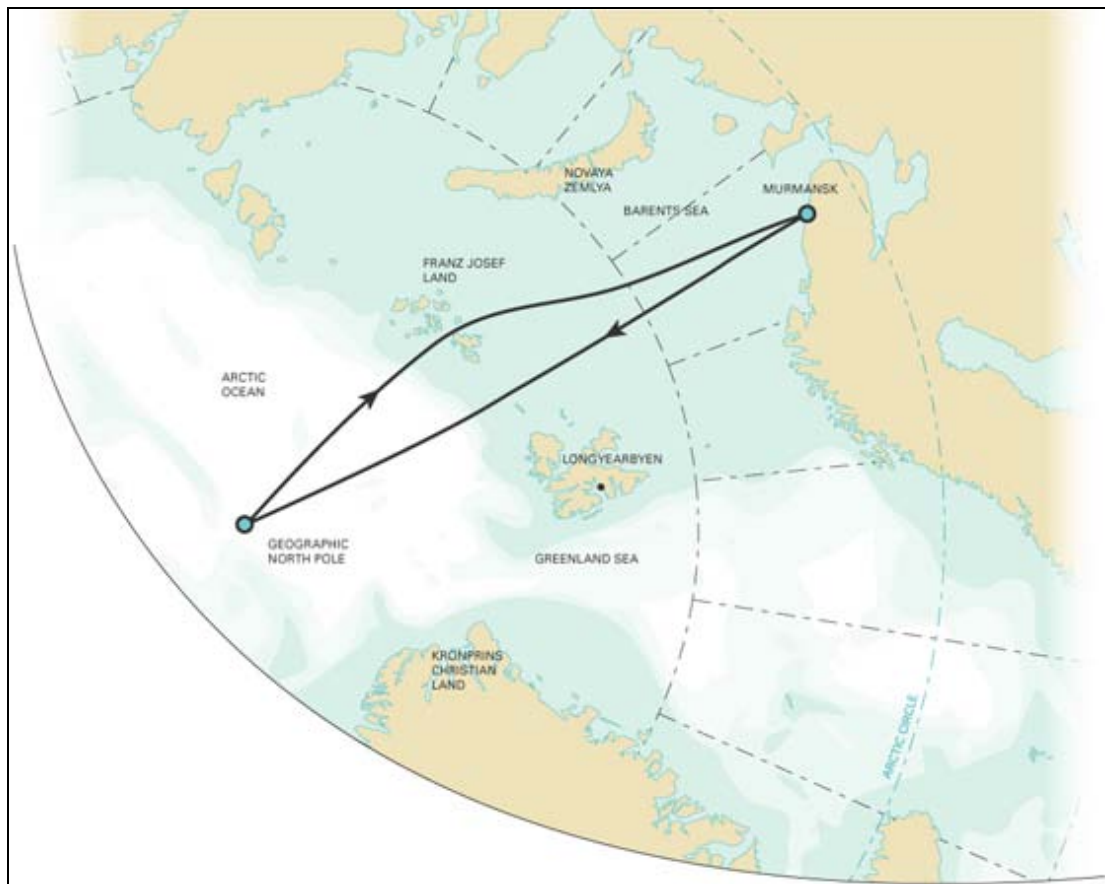
The *50 Years of Victory* is the first Arktika-class icebreaker to have a spoon-shaped bow, the largest, most sophisticated and powerful icebreaker ever constructed. Twenty years in the making, boosting the ship's efficiency is the all-new automated digital control system. The ship, designed with a stainless steel ice belt 5 meters (18 feet) wide, breaks through ice up to 2.5 meters (9.2 feet) thick. The icebreaker is driven by 2 nuclear reactors that produce 75,000 horsepower. In open water, top speed can be as much as 21.4 knots.



All 64 cabins have twin lower berths with private facilities, opening windows, TV and DVD players. The suites have a separate sitting area with a sofa bed along with a fridge and tea and coffee making facilities. There is one large dining room accommodating all guests with unreserved seating where a choice of menu is on offer. Other facilities include a presentation lounge for onboard lectures, a separate library/ lounge and a bar, a gym, pool and two saunas.

There is a fleet of zodiacs for landings and exploration along with a helicopter that can be used for flight seeing. Complimentary parka jackets are provided to all expedition members (to keep at the end of the voyage) and wellington boots are available on loan. Ship to shore communications are available via satellite.

Route Map



2012 Expedition Dates

25th June - 8th July

6th - 19th July

Guide Prices for 2012

Cabin Type

(price quoted per person)

Twin	£14,250
Mini Suite	£15,810
Suite	£19,680
Victory	£20,310
Arktika	£20,930

Please note that these prices are a **guide only** and are subject to exchange rate fluctuations and fuel surcharges.

Includes

- 2 nights hotel accommodation in Helsinki
- 12 day voyage on full board basis
- All lectures, guided excursions and Helicopter flight seeing on board ship
- Expedition parka & wellington boot loan
- Comprehensive trip handbook & photo DVD
- Group transfers and baggage handling
- All port duties
- Wine, beer, liquor soft drinks on board

Excludes

- International flights to and from Helsinki
- Charter flights to and from the points of embarkation/ disembarkation (see below)
- Any additional pre or post voyage hotel accommodation or services not mentioned
- Gratuities & laundry
- Medical insurance (mandatory)

Charter Flights

Please note that the charter flights Helsinki/ Murmansk return are not included in the overall voyage cost. These flights cost an additional approx. £1,060 per person, subject to confirmation at time of booking and exchange rate fluctuations. However book before the 30th September 2011 and they are included as an **early booking offer** in the overall voyage price.

Hot Air Ballooning

Optional add-on: Be one of only 50 passengers per voyage to ascend above the North Pole in hot air balloon, additional supplementary cost of £160 per person.

Visa Information

British Citizens will require a visa for Russia, all invitation documentation for this will be provided 90 days prior to departure to allow plenty of time for you to arrange these. A photocopy/ scan of your passport will be required at the time of booking.

Want to discuss this trip?

Please call Sue on 01285 880981 for more details or to check boat availability



Having spent the best part of 5 years on my "gap year" working in travel seemed the natural progression. I am most at home travelling to remote wilderness areas of the globe. With a life-long passion for wildlife I love to get up close either by kayak or on foot and learn the local bushcraft skills. My travels have taken me to all seven continents. Most recently travelling to Antarctica, Spitsbergen and the Canadian High Arctic, sailing on the Amazon and Rio Negro along with whale watching in Baja California. I hope to go polar bear tracking in the Russian Arctic next.

Sue is Country Director for Steppes Voyages

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