

Polar bears: on foot & personal

Trip dates: D1: 1-8 November; D2: 6-13 November 2021

Location: Arviat, northern Manitoba, Canada

Group size: 6; Cost GBP 9,985 per person

ANDY SKILLEN
PHOTOGRAPHY



A LIFE-CHANGING EXPEDITION TO THE NORTHERN TUNDRA TO PHOTOGRAPH POLAR BEARS THE ONLY WAY ANDY HAS EVER DONE IT....ON FOOT. LEAVE BEHIND THE MADNESS OF CHURCHILL AND ITS OVERCROWDED TUNDRA BUGGIES AND INCREASINGLY BUSY LODGES OUT OF TOWN, AND FLY NORTH TO A REMOTE CAMP WHERE ARCTIC IMMERSION IS THE ORDER OF THE DAY.

TO WALK WITH POLAR BEARS ON THIS MOST UNIQUE ARCTIC PHOTOGRAPHY TRIP IS AN EXPERIENCE LIKE NO OTHER. THIS ARCTIC ADVENTURE ALL LEVELS OF PHOTOGRAPHER AND WILDLIFE WATCHER ALIKE A RARE OPPORTUNITY TO PHOTOGRAPH ONE OF THE WORLD'S MOST MAGNIFICENT PREDATOR SPECIES IN THEIR NATURAL HABITAT. THE SPECTACULAR ENVIRONMENT OF REMOTE ARCTIC TUNDRA IS SURE TO LEAVE AN UNFORGETTABLE IMPRESSION AND MEMORIES TO LAST A LIFETIME.

TRIP HIGHLIGHTS

- **EXCLUSIVE GROUP SIZE OF JUST 6 GUESTS** – NOT AN OVERCROWDED BUGGY OR LODGE
- **SCENIC 50 MINUTE FLIGHT OVER THE TUNDRA TO OUR REMOTE CABINS**
- **ON-FOOT PHOTOGRAPHY WITH POLAR BEARS AND A WHOLE RANGE OF OTHER ARCTIC WILDLIFE**
- **PHOTOGRAPH THE NORTHERN LIGHTS FROM THE TUNDRA (WEATHER PERMITTING!)**
- **ESCORTED THROUGHOUT BY ANDY SKILLEN**
- **ACCESS TO SOME OF NUNAVUT'S BEST ARCTIC GUIDES**
- **AS MUCH, OR AS LITTLE, PHOTOGRAPHIC TUITION AS NEEDED!**

COSTS AND LOGISTICS

- **Group size:** 6 guests only
- **GBP 9,985** per person, based on twin-share accommodation
- **Start point:** Winnipeg
- **End point:** Winnipeg

WHAT'S INCLUDED...

- **1 night** accommodation in Winnipeg (airport hotel) before the adventure
- **5 nights** accommodation in the polar bear cabins
- **1 night post-trip accommodation back in Winnipeg**
- **Return flights Winnipeg – Churchill**
- Return charter flight from Churchill to the cabins
- All guiding fees

- **Welcome meal in Winnipeg**
 - **Some alcoholic drinks at the cabins**
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WHAT'S NOT...

- International and/or any domestic flight to/from the itinerary start/end points
 - Drinks at the hotel before and after (other than those served with breakfast)
 - Items of a personal nature
 - Visa fees as appropriate
 - Gratuities
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YOUR ITINERARY....

Day 1: Arrive in Winnipeg and overnight (1 night)

Having arrived in Winnipeg, it is a short walk over the road to the hotel we will use as our base for the night and a welcome dinner before turning in early to be up and refreshed in time for our early departure the next morning. If you have rented gear, it will be distributed to you that evening.

Day 2: Fly to Churchill and then onto the cabins (5 nights)

Fly from Winnipeg to Churchill, Manitoba on the early morning departure and on arrival, transfer to a private charter aircraft waiting to whisk you away to our Polar Bear Cabins. During the 45-50 minute flight along the west coast of Hudson Bay aerial landscape photography maybe possible. A lucky few may even get a chance to view and

photograph Arctic wildlife from above. The Polar Bear Cabins are strategically placed in “polar bear alley” for reliable polar bear encounters. After landing on the frozen tundra, settle into the rustic cabins, a transformed polar bear hunting camp once used by local Inuit. Strategically located in “polar bear alley”, the site provides the opportunity to safely photograph polar bears at ground level behind an unobtrusive electric fence. Polar bears are known to wander right up to the fence!

Previously, we have seen anywhere from one to ten polar bears per day along with a variety of other Arctic wildlife. However, due to the nature of wildlife, there may be days when polar bears aren't near the cabins. On these days you'll take short, guided walks on the tundra to look for other Arctic wildlife and to photograph the stunning landscapes. These short walks often provide more opportunities to photograph polar bears, as well as other Arctic wildlife, including Arctic hares, foxes, marten, gyrfalcon, willow ptarmigan and snowy owls.

Our Inuit guides are specially trained to maximize polar bear photography opportunities without endangering guests or the bears. Often polar bears are friendly, in good spirits, and disinterested in humans. From time to time, there will be a curious polar bear who approaches us. Our local Inuit guides have lived among polar bears for generations and know their behaviour well. Following their guidance provides the most authentic and intimate polar bear moments available. After days of observing and photographing polar bears, get the chance to witness the magical Northern Lights at night.

Day 7: Depart for Churchill and onto Winnipeg

Capture a few last shots in the morning before flying back to Churchill on the charter flight. Transfer in Churchill for the flight to Winnipeg and then spend the night in the same Winnipeg hotel you left at the start of the trip (this makes it easier for you to store any excess baggage by the way!)

Day 8: Depart Winnipeg

Cards full of pictures, head full of memories, you are free to leave when ready...to continue your adventure in Canada or elsewhere, or simply head home 😊

GOOD TO KNOW...

Arctic travel is not for everyone, and for me it is important that you do take into account the following when booking on this life-changing adventure:

What's it like to travel there?

The intent of our Polar Bear Migration Fly-in Photo Safari is to immerse you in the annual polar bear migration of Hudson Bay, where polar bears wait for the bay to freeze. This world-class Arctic photography tour takes you north of Churchill, Manitoba and into Nunavut where you can take advantage of excellent opportunities for photographing Arctic landscapes and wildlife. **However, the Arctic has many variables that can influence travel plans.** Being relaxed, patient, and flexible are important attitudes. **We cannot control the weather, and it is VITAL that you understand this. Flights into and out of camp could be subject to delays and it is important you have the adequate insurance to cover this fact.**

What's the worst case, weather-wise?

There is a chance of weather delays when flying to or from the polar bear cabins. If you arrive on Day 2 of the itinerary and our plane is not able to transfer you to the bear cabins, we will arrange for accommodations in Churchill. The cost of the accommodations, meals and beverages will be your responsibility. In the unlikely event that the charter flight is unable to fly on Day 3 due to weather delays, Arctic Kingdom will arrange for an additional night accommodation. The cost of the 2nd night hotel, meals and beverages are your responsibility. If on the morning of Day 4 by 10 AM, we are still unable to fly, we will officially cancel the tour and provide a trip cancellation letter to submit to your travel insurance provider. Please note that Churchill has limited accommodation space during the peak polar bear season. Accommodation ranges from bed and breakfasts to 3 star hotels. There are no 4 or 5 star hotels in Churchill. We maybe required to book trip participants in separate hotels and change accommodation each night. It is also for this reason we strongly recommend trip interruption and cancelation insurance so that additional expenses you could incur are covered. A spirit of flexibility and understanding of northern conditions is paramount to make the best of a situation that, although not frequent, may happen.

It should be noted that such a level of cancellation is very unlikely, but the weather is the weather. It is always better to be prepared!

What about getting to Winnipeg?

Travel arrangements between your point of origin and Winnipeg are the responsibility of the traveller. We will look after your flight from Winnipeg to Churchill and return.

We strongly recommend that participants travelling on reduced fare airline tickets not try to continue their journey home on the final day of the trip; any deviation from the ticketed itinerary will result in a penalty regardless of the cause. We highly recommend that you do not plan on having any important meetings or events the day after your trip end date as we recommend planning on 'buffer time' to account for any possible delays in getting home...just in case!

Is this the adventure for me?

This safari is perfect for anyone looking for a photographic adventure in some of the most pristine and remote parts of Canada.. This is not a strenuous trip as most of the days will be spent observing polar bears from the cabin area or on short nature treks. Guests should be able to walk unassisted for 1-3km (maximum) with photo equipment. You don't need to have previous Arctic experience, but you do need to have an adventurous spirit. Having a laid back, open-minded and patient demeanor is important.

What about the clothing?

A year out, we will inform you of what to pack if you're unfamiliar with travel in this part of the world. The option to rent some gear (pants, parkas and boots) also exists to avoid you having to pay out for something you might only use once. We organize this through an outfitter and the equipment is of the highest order.

What about the weather?

Weather along the west coast of Hudson Bay in October and November can be variable. Expect to experience temperatures ranging from -5 to -25°C. Sunny days are possible, but conditions can be windy and foggy. On particularly cold days, we usually do not venture far from the cabin complex, so you're never far away from warming up quickly. With the proper clothing, you may be surprised how long you can last outside (and be enjoying it!). On clear nights, there is an excellent chance of observing northern lights from the cabins at this time of year.

What will I see?

This Arctic photography tour is designed for viewing and photographing polar bears, along with other Arctic wildlife, in their natural habitat. There may be an opportunity to see one to 10 polar bears per day, however, there may also be days when polar bears will not be spotted. During these days, you can enjoy walks on the frozen tundra in search of other Arctic wildlife and photograph the stunning landscapes.

WHAT DO I DO NEXT?

To reserve your space on this very special adventure, either:

- a. send an email to Andy@faunavista.com or Carrie@faunavista.com to register your interest and receive a booking form
- b. download the generic booking form using the link on the page from where you obtained your itinerary, fill it out, and send it to either email address as above.

Charity...a permanent winner

Andy's photography is all about giving some thing back; back to a world that has given him such a wealth of memorable experiences and opportunities. As a result, a proportion of all the profits we make from every perspective of Andy's work is donated to some of the world's leading wildlife charities. These include the David Shepherd Wildlife Foundation (DSWF), Animals Asia and the Bushlife Foundation – for which Andy and Carrie are the UK ambassadors.