

EXPLORE!

Tour Notes



Polar Bears in Churchill (CHPB 2015)



TOUR DURATION
6
DAYS



Tour Style: Classic
Tour Pace: Relaxed

Tour Type: Small Groups
Tour Comfort: Comfortable

tour Code: CHPB

Tour Highlights - Polar Bears in Churchill

- ✓ See the World's greatest concentration of polar bears in a small group of like-minded people
- ✓ Enjoy the comfort of our specially designed Polar Rovers, with its outdoor observation platform, enabling you to get safely up close to the bears
- ✓ Enjoy the in-depth knowledge of our experienced Expedition leaders, further enhancing your polar bear adventure

Tour Essentials

Accommodation: 5 nights Hotel
Included Meals: 5 breakfasts, 4 lunches, 4 dinners
Start Point: Join tour: Winnipeg
End Point: Tour ends: Winnipeg
Transport: Polar Rover
Countries: Arctic Region, Canada

Polar Bears in Churchill

Take a journey to the welcoming outpost town of Churchill to view polar bears up-close. Each day you will head out on a bespoke vehicle, known as a Polar Rover, to watch the bears interact. Take photographs as they walk across the ice in front of you and learn about 'bear behaviour' via the in-depth knowledge of our expert guides, further enhancing your polar bear adventure.

Wildlife

Polar Bears, Caribou, Ringed and bearded seals, Arctic fox. Also a variety of Arctic birds including gulls, Canada geese, Willow Ptarmigan and Snowy owls.

Suitability

We've given each of our tours a comfort rating and a tour pace, walking or cycling grade to give you a general idea about the level of activity on each tour and the standard of accommodation you will be staying in at the end of your day's adventure.

Often you'll stay in different styles of accommodation during your tour; so we make an average rating across the entire tour. For more information on where you'll stay each night, please refer to the day by day tour itinerary.

Tour Comfort: Comfortable

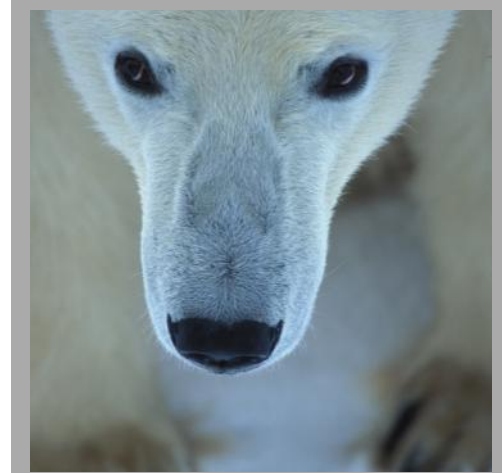
Hand-picked and chosen for their character, location or local importance, these properties have excellent facilities and a higher level of comfort and service. They provide the perfect wind down after an active day.

Tour Style: Classic

Packed with adventure, these tours offer inspiring destinations and authentic travel experiences at a reasonable price. Using all kinds of transport and accommodation, we'll take you off the beaten track to discover the true heart of the people and places you visit.

Tour Pace: Relaxed

Easy paced tours with plenty of time to relax and absorb the sights and immerse yourself in the local surroundings.



Your tour itinerary

Tour itinerary notes

While our intention is to adhere to the day-by-day itinerary as printed below, a degree of flexibility is built in. Overnight stops may vary from those suggested.

DAY 1 Winnipeg, Manitoba

Our tour begins in Winnipeg. You will meet your Expedition leader in the evening at your orientation dinner.


Overnight: **Hotel**

 **Included Meals:** Dinner

DAY 2 Winnipeg to Churchill - evening on the Tundra

Fly to Churchill in the morning, our base for our polar bear adventure. We head to the tundra this evening for our first glimpse of the bears. If we are lucky, our night time excursion might reveal one of nature's most exhilarating experiences - a chance to view the Northern Lights!


Overnight: **Hotel**

 **Included Meals:** Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner

DAY 3 Polar Bear Viewing

Uniquely designed Polar Rovers are our mobile means for spending time amongst the bears. We take a maximum of sixteen, ensuring everyone has a window seat. Our Expedition leaders know the best places to see polar bears, as these majestic creatures congregate to the region each fall.


Overnight: **Hotel**

 **Included Meals:** Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner

DAY 4 Polar Bear Viewing

You will be delighted by their rugged beauty and playful antics, as we watch the bears interact. From the warmth of our vehicle, we may see mothers with cubs, young males play-fighting, or a lone bear ambling over the tundra in solitary grandeur.

Overnight: **Hotel**

 **Included Meals:** Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner

DAY 5 Explore Churchill / fly to Winnipeg

You will have time to explore historic Churchill before boarding our afternoon flight back to Winnipeg. We enjoy a farewell lunch in Churchill and will have a final dinner reception before our adventure concludes in Winnipeg.

Overnight: **Hotel**

 **Included Meals:** Breakfast, Lunch

DAY 6 Depart Winnipeg

After breakfast, transfer to the airport for your flight home.

 **Included Meals:** Breakfast

Accommodation and Meals

Food & Drink

Included meals: 5 breakfasts, 4 lunches, 4 dinners included in the price of this tour. Please be prepared to pay for non-included meals. Please note that costs for drinks and meals can vary depending on location.

Budgeting for your Tour

You will need some extra money to cover meals and drinks not included in the tour price, any optional sightseeing, souvenirs and items of a personal nature such as laundry.

Food

The costs for meals may vary depending upon location, type of restaurant and number of courses eaten and so the prices given are an average guide. Local restaurants located off the beaten track may be less expensive, whereas an upmarket restaurant located in the centre of a major city may charge more.

Arctic Region

Canada

Lunch £: 13.00

Dinner £: 20.00

Drink

The prices for drinks can vary greatly depending upon location and the prices detailed below are an average guide. In general you would expect that drinks purchased in a supermarket or local bar to be less expensive, whilst drinks in an upmarket bar or restaurant may be more expensive.

Arctic Region

Canada

Bottle of Beer £: 3.00

Water £: 1.10

Tipping - Local Crew

Our Expedition leaders guide nature trips because they love to view wildlife and to educate people about the splendors of the world in which we live. They are not motivated by gratuities. Rather, they take great pride in making your trip an experience of a lifetime. If you feel your Expedition crew have done an outstanding job and wish to offer a gratuity, we recommend approx. \$15-\$25 USD per person, per day. A portion of this gratuity is shared with local Natural Habitat Adventures staff for their assistance on your adventure. Please note, Canadian dollars is also acceptable.

Foreign Exchange

Arctic Region

ATM Availability: Cash can be drawn on credit or debit cards from ATMs in major cities.

Credit Card Acceptance: Credit cards are useful and can be used in many places, but may be subject to a service charge. The ship accepts Visa and Mastercard.

Travellers Cheques: Travellers Cheques can be difficult to exchange and are not accepted aboard.

Recommended Currency for Exchange: A combination of US dollars cash and cards is best. It is advisable to take a minimum of US\$200-500 of your total spending money in cash, in mixed denominations (notes should be in good condition).

Where to Exchange: Banks or Forex offices in major cities.

Canada

ATM Availability: There are ATMs in the towns.

Credit Card Acceptance: Widely accepted just about everywhere.

Travellers Cheques: Canadian Travellers Cheques are the most convenient.

Local Currency: Canadian Dollars.

Recommended Currency for Exchange: Bring your money in Canadian Dollars or US Dollars cash or Travellers Cheques which can be used almost everywhere, although local stores are not keen to change anything over \$50.

Where to Exchange: Banks or 'Forex' offices in main towns/cities. Your tour leader will advise you on arrival.

Joining your Tour

Flight Information

You are able to book this tour on a 'land only' basis or as a 'flight inclusive' package. Your flight inclusive package will be fully protected by the Civil Aviation Authority (CAA) ATOL protection scheme.

Booking a land only package with Explore

Customers who have chosen to book on the 'Land Only' arrangements of our tour, please ensure that you have checked your tour specific 'Joining Instructions' prior to booking your own travel arrangements. Your joining instructions can be found on our website at www.explore.co.uk, in the tour specific dates and prices section.

You may also be eligible for the Free Explore Transfer. For more information please refer to <https://www.explore.co.uk/transfers>.

Joining Tour Abroad

Customers booked on the 'Land Only' arrangements will now receive a Free Transfer, provided you arrive and depart on the tour only itinerary start and end dates. The transfers will be from the Explore designated airport or train station to the joining point of your tour, and then back from the ending point to the designated airport or train station. The exception to this rule is customers who are booked on a tour where the joining and ending point is at the designated airport or train station.

If you are not eligible for the Free Transfer then you will need to make your own way through to the joining and ending point. On a majority of our tours Explore will be able to provide a private transfer at an additional cost. Please ask for a quote at the time of booking.

For more information regarding the Explore Free Transfer please refer to <https://www.explore.co.uk/transfers>.

Free transfers are not available for Self-Guided, Tailormade or Tours for Churches customers.

Booking a flight inclusive package with Explore

We have a good selection of flights not only from London but from many regional airports around the UK allowing us to compare fares between scheduled carriers as well as low cost and charter airlines. Our dedicated flights team will match the best flight options to your arrival and departure airport.

On our website we display a UK flight inclusive package guide price which is generally based on a London departure. To avoid paying supplements or to secure your preferred flight option, we recommend booking as early as possible, especially for peak travel dates.

Important Information

Travel Insurance

It is a condition of joining any of our tours that you must have valid travel insurance. It must indicate that you have cover for (at least) medical expenses and emergency repatriation in the event of illness or injury. Medical and repatriation insurance cover is not mandatory for UK residents who are travelling in England and Scotland. We also strongly recommend your policy includes curtailment, personal effects and cancellation protection as all deposits paid are non-refundable. You will also need to ensure your travel policy covers you for all activities you intend to do whilst on tour.

We are delighted to include FREE travel insurance **for all qualifying customers** who book an Explore trip from 01 January 2015.

For more information about Travel insurance and to check whether you are eligible to receive free cover, please visit www.explore.co.uk/insurance. Explore Worldwide Ltd are an Appointed Representative of Campbell Irvine Limited, who are authorised and regulated by the Financial Conduct Authority. The registration number can be checked by visiting the the FCA's website www.fca.gov.uk or by contacting them on 0800 111 6768.

Visa Information

Canada Visas are not required for UK, US, Canadian, New Zealand and Australian citizens.

All visa information is subject to change. You should confirm all visa related questions with the relevant Embassy prior to departure.

USA (If flights transit): According to US law, passengers will have to disembark, collect luggage and clear immigration before re-boarding for the onward flight.

Citizens of the UK, New Zealand, Australia, Canada and passport holders from several EU countries can enter the United States without a visa under the Visa Waiver Program (VWP). This applies if you enter the country by sea or by air on a carrier participating in the visa waiver scheme, holding a return/ onward ticket. The passport requirements are that it must be machine readable, and must contain a digital photograph of the holder and also an integrated circuit chip that stores biographic information.

All passengers travelling to the USA under the Visa Waiver Programme must provide their details online no later than 72 hours prior to travel. British travellers who have not registered before their trip are likely to be detained and sent home.

When completing an application for transit you should enter the words 'In Transit' with your final destination location in the address line. Anyone applying for an Electronic Travel Authorisation (ESTA) to travel under the Visa Waiver system will be charged a fee of 14USD (9GBP).

For more information, and to apply online, please visit the following website at <https://esta.cbp.dhs.gov>. Once obtained, the application will be valid for a period of two years, or for the validity of your passport (whichever is shorter).

For more information about who is eligible for the VWP, or any other questions you may have regarding your eligibility, or machine readable passports, please contact your local consular office, or visit

Vaccinations & Protection

Arctic Region

Nothing compulsory, we recommend protection against typhoid, tetanus, diphtheria, polio and hepatitis A. The above is not an exhaustive list. Further information regarding vaccinations and travel health advice can be found by following the NHS and NaTHNaC links at <http://www.explore.co.uk/Travelhealth/> and from your local healthcare provider.

Canada

Nothing compulsory, but we recommend protection against tetanus, typhoid, infectious hepatitis and polio. The above is not an exhaustive list. Further information regarding vaccinations and travel health advice can be found by following the NHS and NaTHNaC links at <http://www.explore.co.uk/Travelhealth/> and from your local healthcare provider. Visa and vaccination requirements are subject to change and should be confirmed before departure.

Preparing for your Tour

Climate

Arctic Region

Canada

May-Sep is the best time to visit, when the weather is usually warm, dry and pleasant. Temperatures can be a little cooler on the coast and in the mountains; rain can be expected at any time. Early in the season, there can be snow in some areas which may limit walking possibilities.

Clothing

Warm gloves or mittens and glove liners

Warm hat - make sure it covers your ears

Scarf or neck gaiter

Warm trousers - Ski pants /salopettes are good if you have them

Warm socks and sock liners (several pairs)

Silk or polypropylene long underwear for layering (tops & bottoms)

Turtleneck tops for layering

Warm sweaters or fleece tops

Comfortable warm trousers for wearing in the evenings

Underwear and sleepwear

Swimsuit if you wish to use the pool at the Fort Garry Hotel

Down parka and boots will be supplied for use on the trip when you arrive in Winnipeg. Please pack a Warm jacket and footwear for arrival into Winnipeg. Sizes for the loaned jacket and boots will be taken in advance, once you have booked onto the tour.

Equipment

Photography equipment and chargers

Binoculars - these are a must on the tundra. For optimal viewing, we suggest those with specs between 10x42 and 8x42. You may even try 8x35, but only if they contain high quality glass. Practice using your binoculars before your adventure to make sure they are not too powerful or you do not have trouble holding them steady. Couples should consider bringing two pairs of binoculars, so both people can view wildlife simultaneously.

Water-resistant daypack for use during outings

Hand/foot warmers (highly recommended)

Sunglasses (with UV protection)

Prescription glasses/contact lenses

Yaktrax (optional.) Yaktrax can be extremely helpful to prevent slipping in snowy or icy conditions. Other popular brands of traction devices include DueNorth, Kahtoola, and Stabilicer. (There are a limited number of Yaktrax available for guest use in Churchill.)

Small flashlight or headlamp (with spare batteries) - recommended for the evening tundra excursion

Toiletries

Dry skin lotion

Sunscreen & lip balm (SPF15+) Bring protection for your hands, face, and lips, as the reflection off of the snow and ice can be intense.

Small medical kit

Battery-operated alarm clock or wristwatch

Zip-lock bags are great for protecting camera equipment.

Footwear

Boots will be supplied for use on the trip when you arrive into Winnipeg on Day 1. Sizes will be taken in advance once you have booked onto the tour.

Luggage: On Tour

The weight limit for checked-in baggage on our charter flight between Churchill and Winnipeg is 50 lbs. per person.

As luggage space on our transfer vehicles is limited, we ask that you limit your luggage to ONE piece of checked baggage per person.

We suggest one water-resistant or waterproof bag and one carry-on or daypack per person. We highly recommend packing light - take only the essentials you will need during your adventure.

General Information

Country details

Arctic Region

Time Difference to GMT: -12

Canada

Population: 33,000,000

Size of Country: 9,984,670

EXPLORE! The Adventure Travel Experts available online 24/7

Major Language: English and French

Religion: Roman Catholic, Protestant

Time Difference to GMT: -7

Electric Supply & Plugs

Arctic Region

2 Pin Round

Canada

2 Pin Flat

Why Choose Explore

We've been creating award-winning pioneering adventure holidays for over 30 years, earning the trust of thousands of delighted customers, who feel safe in our hands. Our tour leaders have expert local knowledge and our tours are designed to take you off the beaten track to see the most exotic, inspiring and dramatic places in the world.

- With over 30 years' experience, we are passionate about what we do.
- Pioneering small group adventures, self-guided, private journeys & tailor-made holidays.
- Award-winning tour leaders who you can trust.
- Responsible travel is and always has been one of the driving principles of Explore.

Our adventure holidays are full of exciting things to see and do, exploring in small groups travelling by bus, boat, plane, rickshaw, camel, elephant, or any number of unusual forms of transport. Often you will stay in family-run hotels and village houses and enjoy authentic local cuisine. In this way, it's easy to discover the true heart of the people and the place you travel to – and make some new friends along the way. Each tour is uniquely different, so please feel free to browse through our tours to see what may whet your appetite.

Our commitment to the environment

We are passionate about sustainable travel and work hard to create tours where your holiday delivers real benefits to the local communities. We minimise our impact by travelling in small groups, respecting local cultures and traditions, reducing waste and offsetting 100% of the CO2 from our flights.

When you travel with Explore, you are directly contributing to local economies and helping empower the people you meet. We currently support a range of charities and good causes, including: Toilet Twinning (helping to flush away poverty), Lone Buffalo Foundation (a community project based in Laos providing creative skills for young people), Dekamer (a turtle rescue centre in Turkey) and Kids Saving the Rainforest (a wildlife rescue centre in Costa Rica supported through the LATA foundation). We also care passionately about the world's wildlife. We are patrons of the Born Free Organisation and Friends of Conservation.

Cool Earth

Explore are proud to support Cool Earth in their effort to reduce global carbon dioxide levels through the prevention of deforestation in the South America rainforest. Cool Earth focus on areas in immediate danger of deforestation, supporting local communities to be forest guardians. To date 350,000 acres of rainforest has been protected. Saving rainforest also protects rare animals and plants, allows local forest communities to maintain their way of life, and protects a major source of oxygen and fresh water. When you travel on an Explore holiday we make a donation to Cool Earth that exceeds the impact of our customers flights each year.

Earth Matters

The Travel Foundation

Explore are active members and supporters of the Travel Foundation which has established a variety of sustainable tourism projects in destinations and works with industry to improve practice. Visit their website www.thetravelfoundation.org.uk

Tourism Concern

Explore support the work of Tourism Concern who campaign for fairly and ethically traded tourism, and are part of its Ethical Tour Operator Group www.tourismconcern.org.uk

- For further information on responsible travel go to <http://www.explore.co.uk/ResponsibleTourism/>
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Know before you go

We strongly recommend that you check your government's travel advisory for up-to-date information and advice about your destination: safety and security, entry requirements, health, local laws and customs. For UK Foreign and Commonwealth Office Advice follow the link at <http://www.explore.co.uk/essential-travel-information/travel-resources/travel-safety>

Booking Your Holiday

Peace of mind - book with confidence

You can book your Explore holiday with confidence, as all monies paid to us for your trip are fully protected. Explore is a fully bonded tour operator licensed by the Civil Aviation Authority (CAA) and by ABTOT.

The air holiday packages (Tours including flights) that we advertise are ATOL protected, since we hold an Air Travel Organiser's Licence granted by the Civil Aviation Authority. Our ATOL number is ATOL 2595. In addition, As a member of the Association of Bonded Travel Organisers Trust Limited (ABTOT), Explore has provided a bond to meet the requirements of the Package Travel, Package Holidays and Package Tours Regulations 1992. Please note that packages booked outside the UK are only protected when purchased directly with Explore.

Reserving your place

To reserve your place on this tour you will need to check availability on the Explore website or through our dedicated call centre based in the UK where you can. Our tours can fill up quickly so you are advised to book as early as possible. If your chosen date is 'Available' or 'Guaranteed' we will be able to provisionally hold you a space for up to 48 hours.

For Self-Guided holidays and Private Journeys simply choose your date of travel and let us know so we can confirm all ground services.

The easiest way to confirm your booking is through our website. When you are ready to book, we normally require a 10% non-refundable deposit, but for some holidays this may be more to cover such items as permit fees, internal flights or other non-refundable services. If your travel starts within 60 days of booking, full payment will be required at the time of booking

100% No Surcharge Guarantee

The price paid for our holidays is no longer subject to change. Once booked and confirmed we will guarantee the price you pay will not increase, whatever the circumstances. You will not be approached to pay fuel surcharges unlike the vast majority of other adventure tour operators. The price guarantee applies to all new bookings departing between 1st January 2014 and 31st December 2015.

Tour Itinerary Versions

Itinerary details may vary depending on departure date and alternative itineraries for this tour may exist. Please refer to the dates and prices page on our website to check which itinerary operates on each departure date.

Please ensure that you have an up-to-date copy of these tour notes immediately before you travel, as from time to time our itineraries may be amended, either for operational reasons or in response to feedback from customers. You will be informed of any major changes to your tour but small changes may just be added to these tour notes.

Please note: 2015 itinerary versions are applicable to tours departing in 2015. 2016/17 itinerary versions are applicable to tours departing from 1st January to 31st December 2016.

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