

EXPLORE!

TRIP NOTES



Polar Bears in Churchill (CHPB 2017)



TRIP DURATION
6
DAYS



Tour Style: Classic
Tour Pace: Relaxed

Tour Type: Small Groups
Accommodation
Grade: Premium

Trip Code: CHPB

Trip 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 it's 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

Trip Essentials

Accommodation: 5 nights Hotel
Included Meals: 5 breakfasts, 4 lunches, 4 dinners
Start Point: Join trip: Winnipeg
End Point: Trip 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.

Accommodation Grade: Premium

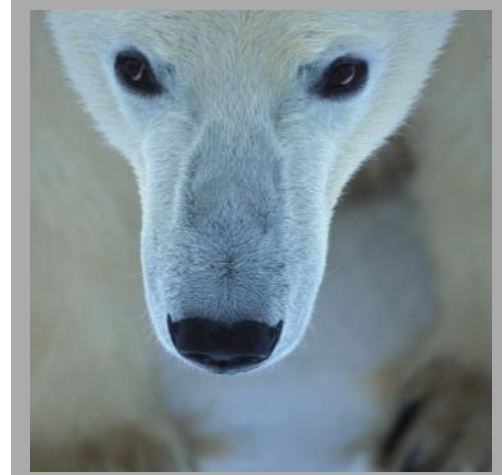
Our comfortable accommodation is hand-picked and chosen for its character, location or local importance. These properties have excellent facilities and a higher level of comfort and service.

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 trip 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.

Fort Garry Hotel

The Fort Garry Hotel is one of Canada's lavish railway hotels built by the Grand Trunk Pacific Railway in 1913. This historic, downtown, landmark is built in a French chateau style and is Winnipeg's finest hotel. Relax in the lounge, enjoy a drink in the antique bar, or indulge in a sumptuous treatment at Ten Spa, an authentic Turkish-style bath and spa located on the top floor of the 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!

Unspecified Churchill Hotel

In the Arctic frontier outpost of Churchill, hotels are small and simple. They are clean, comfortable and conveniently located in the center of town. Every room has its own private bathroom with a shower. Please be aware that hotel space in Churchill is scarce and to accommodate demand, we must use a variety of local properties. Room size, amenities, and range of services may vary among hotels. Your hotel will be clarified in your final documentation.


 **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.

Unspecified Churchill Hotel

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 **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.

Unspecified Churchill Hotel

In the Arctic frontier outpost of Churchill, hotels are small and simple. They are clean, comfortable and conveniently located in the center of town. Every room has its own private bathroom with a shower. Please be aware that hotel space in Churchill is scarce and to accommodate demand, we must use a variety of local properties. Room size, amenities, and range of services may vary among hotels. Your hotel will be clarified in your final documentation.


 **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.

Fort Garry Hotel

The Fort Garry Hotel is one of Canada's lavish railway hotels built by the Grand Trunk Pacific Railway in 1913. This historic, downtown, landmark is built in a French chateau style and is Winnipeg's finest hotel. Relax in the lounge, enjoy a drink in the antique bar, or indulge in a sumptuous treatment at Ten Spa, an authentic Turkish-style bath and spa located on the top floor of the 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 trip. 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 Trip

You will need some extra money to cover meals and drinks not included in the trip 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 Trip

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.

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

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>.

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 booking with Explore that you have adequate valid travel insurance. It is your responsibility to arrange appropriate travel insurance and ensure you have read and understood the full terms and conditions of your travel insurance policy to ensure that you are covered for all activities you intend to undertake whilst on the tour, including all optional activities. Your Insurance Policy must fully cover you for medical expenses and emergency repatriation to your home country. Please ensure your policy includes medical emergency helicopter evacuation in the event of illness or injury and covers the entire duration of your holiday. If you are trekking at altitude please ensure that there is no upper altitude limit which may limit or exclude cover for your trip. Medical and repatriation insurance cover is not mandatory for UK residents who are travelling on trips within the United Kingdom.

EXPLORE!
The Adventure Travel Experts

CAMPBELL IRVINE
DIRECT TRAVEL INSURANCE



Travel Insurance is essential. If you have not already arranged cover, please contact our recommended Travel Insurance providers www.campbellirvinedirect.com/Explore who offer Travel Insurance specifically designed to cover travel with Explore or call **Campbell Irvine Direct** on Tel: 020 7938 1734

Explore Worldwide is an Introducer Appointed Representative of Campbell Irvine Ltd who are authorised and regulated by the Financial Conduct Authority.

Travel Aware

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 www.explore.co.uk/travel-safety

EXPLORE! Share your experiences with us



We strongly advise that you register with the FCO to receive updates to the travel advice for your chosen destination. A hard copy of the current FCO Travel Advice for your chosen destination is available by contacting cr@explore.co.uk or 01252 379438.

Under 18 immigration guidance

Please note that some countries require proof of parental consent when travelling overseas with under 18s. Please check requirements with the relevant embassy or consular office well in advance of travel if this applies to your party.

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.

From March 2016 any visitor travelling to Canada, including those who don't currently need a visa to visit, will have to get an electronic travel authorisation (eTA) to enter Canada. From 1 August 2015, travellers will have the opportunity to go online and apply for their eTA ahead of time. For more information see the official Canadian government website.

USA (If flights transit): you will need to apply for an ESTA if you are transiting the USA as you will have to disembark 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) - where you apply for an ESTA (Electronic System for Travel Authorisation), which applies if you enter the country by sea or by air. This must be done on line - <https://esta.cbp.dhs.gov> no later than 72 hours prior to travel. Travellers who have not registered before their trip are likely to be refused boarding. When completing an application for transit you should enter the words 'In Transit' with your final destination location in the address line

You must have an electronic passport with a digital chip containing biometric information about the passport owner. UK passports which are biometric feature a small gold symbol (camera) at the bottom of the front cover.

If you have visited Iraq, Syria, Iran or Sudan in the past five years or are dual nationals of these countries, you cannot travel under the Visa Waiver Programme. Instead you will need to apply for a visa from the nearest US Embassy or Consulate. If you are unable to provide a valid visa before boarding flights to the US, or entering via another method, you may not be permitted to travel.

For further information please check out the US embassy website.

Visa applications - <http://london.usembassy.gov/niv/apply.html>

If you do require assistance in obtaining a visa then you may consider applying through Explore's recommended visa service in the UK, Travcour. See www.travcour.com to download the relevant visa application for your trip, if applicable (UK citizens only), along with details of how to apply for your visa through Travcour. The Team at Travcour will be happy to answer specific questions relating to visa applications, please call them directly on 0208 5431846.

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 Trip

Climate

Arctic Region

The average temperatures in the Norwegian Arctic is approximately 5 degrees centigrade during the summer months (June-August.) It can however feel significantly colder with the wind, so be prepared for colder temperatures.

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: +1

Canada

Population: 33,000,000

Size of Country: 9,984,670

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, 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.

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

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, 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) and have recently supported women's cooperatives in Borneo and Morocco. We are a member of Tourism Concern's Ethical Tour Operator Group (www.tourismconcern.org.uk) and support their campaign for fair and ethical tourism. We also care passionately about the world's wildlife and actively support and promote the Born Free Organisation and Mahouts Elephant Foundation.

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 2016 and 31st December 2017.

Trip 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: 2017 itinerary versions are applicable to tours departing in 2017. 2018/19 itinerary versions are applicable to tours departing from 1st January to 31st December 2018.

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