EXPLORE! Tour Notes

PRICE GUARANTEE 100% NO SURCHARGES

West and Southern Greenland (FRWG 2015)

POLAR

TOURDURAT
12
DAYS

Tour Style: Classic
Tour Pace: Relaxed
Tour Type: Small Groups
Tour Comfort: Comfortable
tour Code: FRWG

Tour Highlights - West and Southern Greenland

- ✓ Follow the path of the Norse settlers who discovered Greenland over 900 years ago
- ✓ Explore ancient Norse ruins
- ✓ Cruise past enormous glaciers and visit UNESCO-listed World Heritage Sites
- ✓ Visit the fjords of Southern Greenland and several settlements
- ✓ Visit Iceland, Southern Greenland and Disko Bay in one voyage.

Tour Essentials

Accommodation:	12 nights Comfortable Boat
Included Meals:	11 breakfasts, 10 lunches, 11 dinners
Start Point:	Join tour: Reykjavik
End Point:	Tour ends: Copenhagen
Transport:	Zodiac, MS Fram
Countries:	Arctic Region, Greenland, Iceland

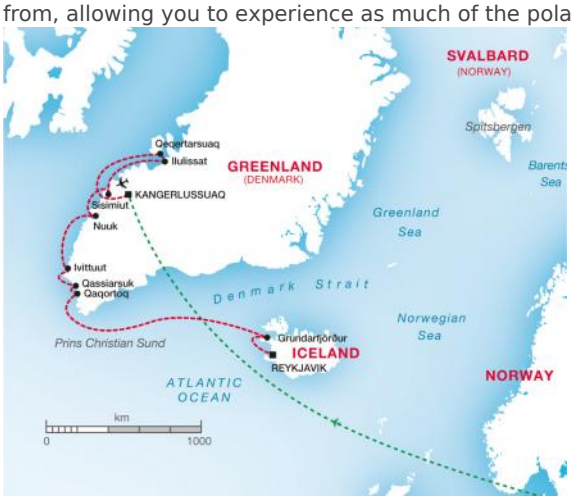
West and Southern Greenland - M/S Fram

Icescapes to abandoned villages
This is a varied journey to the little-visited sounds and glaciers of west Greenland. You will sail beneath majestic fjords and close to icebergs and glaciers. The area proliferates with icescapes, which you can appreciate up-close from a Zodiac or with walks on the islands - both of these afford fantastic photographic opportunities.

This voyage also gives the traveller an insight into the rich history, as we visit abandoned villages and Inuit settlements. You'll visit some of the best-preserved ruins from the Norse period and learn about the Viking legacies. During the summer, there is 24-hour daylight, so you can really make the most of your time exploring Greenland's dramatic landscapes.

Ship Description

The M/S Fram is a comfortable vessel for your polar exploration with modern amenities such as fitness room, Jacuzzi and sauna. The ample indoor and outdoor public spaces are designed to ensure you enjoy the passing scenery and wildlife sightings; each table in the restaurant has scenic views and the observation lounge has panoramic windows. There’s also a selection of shore excursions to choose from, allowing you to experience as much of the polar wilderness as possible.



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 Arrive Reykjavik

The world's northernmost capital, Reykjavik is an exciting, vibrant city surrounded by incredible scenery. Here is where your voyage begins.

Overnight: **Comfortable Boat**

Included Meals: Dinner

DAY 2 Grundarfjörður, Iceland

Grundarfjörður is also often called "Iceland in a nutshell" because of the diversity of its landscape; lava and rock formations, glaciers and volcanic activity, as well as a wealth of bird life and picturesque scenery.

Overnight: **Comfortable Boat**

Included Meals: Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner

DAY 3 Denmark Strait

While crossing the Denmark Strait we take the reverse route of the great Norse settlers who left the shores of Iceland and Norway more than 900 years ago to travel to the "Green Land".

Overnight: **Comfortable Boat**

Included Meals: Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner

DAY 4 Prins Christian Sund/Nunap Isua, Greenland

This 45km long channel-like sound is often full of icebergs and its impressive granite rock faces on each side create a spectacular transit. If the ice conditions do not allow us to transit, we round Nunap Isua (Cape Farewell) instead.

Overnight: **Comfortable Boat**

Included Meals: Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner

DAY 5 Hvalsey and Qaqortoq

In Hvalsey some of the best preserved ruins from the Norse period are found including the former 'Austurbygd' which was abandoned in 1408. From here we continue to Qaqortoq, founded by the Norwegian trader Anders Olsen in 1775, and today home to 3,400 people.

Overnight: **Comfortable Boat**

Included Meals: Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner

DAY 6 Narsaq and Qassiarsuk

Narsaq is located at the beautiful shores of the Tunulliarfik Fjord, and this area of South Greenland has been inhabited for thousands of years. Today around 1,600 people live in town. Narsaq means "plain" and the name refers to the large, green plain on which the town sits. The glaciers north of town ensure that there are icebergs around and the fjord is rich in seals, salmon, trout and minke whales. The afternoon will be spent in Qassiarsuk, a small community known for the settlement of the Viking Erik Raude. He was banished from Iceland and escaped to the land he called Greenland. Erik settled in Qassiarsuk because the area wa,s according to him, the richest and best site in Greenland when he arrived in 982.

Overnight: **Comfortable Boat**

Included Meals: Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner

DAY 7 Ivittuut

Ivittuut has a small community of approximately 200 people, but they rarely spend the whole year in this old mine village. In the summertime some of the old houses here are used for tourism. Ivittuut is a former cryolite mine, which was extracted for use by the Allied during World War II. The mine was closed down in 1987.

Overnight: **Comfortable Boat**

Included Meals: Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner

DAY 8 Nuuk

Nuuk is the capital and the oldest town in Greenland founded by the Norwegian missionary Hans Egede in 1728. Today old and new traditions meet here, from picturesque old buildings in ”Kolonihaven” to the modern building of the Greenland Home Rule.

Overnight: **Comfortable Boat**

Included Meals: Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner

DAY 9 Sisimiut

Sisimiut is the second largest community in Greenland. Here you’ll find fishing trawlers, a shipyard and a busy fish processing factory. We recommend a visit to the arts and crafts workshop close to the pier. Here you may watch the local craftsmen create traditional jewellery and purchase local souvenirs.

Overnight: **Comfortable Boat**

Included Meals: Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner

DAY 10 Ilulissat

Ilulissat means 'iceberg' in Greenlandic, and this town lives up to its name. The most productive glacier in the Northern Hemisphere, Sermeq Kujalleq, feeds enormous bergs into the Ilulissat Icefjord. As a result this area is on UNESCO's list of World Heritage Sites. Ilulissat holds the busy life of a bigger town and also the house where Knud Rasmussen was born. In the museum you will find the extensive collection from Knud Rasmussens expeditions and the history of Ilulissat (entrance fee is approx. 40 DKK.) During our landing, the expedition team will take you on a guided hike to the abandoned settlement of Sermermiut, which is situated 1.5 kilometres south of the town.

Overnight: **Comfortable Boat**

Included Meals: Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner

DAY 11 Qeqertarsuaq

Qeqertarsuaq means “The Big Island” and is situated on the old volcanic island of Disko. The most important industry in the town is fishing and sealing, though whaling once used to play an important role. The town is set in wonderful surroundings at the foot of the impressive Basalt Mountains. On shore, you will be able to visit the the old trade quarter with buildings dating back to the time when Qeqertarsuaq was the ’capital’ of Northern Greenland. Here you will find the very special octagonal church, called 'Our Lord's Little Ink Pot'. A walk through town gives a vivid impression of the hunters’ society in Qeqertarsuaq and you can learn more about it's history by visiting the local museum (entrance fee is approx. 25 DKK.) Our expedition team will also take you on a guided walk over Rødeelv (the Red River) through Blæsedalen (the valley of the winds). Walk through characteristic mountain heath to see flora specific to Disko Island. The hike starts from the Women’s House and ends at the waterfall, and passes by the stunning 900m high Skarvefjeld (Mountain of the Cormorant). During the walk you will have spectacular views to the seaside, where the huge icebergs have stranded in the shallow waters.

Overnight: **Comfortable Boat**

Included Meals: Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner

DAY 12 Kangerlussuaq / Copenhagen

Join your charter flight from Kangerlussuaq to Copenhagen where our journey comes to an end.

Overnight: **Comfortable Boat**

Included Meals: Breakfast

Accommodation and Meals

Food & Drink

Included meals: 11 breakfasts, 10 lunches,11 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.

Cabins

Prices are based on the use of inside, category one cabins on decks 3, 5 and 6. Category one cabins are based on twin share, with one bed and one sofa bed. They are comfortable with a private toilet and shower, fridge and TV. The MS Fram has a number of different cabin categories, many of which are outside facing, with two beds (apart from superior cabins and suites, which have double beds). Some cabins have portholes and others, larger windows and sitting areas. All cabins are twin share, but we can also offer single occupancy at a supplement, if you are travelling alone. Call us for details on the cabin choice to fit your requirements.

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

Greenland

Iceland

Lunch £: 17.50

Dinner £: 35.00

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

Greenland

Iceland

Bottle of Beer £: 6.50

Water £: 2.00

Tipping - Local Crew

Tipping is collected at the end of the voyage and is divided among the crew. Tipping is a very personal matter and the amount you wish to give is at your discretion, but as a generally guideline, we suggest US$12 per person per day.

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.

Greenland

Iceland

ATM Availability: Cash can be drawn on credit cards from ATM’s in Reykjavik and at the airport.

Credit Card Acceptance: Most shops and restaurants take credit cards.

Travellers Cheques: Can be exchanged at banks and post offices.

Local Currency: Icelandic Krona (ISK).

Recommended Currency for Exchange: Both GBP and USD are readily exchanged at banks and post offices.

Where to Exchange: Both GBP and USD are readily exchanged at banks and post offices

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

No visa is required for citizens of UK, CAN, USA, AUS and NZ. Other nationalities should consult the relevant consulate. All visa information is subject to change. You should confirm all visa related issues with the relevant Embassy prior to departure.

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.

Greenland

Iceland

Nothing compulsory; tetanus recommended. 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.

Preparing for your Tour

Climate

Arctic Region

Greenland

Iceland

Iceland has a cool and temperate climate and, despite its location just south of the Arctic Circle, its northerly latitude is counteracted by the warm waters of the North Atlantic Drift which encircles the island. Temperatures in winter can fluctuate between about 10°C and -10°C and precipitation in the form of rain, sleet or snow is to be expected at any time. Days will be short, with daylight often only guaranteed between about 11 am and 4 pm in December. The best time for seeing the Aurora Borealis is October to March. Summer is generally cool with average temperatures for June and July around 12 - 15 degree centigrade in Reykjavik, although is known to be warmer in other parts of the country. In June and July you can enjoy continuous daylight and see the Midnight Sun, whilst late spring and early autumn offer long twilights.

Clothing

Pack comfortable, casual clothing for all activities. Wind and waterproof outer layers are essential, and a jacket is provided in the cost of the cruise. Beware of tight clothing that leaves no room for trapped air, which is an excellent insulator. Wool, silk and some of the new synthetic fibres, like polar fleece, retain heat better than cotton.
Parkas
A wind and waterproof jacket is provided as part of the cost of your holiday.
Gloves
Keeping your hands warm and dry can be a challenge. Thin polypropylene gloves can be worn underneath warm outergloves. This allows you some protection from the cold when removing your gloves to operate your camera etc. We strongly recommend that you bring more than one pair of gloves, in case one gets wet (or lost).
Hat/Cap
Warm, woollen hat/cap to protect your ears, as well as a scarf, neck gaiter or other face protection, such as a balaclava.
Trousers
Water-resistant trousers of coated nylon or, even better, Gore-Tex® are essential for your comfort. They can be worn over your regular clothes to keep you warm and dry. We suggest that you purchase trousers a few sizes larger than you normally wear as you will be wearing them over other clothing. Gore-Tex® or similar fabrics are excellent for keeping out wind and water without trapping excess heat. Rain gear and Gore-Tex® products can be found in any outdoor sport clothing store. In addition to your waterproof trousers, warm ski pants are suggested if you have them. Warm trousers such as jeans, corduroys etc are also good.
Socks
Warm wool socks worn over a thin pair of silk, polypropylene socks should provide enough warmth and insulation for your feet. Bring several pairs of socks, since you will inevitably get your feet wet.
Outer Clothing
Woollen, knit or cotton sweaters/tops, polar fleece tops (medium weight), several cotton turtlenecks and T-shirts for layering on and off the ship.
Underclothing
Thermal underwear is highly recommended as it will keep you warm without adding bulk. Most polar travellers prefer a lightweight version.

Equipment

Sunglasses and sun cream
Personal toiletries
A refilllable water bottle
Books/reading material
Camera and memory cards (and something to protect the camera when out in the elements)
Seasickness remedy
Walking poles

Footwear

Waterproof boots are available on-board for a small charge. Also ensure you take good walking boots and trainers for relaxing.

Luggage: On Tour

One main piece of baggage and daypack. Remember you are expected to carry your own luggage so don't overload yourself.

Luggage allowance on tour: 20kg

General Information

Country details

Arctic Region

Time Difference to GMT: -12

Greenland

Iceland

Population: 318,452

Size of Country: 103,001 sq km

Major Language: Icelandic

Religion: National Church of iceland

Electric Supply & Plugs

Arctic Region

2 Pin Round

Greenland

Iceland

2 Pin Round

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 & tailormade holidays.
- Award winning tour leaders who you can trust.
- Responsible travel is and always has been one 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 traditional, 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/

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 andÂ security, entry requirements, health, local laws and customs. ForÂ UK Foreign and Commonwealth Office Advice follow the link atÂ 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 LicenceÂ granted by the Civil Aviation Authority.Â 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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