

The Northwest Passage

From **8/28/2020**
to **9/19/2020**

Ship: **L'AUSTRAL**

From **Kangerlussuaq**
to **Nome, Alaska**

Embark aboard **L'Austral** for a **23-day luxury expedition** from Kangerlussuaq to Nome.

We are inviting you to set sail for the Far North, well beyond the Arctic Circle, to a legendary, highly coveted maritime route: **the Northwest Passage**, the only possible shipping route between the Atlantic and the Pacific.

In Winter, this “roof of the world” is transformed into a majestic white desert; whilst in Summer, for a few short weeks, the temperature rises enough for **the ice** to melt. Life reappears, nature is reborn, the mythical route is finally free and we can breathe in the unique scent of **great adventure**.

During your cruise, you will first sail along the west coast of Greenland to discover charming **Inuit villages** and **some of the largest icebergs in the Arctic**.

You will then sail across **Baffin Bay** to begin your unforgettable journey westward. On **Beechey Island**, retrace the steps of the Franklin expedition, before marvelling at the sublime canyon at Fury Beach.

Next, admire the incredible wildlife at **Fairway Rock**, home to many marine mammals and sea birds.

This is an exceptional crossing that promises thrills and unforgettable memories.

We are privileged guests in these remote lands where we are at the mercy of weather, ice, tidal and current conditions. Landings on certain sites and the observation of certain wildlife cannot be guaranteed. They vary from day to day, making each PONANT cruise a unique experience. The Captain and the Expedition Leader will make every effort to ensure that your experience is as rich as possible, while complying with the safety rules and instructions imposed by the AECO.



Flight Paris / Kangerlussuaq +
transfers + flight Nome / Seattle



The information in this document is valid as of 2/20/2020

The Northwest Passage

YOUR STOPOVERS :

KANGERLUSSUAQ

Embarkation 8/28/2020 from 17h00 to 18h00

Departure 8/28/2020 at 22h30

From 1941 to 1992, the town of **Kangerlussuaq** in Greenland was home to an American military base. Nowadays, thanks to its international airport, it has become a transit point for travellers seeking adventure in the Far North. Located to the north of the Arctic Circle, this town is the starting point of magnificent discoveries surrounded by **unspoiled nature**. Indeed, just a few dozen kilometres from there it is possible to get close to the Greenland ice sheet, the largest **body of ice in the Northern Hemisphere**. From Kangerlussuaq, admire also the superb landscapes of tundra in autumnal colours, where Arctic hares, musk oxen, Arctic foxes, reindeer, falcons and eagles live.

SISIMIUT

Arrival 8/29/2020

Departure 8/29/2020

During your cruise, we invite you to discover **Sisimiut**, founded in 1756 and the second largest town in Greenland. This small town is typical of Greenland, boasting bewitching panoramas: here and there, **colourful stilt houses** dot the **undulating landscape**, and the small fishing port stands as the gateway to an icy realm. As for the town centre, it is home to a number of historic buildings, a small church and a museum which retraces the history of the Inuit people, as well as many craft shops. When your ship drops anchor here, you will set out to meet the locals in a typically arctic atmosphere.

DISKO BAY

Arrival 8/30/2020

Departure 8/30/2020

To the east of Baffin Bay, discover Disko Bay, scattered with countless icebergs produced by the Ilulissat Icefjord, a UNESCO World Heritage Site. From your ship, admire the majestic ballet of these ice giants as they slowly drift across the dark waters. This site is a natural marvel of Greenland, and is also renowned as an observation point for the region's many humpback whales. The encounters with wild fauna and stunning landscapes in the heart of this spectacular and fragile nature will be pure moments of wonder for you.

TUGTUTOQ

Arrival 8/31/2020

Departure 8/31/2020

The small uninhabited island of **Tugtutoq**, a former Inuit encampment, is located in the Upernavik region. The power of this place lies in its soft landscapes, which conceal many **archaeological treasures** nestling in the **wild tundra**. After a stop on a beautiful beach, you will have the opportunity to walk around ancient **peat houses** from the Thule civilisation, built according to a traditional method. The graves of a cemetery, dotted here and there between the rocks, seem to remind visitors of the presence of ancestors in these places marked by the Thulean culture.

KULLORSUAQ

Arrival 9/1/2020

Departure 9/1/2020

Well beyond the Arctic Circle, in the majestic landscapes of Greenland's Northwest, you will find the village of **Kullorsuaq**, the last bastion of Greenland's traditional hunters. Here is where you will find Greenland's true character... Vast mineral expanses, **sumptuous mountains**, impressive glaciers and, above all, the local population which still lives off fishing and seal or bear hunting. Hospitality and respect for nature are essential elements in the daily lives of these men, who live an austere life. When we drop anchor in this remote part of the world, set off to discover these friendly people who are also **talented craftsmen**, deftly sewing the furs and skins of marine mammals. This will be a unique and authentic experience.

SAVISSIVIK

Arrival 9/2/2020

Departure 9/2/2020

Some places in this world are so magical that their beauty cannot be described in words... **Savissivik**, a small Inuit village with less than a hundred inhabitants, is one such place. Rightly considered to be **the biggest iceberg graveyard in Greenland**, it is a stunning sight to behold. During your Zodiac[®] outing, you will sail between these icy giants. Once on land, you can hike to a viewpoint from which to enjoy breathtaking views over these icebergs, which come in an incredibly diverse range of shapes and colours. Photographers will love it. Savissivik Bay attracts many **bears** and is also known for having been the home of one of the world's biggest **meteorites**, but the latter has now been moved to a museum in New York.

POND INLET, NUNAVUT

Arrival 9/3/2020

Departure 9/3/2020

On **Baffin Island**, located in northern Canada at the mouth of the famous NorthWest Passage, there is a small Inuit settlement at the very bounds of infinity. To get there, cross the **Arctic Circle**, the imaginary line that separates man from lands of mystery and wonder. It's not so much the way of life that sets Pond Inlet's inhabitants apart, so much as the setting. Snow-capped mountains, **fjords** and **glaciers** combine in a dazzling natural environment that fills space and expands time. Some discoveries change you forever: this is one of them.

BEECHEY ISLAND, NUNAVUT

Arrival 9/4/2020

Departure 9/4/2020

Beechey Island, at the eastern end of Resolute Bay, will call to mind some of the most important moments of Franklin's expedition. Sir John set off in 1845 in search of the mythical **Northwest Passage** and was forced to take shelter in Erebus Harbour for two long years, while he waited for the ice floes to recede and allow him a way through. It is a spectacular location; seeing the three wooden grave markers, bleached by the sun (indicating the burial places of at least three of Captain Franklin's men) and visiting the **memorial** that has been erected in memory of Franklin and his men can only reinforce the hushed sense of reverence. If the surrounding wilderness impresses us, the ochre and yellows of the rocky desert soften the landscape.

FURY BEACH, NUNAVUT

Arrival 9/5/2020

Departure 9/5/2020

The ice floe gradually appears as you approach Somerset Island, in the heart of the North West Passage. In a Zodiac[®] dinghy, you will land on **Fury Beach**, a place with a rich history where the English explorer William Edward Parry ran aground in 1825. He left materials and supplies here in order to help the next expeditions that would pass by this site. During your hike around the **majestic canyon** of Fury Beach, you'll be dazzled by the surprising landscape: the turquoise green water and sheer cliffs are reminiscent of the Grand Canyon or the High Atlas in Morocco. If fortune smiles on you, you will perhaps come across a family of **polar bears** roaming the enormous ice floes. A sublime hike; a sense of wonder is guaranteed.

QARIARAQYUK

Arrival 9/6/2020

Departure 9/6/2020

Located at Hazard Inlet (Somerset Island), the abandoned village of **Qariaraqyuk** is home to the ruins of one of the largest Thule **archaeological sites** in the High Arctic. The foundations of several constructions as well as many whale bones found on the site bear witness to the village's past activity and its inhabitants' incredible capacity to adapt to such isolated lands. Qariaraqyuk had a population of 300 people who subsequently left the village for reasons that remain unknown. The **Thule civilisation** is the last Paleo-Eskimo civilisation from which all the Inuits we know today are descended.

FORT ROSS, NUNAVUT

Arrival 9/6/2020

Departure 9/6/2020

Discover **Fort Ross**, the last trading post established by the Hudson's Bay Company. Constructed in 1937, it was used as a fur and whaling trading post at the same time. Fort Ross, located on a small island at the entrance to the **Bellot Strait**, is still home to this former store as well as the house for the manager and staff. The interior of these two buildings has been damaged over time and by the presence of **polar bears**. After a short walk towards the summits of

the island, you will be able to enjoy a breathtaking panoramic view over the Bellot Strait and surrounding area.

BELLOT STRAIT

Arrival 9/6/2020

Departure 9/6/2020

A key stage in the North West Passage, the **Bellot Strait**, crossed by strong currents, promises you an **unforgettable sailing experience**. The entrance to the strait is dominated by the Ross Cairn. The buildings of Fort Ross also stand not far from here. Separating Somerset Island from the Boothia Peninsula, this 2-km-wide strait was discovered in 1852 by Captain William Kennedy of the Royal Navy, and the Frenchman Joseph-René Bellot, during an expedition in search of Sir John Franklin. Discover a **magnificent décor** covered in snow, fragmented by large ice floes. As you sail between them, your ship will perhaps be accompanied by a few polar bears.

GJOA HAVEN, NUNAVUT

Arrival 9/7/2020

Departure 9/7/2020

Discovered by the Scottish explorer John Ross in 1830, **King William Island** was named in honour of the reigning British King. In September 1903, Captain **Roald Amundsen** was the first to drop anchor at **Gjoa Haven**, the only inhabited part of the island, where a few Inuit were the only sign of human life. The Norwegian sailor decided to overwinter here for two years, to attempt to find the location of the mysterious Magnetic North Pole. Roald Amundsen interacted with the local Inuit to learn how to survive in these extreme conditions and freezing temperatures. We invite you to discover this **small hamlet** in the Nunavut region, located just above the Arctic Circle. Do not miss this unique opportunity to discover these forgotten lands.

AT SEA

Arrival 9/8/2020

Departure 9/8/2020

During your day at sea, make the most of the many services and activities on board. Treat yourself to a moment of relaxation in the spa or stay in shape in the fitness centre. Depending on the season, let yourself be tempted by the swimming pool or a spot of sunbathing. This day without a port of call will also be an opportunity to enjoy the conferences or shows proposed on board, to do some shopping in the boutique or to meet the PONANT photographers in their dedicated space. As for lovers of the open sea, they will be able to visit the ship's upper deck to admire the spectacle of the waves and perhaps be lucky enough to observe marine species. A truly enchanted interlude, combining comfort, rest and entertainment.

EDINBURGH ISLAND, NUNAVUT

Arrival 9/9/2020

Departure 9/9/2020

Fall under the charm of small and uninhabited **Edinburgh Island**, in Nunavut. Blueberries, crowberries, arctic willow, cranberries: vegetation rules the roost here, with no fewer than 19 types of dwarf shrubs, berries and flowers identified. In autumn, these species are adorned with shimmering colours that produce a magnificent picture. The

tundra, dotted with red and yellow touches, competes in its beauty with the superb ochres of the sandy beaches and the dark tones of the surrounding cliffs. At the end of a walk towards the heights of the island, enjoy a superb panorama with a view over lakes, sea and **basalt mountains**. An enchanting place, frequented by **caribous**, peregrine falcons, **reindeer**, **Arctic foxes** and hares.

HOLMAN (ULUKHAKTOK)

Arrival 9/10/2020

Departure 9/10/2020

Set off to meet the inhabitants of **Holman** for an unforgettable moment in the midst of a **welcoming community**. With some 500 inhabitants, this hamlet located on the west of Victoria Island has learned how best to adapt to an at-times harsh environment and a difficult climate. As you visit this village in the Canadian Far North, admire the prints and other objects created by the very **rich local craftsmanship**. **Traditional singing and dancing** are also part of the daily life of this commune, to the great delight of fans of Inuit culture. The village of Holman, also called Ulukhaktok, is one of those places in which you can share an authentic experience in a remote land.

MINTO INLET

Arrival 9/11/2020

Departure 9/11/2020

Located to the east of the Amundsen Gulf, in the eastern part of Victoria Island, **Minto Inlet** is an integral part of the history of **the Copper Inuits**. The representatives of this people, also called the Kitlinermiut, are the descendants of the old Thule. **Hunter-gatherer nomads** during more than three millennia, they knew how to flawlessly exploit the copper deposits in the regions where they set up camp, which is what earned them their name. Arrows, knives, spears, ulus (blades) and harpoons: all these objects made with a deft hand and used day-to-day by this small community. During your visit, you will have the opportunity to visit their territory, in a landscape of tundra frequented by **many caribou**.

FRANKLIN BAY

Arrival 9/12/2020

Departure 9/12/2020

This large bay, 48 km long and 40 km wide, is located in **the Northwest Territories**, in Canada. It was given its name in 1826 by the naturalist John Richardson, in honour of the British polar explorer Sir John Franklin. **Franklin Bay** always offers fine occasions to come across marine mammals. During your cruise here, you will also see the famous smoke column show at **Smoking Hills**, which are cliffs made of sulphur and lignite in beautiful yellow, ochre and brown colours.

AT SEA

Arrival 9/13/2020

Departure 9/13/2020

During your day at sea, make the most of the many services and activities on board. Treat yourself to a moment of relaxation in the spa or stay in shape in the fitness centre. Depending on the season, let yourself be tempted by the swimming pool or a spot of sunbathing. This day without a port of call will also be an opportunity to enjoy the

conferences or shows proposed on board, to do some shopping in the boutique or to meet the PONANT photographers in their dedicated space. As for lovers of the open sea, they will be able to visit the ship's upper deck to admire the spectacle of the waves and perhaps be lucky enough to observe marine species. A truly enchanted interlude, combining comfort, rest and entertainment.

HERSCHEL ISLAND

Arrival 9/14/2020

Departure 9/14/2020

The Canadian Arctic Archipelago is composed of a myriad of islands and reveals landscapes you will only see at this far end of the world. Come and discover the small **canadian island of Herschel**, a frozen paradise located in the Beaufort Sea, within the **Ivvavik National Park**. During an expedition in 1826, **Sir John Franklin** was the first european to lay eyes on these unique places and their inhabitants, the Inuvialuit, the nordic cousins of the Inuit. It was during this trip that he named the island after one of his friends, John Herschel, a brilliant british astronomer and scientist. Herschel Island is a landmark in the West Arctic and has since served alternately as a **whaling station**, a relay station and a refuge for travellers.

AT SEA

Arrival 9/15/2020

Departure 9/16/2020

During your day at sea, make the most of the many services and activities on board. Treat yourself to a moment of relaxation in the spa or stay in shape in the fitness centre. Depending on the season, let yourself be tempted by the swimming pool or a spot of sunbathing. This day without a port of call will also be an opportunity to enjoy the conferences or shows proposed on board, to do some shopping in the boutique or to meet the PONANT photographers in their dedicated space. As for lovers of the open sea, they will be able to visit the ship's upper deck to admire the spectacle of the waves and perhaps be lucky enough to observe marine species. A truly enchanted interlude, combining comfort, rest and entertainment.

INALIK, LITTLE DIOMEDE

Arrival 9/17/2020

Departure 9/17/2020

You've now arrived in the heart of the **Bering Sea**, between Alaska and Russia. Your ship sets sail for **Little Diomedede**, an American island inhabited by an Inuit community numbering fewer than a hundred people. You will disembark at **Inalik**, a village gripping the steep slopes of this lost piece of rock. Here, around twenty dwellings are curled up against each other, mounted on stilts and accessible by small staircases. You will be warmly welcomed by the **Inupiak**, who will be keen to introduce you to their culture, traditions and day-to-day life. Only 3 kilometres away, on the other side of the **International Date Line**, is the island of Big Diomedede, belonging to Russia.

FAIRWAY ROCK

Arrival 9/17/2020

Departure 9/17/2020

Your ship moves slowly towards **Fairway Rock**, a small rocky island lost in the middle of the Bering Strait. This little piece of pebble, located off the Russian coastline and the Diomedes Islands, rises a hundred meters above the water. It is home to **many species of marine birds** that the naturalist-guides will help you to identify: Tridactyl gulls, thick-billed murrelets, Atlantic puffins and cormorants have set up home on the cliffs of Fairway Rock. **Spotted seals** and **walrus** have also found their place here and make a warm welcome committee. If you're lucky, you will perhaps spot the blow of a **humpback whale** from the deck of your ship. A magical encounter with the local fauna.

AT SEA

Arrival 9/18/2020

Departure 9/18/2020

During your day at sea, make the most of the many services and activities on board. Treat yourself to a moment of relaxation in the spa or stay in shape in the fitness centre. Depending on the season, let yourself be tempted by the swimming pool or a spot of sunbathing. This day without a port of call will also be an opportunity to enjoy the conferences or shows proposed on board, to do some shopping in the boutique or to meet the PONANT photographers in their dedicated space. As for lovers of the open sea, they will be able to visit the ship's upper deck to admire the spectacle of the waves and perhaps be lucky enough to observe marine species. A truly enchanted interlude, combining comfort, rest and entertainment.

NOME, ALASKA

Arrival 9/19/2020 early morning

Disembarkation 9/19/2020 at 07h00

Located along the Bering Strait at the westernmost point of Alaska, **Nome** offers the rustic charm of a former gold-mining town, set in the middle of magnificent wilderness. As you weave in and out of the brightly coloured houses, you will discover the pioneering legacy that still marks local traditions. Fishing, **reindeer rearing**, sledge-racing... People here live from their manual labour. The surrounding plains provide stunning vantage points for observing Arctic fauna.