

WRANGEL ISLAND ACROSS THE TOP OF THE WORLD

This expedition cruise along the wild north Siberian coast reveals a world of breaching whales, massive bird colonies, walrus haul-outs, and native villages. Aboard the Spirit of Enderby, you'll cruise through the Bering Strait, from Russia to Wrangel Island, a treasure trove of Arctic biodiversity and well known for its huge denning polar bear population. You're likely to encounter this magnificent animal along with walrus, reindeer, snow geese, and migratory bird species that nest here in the brief Arctic summer. The islands is also famous for its huge number of mammoth remains and tusks can be seen scattered around the landscape. You'll see incredible landscapes and have fantastic wildlife encounters.

Note: This cruise is not exclusive to, nor operated by, Island Ecoventures, who acts solely as a booking agent with the ship operator. The itinerary, lecturers, and all other arrangements are subject to change at the discretion of the cruise line.

ITINERARY

Day 1 ~ Anadyr

All expedition members will arrive in Anadyr; depending on your time of arrival you may have the opportunity to explore Anadyr, before getting to know your fellow voyagers and expedition team on board the Akademik Shokalskiy. We will depart when everybody is on board.

Spirit of Enderby (D)

Day 2 ~ Anadyrskiy Bay and at Sea

As we sail across Anadyrskiy Bay towards the Bering Strait there will be introductory lectures and a series of compulsory briefings and drills. Relax or enjoy some birding and cetacean watching with our naturalists and settle into ship life.



Spirit of Enderby (B, L, D)

Day 3 ~ Lavrentiya and Cape Dezhnev

We arrive in Lavrentiya Bay this morning to visit the Chukchi Region's administrative centre of Lavrentiya. We will explore the township and visit the local museum, which displays an interesting insight into Yupik and Chukchi cultures. There may be an opportunity to view Chukchi song and dance and to interact with the locals.

Sea conditions permitting, we will land at Cape Dezhnev this afternoon. The north-eastern most point of the Eurasian continent, it is sometimes possible to see the coast of America from this

remote and lonely outpost. It is also an historic landmark named after the Siberian Cossack, Semyon Dezhnev, who in 1648 became the first European to sail from the Arctic to the Pacific.

Spirit of Enderby (B, L, D)

Day 4 ~ Kolyuchin Inlet and Kolyuchin Island

Kolyuchin Inlet is so huge that it is visible from satellite photos; this inlet contains vast numbers of waterfowl and migratory waders. We concentrate our visit on Belaka Spit near the mouth of the inlet. It is a wild, desolate landscape that is strangely beautiful. We search the dunes and tidal areas for birdlife including Emperor Geese and Spoon-billed Sandpipers. Gray Whales frequent the area and are sometimes spotted feeding only metres offshore.

Later today we will arrive at Kolyuchin Island; this small island was once an important Russian Polar Research Station and one of a number dotted across the Arctic. Near the derelict buildings are some of the most spectacular bird cliffs in the Arctic where puffins, guillemots and gulls can be observed and photographed up close.

Spirit of Enderby (B, L, D)

Day 5 ~ At Sea

We continue our journey north across the Chukchi Sea, there may be sea ice to negotiate our way through as we get closer to Wrangel Island; this could offer our first opportunities to see Polar Bears, seals and walrus on ice.

Spirit of Enderby (B, L, D)

Days 6 to 10 ~ Wrangel and Herald Islands

Ice and weather conditions permitting, we will spend the next few days on Wrangel Island and we will also attempt to include a visit to nearby Herald Island.



There are many landings that we can make to search out wildlife, wild flowers and Arctic landscapes. Polar Bears will be high on our list of animals to see and with a little patience we should be rewarded with a number of encounters. Musk Oxen and reindeer were introduced to the island in 1975 and 1948 though reindeer numbers are low. We also have a chance to visit Dragi Harbour where the survivors of the Karluk which was crushed by ice in 1914 scrambled ashore and lived until they were rescued. Wrangel Island is a Russian Federal Nature Reserve of international significance and importance particularly as it is a major Polar Bear denning area. Also each

summer thousands of birds migrate here to breed, including Snow Geese, Snowy Owls, skuas, Arctic Terns, Ross's, Sabine and Ivory Gulls.

Spirit of Enderby (B, L, D)

Day 11 ~ At Sea and North Siberian Coast

As we sail through the Bering Strait we will pass the Diomedede Islands, sometimes called Tomorrow Island and Yesterday Isle because they straddle the International Date Line. Here Russia and America are separated by only 2.3 nautical miles of ocean. We will remain in Russian territory as we cruise south past the islands.



We continue along the North Siberian Coast, bounded by narrow sand ridges with numerous lagoons and inlets, this area offers plenty of places to land and explore this extensive coastline. We will be on the lookout for whales, walrus and other wildlife. We will see Chukchi

villages whose residents survive in an unforgiving climate, hunting seals and whales just as their ancestors did.

Spirit of Enderby (B, L, D)

Day 12 ~ At Sea and Masik Village

This afternoon we plan to visit Masik Village, an archaeological site at Mechigmen Bay which is part of Beringia National Park. This site consists of subterranean dwellings, food caches and possible ceremonial structures where materials used in construction were whale skulls, ribs and jawbones.

Spirit of Enderby (B, L, D)

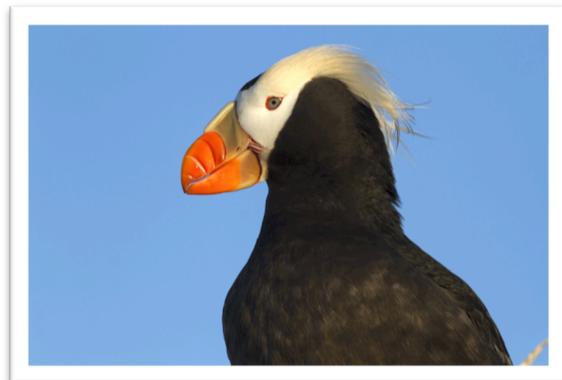
Day 13 ~ Yttygran, Nuneangan and Arakamchechen Islands

Yttygran Island is home to the monumental ancient aboriginal site known as Whale Bone Alley. Whalebones stretch along the beach for nearly half a kilometre. Gray Whales are frequently seen around the island, we will also cruise by Nuneangan and Arakamchechen Islands where seabirds nest and walrus can be found.

Spirit of Enderby (B, L, D)

Day 14 ~ Preobrazheniya Bay

Today we will be in the vicinity of Preobrazheniya Bay where there are some outstanding 'Bird Cliffs' which we plan to Zodiac cruise, the rock faces, ridgelines and soaring granite spires are home to an abundance of bird life. Species that can be seen include



Common and Thick-billed Murres, Black-legged Kittiwakes, Least and Crested Auklets, Vega Gulls and Arctic Tern. Both Horned and Tufted Puffins are normally in vast numbers stretched along cliffside grasses.

This evening relax as we sail across Anadyrskiy Bay towards Anadyr.

Spirit of Enderby (B, L, D)

Day 15 ~ Anadyr

After breakfast it will be time to say our farewells. There will be a complimentary transfer to the airport or to a central downtown hotel. (B)

End of Cruise

(Code: B – Breakfast, L – Lunch, D – Dinner)