

# MS SILVER EXPLORER

## NORTH ATLANTIC ADVENTURE

Kangerlussuaq to St. John's

September 9, 2016 | 12 Days | Voyage 7620



### Expedition Highlights:

- Cruise by Zodiac around isolated islands.
- Learn of the Inuit culture and their lasting traditions.
- Look for Polar Bears and thousands of birds.
- Visit L'Anse aux Meadows and Red Bay — two of Canada's UNESCO World Heritage Sites.

**Day 1 — Kangerlussuaq, Greenland** Arrive in Kangerlussuaq and enjoy your first Zodiac ride to the *Silver Explorer*, waiting at anchor. Once all guests have embarked, we will depart on our exciting Silversea Expedition — North Atlantic Adventure. This evening, you will be introduced to your Expedition Leaders and attend a Zodiac briefing.

**Day 2 — Kangaamiut and Evighedsfjorden/Kangerlussuatsiaq Fjord, Greenland** Just 26 kilometres south of the exit (or entrance) of Kangerlussuaq Fjord is Kangaamiut. Located on the south coast of Timerdlit Island and facing the Davis Strait, Kangaamiut is situated between the mouths of two long fjords: the Kangerlussuatsiaq Fjord (or Evighedsfjorden in Danish) to its south and to its north Kangaamiut Kangerluarsuat Fjord. Founded in 1755, it was called “Sugartop”

(Sukkertoppen) because of the appearance of three nearby hills. We will get a first-hand impression of life in a small Greenlandic community (there are only 350 inhabitants) visiting Kangaamiut in the morning. During lunch *Silver Explorer* will relocate, going up part of the 75 kilometres long Kangerlussuatsiaq Fjord. The 700 metres deep fjord flows in a canyon with several tidewater glaciers from the Maniitsoq ice sheet. In its entire length there are more than 12 glaciers flowing into the fjord. We will cruise to the first and the most interesting (as well as widest): the Sermitsiaq Glacier. It is unique, as it is flowing into two fjords at the same time: Kangaamiut Kangerluarsuat Fjord in the north and Kangerlussuatsiaq Fjord (Evigheidsfjorden) in the south. Some of the cliffs along the fjord exceed 2,000 metres (6,600 ft.) in height. At the Sermitsiaq Glacier we want to have a closer look at the glacier and the cliffs using our Zodiacs.

**Day 3 — Nuuk, Greenland** This morning we arrive in Greenland's first town (1728) and current capital, Nuuk — meaning “the heartland”. Our leisurely walk through this picturesque harbour town allows us to take in Nuuk's natural beauty, and also to see Inuit ruins, Hans Egede's home, parliament, and the Church of our Saviour. At the Greenlandic National Museum we have the fantastic opportunity to see the famous Qilakitsoq mummies, and will, of course, leave time to visit Father Christmas' post office with the world's largest mailbox.

**Day 4 — Cruising the Davis Strait** Binoculars and camera in hand, head out on deck to watch for seabirds and marine mammals. Attend informative lectures that will prepare you for the upcoming ports-of-call and the adventures that lie ahead. Peruse an array of titles and topics in the well-stocked Library, enjoy a fine cognac at the Connoisseur's Corner or indulge in any of the other special amenities offered aboard ship.

**Day 5 — Iqaluit, Baffin Island, Nunavut, Canada** Our first foray into Canada begins in the town of Iqaluit located at the head of Frobisher Bay, an inlet of the North Atlantic extending into southeastern Baffin Island. The Bay is so long that it was first taken to be the possible entrance of a Northwest Passage. During the morning we will cruise towards Iqaluit, the capital of Canada's newest territory, Nunavut — Inuktitut for “our land”. Nunavut is the least populated but largest of Canada's provinces and territories, and is filled with culture and charm. After completing formalities associated with customs and immigration, we go ashore and explore the edges of Canada's “true north”. Depending on the tides (Iqaluit has a maximum tidal range of almost 12 metres (close to 40 ft.) we will either have a dry landing on a pier or a wet beach landing. Our ship's experts along with local guides will lead us through the Nunatta Sunakkutaangit Museum and the Nunavut Legislative Assembly Building, both housing incredible collections of Inuit artwork. The museum shop has some very interesting local prints for sale. Before returning to *Silver Explorer* we will enjoy a performance of traditional throat singing.

**Day 6 — Lower Savage Island and Resolution Harbour, Nunavut, Canada** Today the search is on for *Ursus maritimus*, the polar bear, which the native Inuit refer to as Nanuk or Nanuuq. The Lower Savage Islands are a small group of islands off of the southeastern tip of Baffin Island, and a common location for polar bears to be found during the summer months. With plenty of land to roam while giving each other a wide berth, plus opportunity for the odd feed, it seems many bears locate here as the ice vanishes with the season's warming temperatures. Our Zodiacs will allow us to cruise through the narrow channels between the islands to search for wildlife among the unusual rocky formations. Slightly further southeast is Resolution Island — and Resolution Harbour. Although Captain Cook had served in Canada, the island and harbour were named after Thomas Button's ship Resolution some 150 years earlier. The rocks and channels at Resolution Harbour are an excellent area for another Zodiac-cruise.

**Day 7 — Akpatok Island, Nunavut, Canada** Today we explore around remote Akpatok Island at the northernmost extremity of the Labrador Peninsula. Steep and sheer limestone cliffs jut out of the icy waters. Encased in snow and surrounded with sea ice in the winter months, this uninhabited island lures huge amounts of wildlife, most notably the world's largest population of breeding Thick-billed Murres (Inuktitut name: Akpatok), estimated at well over a million birds. These auks flock to the bare cliffs of the island between June and September, and incubate their

single pear-shaped egg on the cliff's ledges. Glaucous Gulls can be seen soaring above looking for unguarded eggs and chicks, while Black Guillemots paddle around on the nearby sea. Akpatok Island is also a favourite summer home for polar bears as they wait for the winter ice to form.

**Day 8 — Kangiqsualujjuaq, Canada** On our way south from Akpatok we will enter further into Ungava Bay, reaching Kangiqsualujjuaq (“the large bay” in Inuktitut), an Inuit village located at the mouth of the George River. Enveloped by mountains, the township is framed by picturesque surroundings and its elevated position affords unobstructed views of the George River (named in 1811 by Moravian missionaries after King George III). The river is very popular for canoeing, but has very large tidal changes. Depending on the tides (up to 8 metres) our landing might be onto a beach or a pier. The Hudson’s Bay Company operated a post south of today’s village intermittently, but the Inuit of the area never settled around the post, preferring to live along the coast in summer and setting their camps about 50 km (31 mi) km inland in winter. Construction of the village began only in 1962 and from then on Inuit began to settle permanently there and the community today has approximately 900 inhabitants. The town itself is laid out on a grid pattern over levelled-ground, with two unsealed roads leading a few kilometres beyond the mountain ridges at either end of the village. Life in this remote area includes hunting of caribou, seal and beluga whale, arctic char fishing, and the production of Inuit art —of which we hope to see and purchase some.

**Days 9 — At Sea** A leisurely day at sea can be used to exchange notes with fellow travellers and to take advantage of the luxurious amenities aboard *Silver Explorer*. We will be travelling around the Torngat Mountains National Park — sometimes described as the “eastern Rocky Mountains”. Help our birders spot some of the seabirds found far away from their nesting grounds. Enjoy a lecture about Inuit Art or Canada’s natural history. An interesting book can be good company — or just relax in the comfort of your suite and watch a movie on the in-suite interactive television.

**Day 10 — Cruising the Labrador Sea** As we make our way along Canada’s scenic coast, enjoy some time out on deck keeping an eye out for seabirds, dolphin, seals and migrating humpback, fin or blue whales, or listen to additional presentations by our expert natural history staff in The Theatre or in the comfort of your own accommodation. Enjoy a fine cognac at the Connoisseur’s Corner or indulge in any of the other special amenities offered aboard ship.

**Day 11 — Red Bay, Labrador, and L’Anse Aux Meadow, Newfoundland, Canada** The red granite cliffs of Labrador’s south coast were the reason for the naming of both the bay and the village as Red Bay. Home to an important Basque whaling station dating back to the mid-16th to early 18th century, when up to 15 ships and 600 men were sent each season from the Basque region in southern France and northern Spain, Red Bay is still a fishing village. The Basque whalers were hunting Right Whales and Bowhead Whales for blubber and on Saddle Island, an island at the mouth of the bay; the remnants of whale oil rendering ovens and cooperages sit where Basque hands first built them. Considered home of the first large-scale whale oil production in the world, Red Bay was declared a UNESCO World Heritage Site in 2013, as it is considered one of the most important underwater archaeological sites — three Basque whaling galleons and four small chalupas (sloops) used in the capture of whales have been discovered and one of the smaller eight-metre boats used to harpoon the whales is on display in the local museum. Today the interpretive centre in Red Bay explains the whaling history. A cemetery on Saddle Island has the remains of some 140 whalers. We will view both the modern and the historical part of Red Bay. We continue our voyage southward just across the narrow channel leading from the Atlantic Ocean to the Gulf of St. Lawrence while enjoying lunch aboard *Silver Explorer*. After midday, we land like ancient Vikings albeit via Zodiac on the shores of L’Anse aux Meadows (“Jellyfish Bay”). After a short walk with our local guides, we encounter the ruins of an entire Viking village dating back to the year 1000. Norseman Leif Eriksson, son of Erik the Red, established this colony in the New World some 500 years before the likes of Christopher Columbus and John Cabot. In 1978, this village was designated a UNESCO World Heritage Site. Much of the L’Anse aux Meadows’ archaeological site remains natural and unspoilt. Three

buildings have been reconstructed near the original site in order to provide visitors insight into the lifestyles of these hardy explorers.

**Day 12 — Twillingate, Canada** Twillingate is the self-proclaimed 'Iceberg Capital of the World' – although it is highly unlikely that we should see any icebergs at this time of the year. Once ashore by Zodiac, you will be taken by local bus to the "Prime Berth Museum" first, which could be well described as a commercial fishing heritage site. You will hear about the glory "salt fish days" before the cod fishery moratorium in the middle of the eighties of the last century let the busy settlement shrink. Afterwards you will visit several historic buildings packed with artefacts near the shoreline. The most impressive proof of life in Newfoundland waters is a skeleton of a Sei whale and the two giant racks of its baleen on display. The excursion also goes to museum, the former house of an Anglican priest, right next to the church. Almost all the objects on display here are from 1900 to the early 1920s –including a giant bicycle from the turn of the century. Afterwards you will have a good view over the Notre Dame Bay and the outer isles at Long Point Lighthouse. During the afternoon we will continue on toward St. John's. Our onboard Videographer will present his voyage-DVD, a good opportunity to recall all the different impressions Greenland, Baffin Island and the Canadian coast had in stall for you.

**Day 13 — St. John's, Canada** After breakfast, disembark *Silver Explorer*.

*Expedition highlights and wildlife listed here are possible experiences only and cannot be guaranteed. Your Expedition Leader and Captain will work together to ensure opportunities for adventure and exploration are the best possible, taking into account the prevailing weather and wildlife activity. Expedition Team members scheduled for this voyage are subject to change or cancellation*