



Prins Karls Forland - 8 days of hiking

Along the central west coast of Spitsbergen, Prins Karls Forland forms an 86 km long and 11 km wide island, the westernmost place you can possibly reach on Svalbard. Waves directly from the Arctic Ocean break against the west coast of this island, and North Greenland is the next landfall to the west. This island holds a landscape of contrasts with its alpine summits, verdigris green grass plains and barren rock deserts side by side. We offer

this fantastic landscape as a setting for an 8 days long hiking trip, in which we will wander carrying the tent on our backs and set a new camp every evening. Our experiences will include an amazingly rich nature and cultural monuments from former hunting and industrial activities on Svalbard. In the course of this trip, we will feel part of the vast wilderness and run a minimal risk of meeting other people in this part of Svalbard.

Day 1 (Wednesday):

Good planning, nice tour mates and careful preparations are half the trip! It is therefore important that all the participants are in place in Longyearbyen on Wednesday afternoon. The guide will pick you up at your choice of accommodation at 4 pm. During the afternoon, you will have the opportunity to get acquainted with the other participants and to make sure you brought the necessary equipment. The guide will brief you on the planned route and give you an updated weather forecast. We will pack and prepare the rucksacks for the next day before we end the meeting. Those who have a need to supplement their equipment will have time to do so before the sporting goods stores close.

Day 2 (Thursday):

An early start of a long day. The guide will pick you up at your hotel/guesthouse and take you to the harbour where the boat will bring us north to Prins Karls Forland. We will arrive at Prins Karls Forland in the afternoon about 3-4 pm. Once ashore, we will hike a short distance of about 1 – 2 kilometres before we establish our first camp.

Day 3 (Friday) to Day 8 (Wednesday):

Don't be surprised if you wake up to the sound of seagulls and kittiwakes. Prins Karls Forland is known for its rich bird life. We are now left to ourselves in the arctic wilderness. After a sound breakfast every morning, we organise ourselves from basecamp and start hiking. The terrain is fairly easy, and we will walk through a variety of landscape forms.

We will explore the surroundings. If the weather allows, we can spend the evening beside the bonfire with the ocean as background music.

We will be following the coastline. During nesting season, we walk the inland road on some parts to avoid disturbing the nesting birds. The arctic fox will keep an eye on the nests and will not hesitate to steal an egg or chicken given the chance.

Prins Karls Forland is the northernmost habitat in the world for the harbour seal, which is commonly observed here. In this area, there are also several remains from Norwegian trapping activities, and enormous whalebones from the nearly extinguished Bowhead whale can be found scattered on the beaches.



Fuglehuken is the biggest bird cliff on Prins Karls Forland. We may experience the arctic fox in its search for food right beneath the nesting cliffs for the Brünnich's guillemot. Between July and August, we will get a chance to see the dramatic Guillemot jump. The chickens are not fully fledged by the time they leave their nest, but they will try to glide through the air to reach the water. For those who do not succeed this attempt, there are many threats. This is an important period for the Arctic Fox, who is collecting food supplies for the winter.

Day 9 (Thursday):

We will take it easy while waiting for the boat to pick us up. Not far from the camp the walrus find the sandy beach suitable for resting, and we might catch a glimpse of these shapeless, yet charming animals. In the afternoon, we will pack the camp and the boat will pick us up around 3 pm. After 7 days in the field, it is nice to experience some "civilisation" onboard. Maybe you will write down your experience or just watch the landscape pass by. We arrive late night / midnight in Longyearbyen.

General information:

Be aware that the length per day, the trip and the activities may be changed due to weather conditions and the composition of the group. If time permits, we can make some hikes to the surrounding mountaintops. Storm and bad conditions may keep the ship from reaching Prins Karls Forland and cause changes in programme.

Demands of participants:

All participants will carry their own backpack. Weight 15 – 20 kg (personal – and camp equipment, and food for the entire day). We recommend that you read our suggestions of what to bring before departure. We will sleep in sharing tents 2 and 2 persons.

Map:

Norwegian Polar Institute map; A7 Kongsfjorden

Price: NOK 14.950 per person

Start of trip: July 6 – 14

Included in price: Transport to/from your accommodation, food, tent, sleeping mat, experienced guide with necessary safety equipment. The price does not include sleeping bag.

Minimum 4 and maximum 12 participants.