

# PHOTO EXPEDITION SVALBARD

ON BOARD M/S ORIGO 25.07-04.08 2019



WILDPHOTO  
TRAVEL

# BEFORE THE EXPEDITION

## Personal details

To make sure you have the best trip possible to Svalbard 25.07–04.08 2019, we ask you to read the information below. It is also important to make us aware of any dietary allergies, health issues or requirements you have.

## Health

If you have had any major surgeries in the last two years or chronic illnesses that will affect your comfort on the ship, we should be made aware of it.

## Insurance

We strongly recommend you to have insurance covering medical conditions (illness, accidents, death) and evacuation during the period on board the ship. In case of any undesired event we need to have at least the insurance number and emergency telephone number to your insurance company. We do also recommend that you have cancellation insurance, but this is not mandatory.

## Passport and visa

All visitors (also Norwegian citizens) to Svalbard need to bring a valid passport. Foreign travellers will have to clarify whether they need a visa for Svalbard (Norway).

## Currency

Currency in Longyearbyen is Norwegian Kroner (NOK).

Currency on board M/S Origo is Norwegian Kroner (NOK), EURO or US Dollars (USD).

Credit cards (VISA, MasterCard and AmEx) will be accepted on the ship and in most stores on the island. No traveller's checks or other checks are valid.

## Flights to/from Longyearbyen

The flights to and from Longyearbyen are not included in the expedition price, and must be ordered separately by every guest. In July and August 2019 there are flights available from [SAS](#) and Norwegian. We recommend you fly into Longyearbyen at least the DAY BEFORE our departure, meaning 24th July 2019.

[Norwegian](#) is cheaper and have better plane (Boeing 737–800), but not very good regarding weight restrictions.

Buy your tickets as soon as possible, as there are many people flying to and from Longyearbyen.

## Lost luggage

Lost or delayed luggage is out of our control. Please pack a small bag with all your essentials, including medicine, and bring it in your carry-on luggage. The most essential photographic equipment should also be carry-on luggage. See the checklist below for packing details.

There are stores in Longyearbyen selling the most essential things you need, but be aware of their opening hours (usually not open on Sundays).

### **Transport from the airport**

Longyearbyen is a small place and everyone knows where the dock is (with M/S Origo) and also where to find accommodation. Upon arrival at the airport you have three options:

1. Follow the shuttle bus to your accommodation of choice. Approx. NOK50
2. Get a taxi directly to your accommodation of choice. Approx. NOK100+
3. Rent a vehicle from [www.autorent.no](http://www.autorent.no) or [www.svalbardauto.no](http://www.svalbardauto.no) that will be ready for you at the airport parking

### **Accommodation in Longyearbyen**

Recommended accommodation is:

1. [Trapper's hotel](#) (good standard)
2. [Guesthouse 102](#) (simple)
3. [Radisson SAS](#) (good standard)

### **Transport to the ship**

25th July our ship M/S Origo will be at Bykaia (the dock between the town and the airport) and we ask everyone to meet at the dock 16:00 at latest. Boarding opens at 16:00 and we expect to leave before 17:00. The easiest way to get to the dock is by taxi. We will return to Longyearbyen (around 23:00 3rd August) in good time before disembarking the ship at 09:00 on the 4th August after breakfast. It is also possible to disembark the ship earlier if you have an earlier flight (04:10 or 04:40 4th August) from Longyearbyen.

# SHIP INFORMATION M/S ORIGO



M/S Origo is a traditional ship. She was built 1955 at Finnboda shipyard in Sweden for the Swedish Maritime administration as an ice-strengthened Pilot ship. She was on duty for the Administration until 1983, when she was sold and chartered out as a school ship. This is still her employment during the winter season. Many young sailors have got their maritime education on the M/S Origo throughout the years.

In the beginning of the 90's the vessel was carefully refurbished and rebuilt to a passenger ship with space for 24 (now reduced to 12) passengers. Since then she has been cruising in the Arctic waters around Svalbard every summer. In 2011 she was celebrating her 20 year anniversary as an expedition ship. M/S Origo is in spite of her old fashion charm, equipped with the latest navigation and security equipment. She is thoroughly maintained and is in good condition. Every year she is going through all safety controls with the Swedish maritime administration.

**Gross Tonnage:** 368 GT

**Length:** 40 Metres

**Width:** 8.8 Metres

**Draft:** 3.5 Metres

**Passenger Capacity:** 12

**Zodiacs:** 2

**Crew:** 7-8, led by an experienced Captain

**Guides:** 2

**Iridium Pilote Phone:** 0088 167 772 1624  
**Iridium Satellite Phone:** 0088 163 145 0279

## FACILITIES ON BOARD

### **Cabins**

There are 10 passenger cabins on board – 8 single and 2 shared cabins. They are all outside cabins with windows.

### **Communication**

The ship can be contacted via satellite phone: 0088 167 772 1624 or 0088 163 145 0279. There is no regular Internet access on board.

Please note that you will have no reception on your mobile phone during the expedition.

### **Electricity**

The electrical supply aboard the ship is 220 volts using Scandinavian two-prong plugs. We recommend that you bring an international adapter if needed.

## **Bridge Visits**

There is an open bridge policy on board and passengers are welcome to visit the bridge at all times. Please respect the Captain's orders, especially during difficult ice navigation.

## **Bar Service**

The bar is located in the dining room on the upper deck and carries a selection of alcoholic beverages and soft drinks. Your bar bill will be payable at the end of the expedition.

## **Laundry**

Please note that there are no laundry facilities on board.

## **Meals**

The dining room located on the upper deck seats all passengers in one single sitting. Our chef will serve you three meals a day. Breakfast is buffet style and lunch and dinner will be a combination of buffet style and waiter service. If you have special dietary needs, these must be clearly indicated prior to your departure.

Coffee and tea is available around the clock in the "Saloon".

## **Medical**

There is not a doctor on board. Passengers under regular treatment or requiring special medication should bring sufficient quantities to last the duration of the expedition. The ship is always reachable by helicopter from Longyearbyen, where there is a smaller hospital.

## **Money Matters**

The standard currency on board the ship is the Norwegian Kroner (NOK), but we also accept EURO and US Dollar. A tab of your expenses in the bar and shop will be kept throughout the expedition. Your account will be payable at the end of the expedition by cash or credit card (Visa, MasterCard and AmEx). Debit cards are NOT accepted.

Tipping is discretionary, although a rough guideline is \$15 US Dollars per passenger per day.

## **Shop**

The shop offers a limited selection of clothes, postcards, books and souvenirs.

## **Smoking**

A non-smoking policy applies inside the ship. Smoking is only allowed outside on the aft deck in the designated area due to safety reasons. Please note that it is strictly forbidden to throw cigarettes over board.

## **Water**

The water on board is safe to drink.



# EQUIPMENT CHECKLIST

During the time you'll be visiting Svalbard, the mean temperature will be 2–5°C. Due to the wind chill factor, and when travelling to the northern and eastern parts of the archipelago, you may experience temperatures a few degrees below zero. There is normally very little rain (snow) in Svalbard, which is considered a semi-desert. When going ashore by Zodiacs, make sure to wear waterproof jacket/trousers and knee-high rubber boots. Below you will find some instructions on how to dress in polar climates, as well as an equipment checklist.

## A FEW WORDS ON HOW TO DRESS IN POLAR REGIONS

The key is to dress in three or more layers, which allows perspiration, insulates you from the cold and protects you against the wind. The layering method also allows you to easily adjust your clothing when the weather and temperatures change.

### **The inner layer**

Clothing next to your skin must get rid of perspiration from your body to keep you dry and warm. This layer should be close to your body and should be quite tight. Good materials for this first layer are wool or synthetic materials. Cotton should never be worn close to the body, or preferably not at all.

### **The middle layer (or layers)**

This layer provides insulation and retains body heat without restricting movement. Suitable materials for this layer are polar fleece or wool. This way you control your body temperature, and on a cold day we recommend two or more middle layers. It is better to wear several thin layers than one thick layer. On cold days you may need extra insulation.

### **The outer layer**

The main function of this layer is to offer protection against the wind and water, but also to let out excess body heat. Therefore it is good to have a breathable material here such as Gore-Tex. Impregnated cotton materials are not recommended.

### **The top**

80% of your body heat is lost through your head. Your head is like the body's funnel, and you should always wear a hat. The same principle applies here – preferable materials are synthetic fibre or wool, preferably wind proof.

### **Hands and feet**

These parts of your body are extra sensitive. It is important to keep hands and feet dry and warm! The same layering method applies here. Use inner gloves made of synthetic fibre, silk or wool and cover with a wind/waterproof mitten. Mittens are much warmer than gloves! Please remember to bring an extra pair of mittens. You should wear inner socks of synthetic fibre and cover with layers of wool or synthetic socks. A pair of solid knee-high rubber boots are the secret weapon when going ashore on the Zodiacs. It is also wise to bring wool insoles.

# WILDPHOTO GALLERY & STORE

Expedition clothing might be difficult to buy in advance. Thus we have opened a Traveler's [shop](#) in Longyearbyen with high quality clothing and some photo equipment. You can order in advance and pick it up in Longyearbyen before your expedition.

## **Expedition clothing**

Our guide team is using high quality expedition clothing from SailRacing. The [Down parka](#) and [fleece jacket](#) are available for sale to everyone who travels on our expeditions. We need your order at least 4 weeks in advance to make sure we can have your desired size when you arrive in Longyearbyen. See more info about Sailracing expedition clothing in our [webshop](#).

NB: these clothes are branded with our WildPhoto logo.

## **Dry bag**

We strongly recommend everyone to bring a dry bag for your camera gear. This is a cheap camera insurance and it will make your photography more relaxed even in rough conditions. After testing different brands and now have a customized dry bag, which we have available in our store.

## **Gloves**

Nice and warm gloves for photographers is very hard to find! We might have some gloves for sale in our Traveler's store, but we are also cooperating with the store next door who have all kinds of sporting and hunting clothes and equipment. You can contact us regarding gloves to see if we have something available.

## **Camera rental**

We recommend everyone to bring 2 or 3 camera bodies on this expedition. One camera for your telephoto lens and one camera for your wide-angle or zoom lens. It's very important to have backup camera if something happens. We have some Nikon ([D3S](#)) and Canon ([5D III](#)) rental camera bodies available if you need another camera. We also have some rental lenses, like the [Nikon 500/4](#), and also a selection of tripods for rent. See more info about our [camera rental](#) on the website.

## **Image storage**

For some reason there are always someone who have forgotten a back-up hard drive, card reader or enough memory cards, and we offer a small selection of Sandisk and Lacie products.

In the equipment list below we have marked (in green) products available in the WildPhoto Travelers store.





# ABOUT PHOTOGRAPHY

Photography is the main activity on this photo expedition. The level of interest, skills and equipment will differ from person to person, but the following may help you to prepare for your upcoming photo expedition.

## EQUIPMENT

- **Camera:** Whatever camera you use, be sure to check that it is working properly before you leave home, and perform sensor cleaning (by yourself or an expert). We recommend to bring 2 cameras so you have one back-up if something happens with your primary camera. It's also handy with one camera with a telephoto lens and another with a wide-angle lens.
- **Camera features:** The most important thing with your camera is that it has good low-light capabilities (High-ISO). At least ISO 1600 will in many situations be your desired ISO setting.
- **Lenses:** We recommend a 400+ mm telephoto lens for photographing Polar bears and other wildlife. A 70-200mm is very useful for landscape photography. A wide angle (20mm or wider) is nice to use on close animals with great surroundings, and for landscape images.
- **Batteries:** Bring back-up batteries for your cameras, flash etc. You can recharge your batteries on board. In cold climates the batteries lasts shorter than normal.
- **Memory cards:** The general rule is to bring more memory cards than you expect to need. We recommend at least 300 GB in memory card.
- **Weather:** Your equipment should be weatherproof, or you should bring rain cover for your equipment. A dry bag is strongly recommended when traveling with camera gear in the zodiacs. Rain is not the worst, but it's sea water spray in the zodiacs. Small sand particles on some beaches might also cause problems.
- **Tripods:** Tripods are useful onshore, and also on the boat, but not in the zodiacs. With telephoto lenses larger than 300mm on a tripod on board the ship you have to use fast shutter speeds (like 1/1600 sec) because of the ship's vibrations.
- **Flash:** Use of flash might be useful when photographing birds in flight, but with Polar bears we don't use flash.
- **Computer:** It's always good to have a laptop with 1-2 back-up disks (min. 1 TB) to store and edit your images. This is also how you can share your photos with others during the expedition.
- **Drones:** To be allowed to fly and photograph using a UAV (Drone) on WildPhoto Travel expeditions you will have to submit proof of a professional permit well in advance of the expedition. It is also important to know that use of a drone on our boat expeditions will only be allowed if approved by the expedition leader and the captain onboard our ship. Out of respect for other passengers that travel to this remote part of our world it is also important that everyone is informed about the use of a drone during the general information briefing, and that any comments will be taken into consideration before taking flight. We do hope that everyone taking a drone will remember that this is a sensitive subject for many and that even though you are allowed to bring your drone there might be situations where you can not fly. Please note: flying in the Arctic with weak or no GPS signals, means flying in Manual Mode.

# CONSERVATION GUIDELINES

When travelling with WildPhoto Travel you visit places that have been off-limit up until recently. Now, thanks to modern technology, we can visit these remote places. This also means that we have a great responsibility to ensure that the natural environments we visit are not disturbed by our presence. While you are on board our ship, you will find that the principles of conservation are of great importance.

By sharing our environmental concerns as we explore the wonders of nature, we look forward to guiding our guests towards becoming ambassadors for these remote corners of the world.

The following guidelines must be followed by all participants.

## LANDINGS

Passengers must be aware of certain regulations involving the Zodiacs in order to ensure safety in our operations:

- The Zodiac driver is in charge of the boat and its operations. Please follow his or her instructions at all times.
- There may be wet landings (these may require getting your feet wet by wading ashore). We would advise passengers to wear appropriate waterproof clothing as protection from sea spray or rain when in the Zodiacs. Passengers should also use a weatherproof bag (or bring along a small plastic bag) to protect non-waterproof items such as cameras and binoculars.
- Always wear the life jackets provided when travelling in the Zodiacs. This is for your safety, and is required at all times while in the Zodiacs, regardless of weather and sea conditions.
- Always accept the helping hands of crew members and Zodiac drivers when stepping into or out of the Zodiacs at the ship's gangway. Keep both hands free for this operation and use the preferred "sailor's grip" (i.e. grip each other by the wrist, because this gives a much stronger grip than just holding hands).
- Minimise the number of separate articles you take along with you when using the Zodiacs. Backpacks are ideal for consolidating such diverse objects as cameras, binoculars, rain wear, extra shoes, etc. It also enables you to have both hands free.
- Personal hand luggage should be given to the boat handlers before embarking or disembarking the zodiac.

## RESPECTING WILDLIFE

The main focus on this WildPhoto Travel expedition is photographing wildlife and landscape, and we want to get great images without stressing or disturbing the wildlife too much.

- Watch your step. Keep to established paths when possible. Exercise extreme care among breeding colonies of seabirds. Be aware of ground nesting birds. Follow the instructions given by your guides.
- Approach wildlife very carefully when taking photographs. It is important to remember that your photography is not over when the shutter clicks. Make your retreat from the subject in the same way you approached. The key point to remember is not to cause the animals any distress. Never harass wildlife for the sake of a photograph.
- Take care not to startle or chase any bird from its nest. Your attention to a nesting or moulting bird should never be prolonged when a predator is in the vicinity. Foxes, gulls and skuas are especially adapted to exploiting disruptions by raiding exposed nests and the young.
- Monitor your surroundings and be sensitive to any disruption you may be causing. If an animal shows signs of distress or avoidance, move away carefully.
- Look but never touch. These are wild animals going about the daily business of their lives. We want to observe and photograph natural behaviour in its natural state.
- Avoid repeated trampling of plants. Disruption of the plant cover in wet environments can cause underlying permafrost to melt, leading to a perennial and spreading wound. In cold and dry habitats the recovery of plants is very slow.
- When ashore, stay with the group and/or one of the ship's guides. For your safety, never wander off on your own. Listen to the expedition leader and guides. Do not hesitate to ask your leaders and guides if you are not sure about something.
- Emphasise reading animal signs. The meaning of an animal's track can be as interesting as seeing the animal itself and avoids stressing the animal.

## WILDERNESS ETIQUETTE

- In order not to introduce new species into Svalbard please wash your boots at home and make sure that no seeds are included in the packaging or clothing (pockets, photo bag, etc.).
- Do not litter! Respect the wilderness, its wildlife and the enjoyment of future visitors. Return all litter to the ship for proper disposal. This includes litter of all types, such as wrappers, plastic bags, food waste and tissues. Leave no evidence of your visit.
- Do not collect natural souvenirs such as shells, rocks, feathers, bones or fossils.
- Keep noise level to a minimum.

**HAVE A NICE JOURNEY!**

[WWW.WILDPHOTO.COM](http://WWW.WILDPHOTO.COM)