

Svalbard Crossing - A self supported expedition

Trip Code: PXSC

Version:



PIONEER



GUIDED GROUP

INVALID GRADE



HIGHLIGHTS

- Compulsory training weekend in the UK included (16th - 18th Jan)
- Summit Newtontoppen (1713m), the highest peak in Svalbard
- Walk in stunning landscapes and camp in awe-inspiring wilderness

- Travel 220km self supported on snowshoes
- Immerse yourself in the incredible beauty of Svalbard
- Learn the skill of polar bear protection
- Teamwork: Work as part of a small team, sharing the load of daily tasks like setting up camp, cooking, and keeping watch

AT A GLANCE

- 220km Snowshoeing over 11 days
- Join at Longyearbyen

ACCOMMODATIONS & MEALS

[VIEW DATES, PRICES & BOOK YOUR HOLIDAY HERE](#)

Introduction

Svalbard has that undeniable pull of the North. It occupies a special place on the edges of the map where your eye searches north, further north – and there it is. Cloaked in snow, Svalbard stands apart from other snowy places. It has a unique remoteness, an ‘otherness’ that calls to a certain type of person – someone who can put their head down and keep trudging to cover the last miles of the day, and longing to see what’s behind that next hill and the next. Always pushing beyond the horizon line. Svalbard is challenging, vast, and always a step beyond.

This expedition is an 11-day self-supported crossing, taking in the summit of Newtontoppen, the highest peak in Svalbard. Before taking the skidoo transfer into the wild, we prepare in Longyearbyen, practising polar bear protection and checking our gear. From there, the journey begins on snowshoes pulling pulks and camping in polar tents

"Something hidden. Go and find it. Go and look behind the Ranges -- Something lost behind the Ranges. Lost and waiting for you. Go!" Rudyard Kipling

Is this holiday for you?

This is a true expedition style trip, where you will work as a team (with your guide) on all aspects throughout the 17 days.

You will need to be extremely physically fit, travelling approximately 20km each day on snowshoes and pulling a weight of approximately 15 - 20kg.

In addition to this you will need to fully participate in (but not limited to), setting up and breaking down camp every day. The camp is set up in a very specific way to protect from polar bears and staying awake in shifts through the ‘night’ for polar bear watch. The UK training weekend will cover the details of these.

The training weekend, will be held in the Glen Coe area of Scotland, will be from the 16th – 18th January. Please note that this weekend is compulsory as it includes essential training for the Svalbard expedition.

No previous experience of snowshoeing or of driving a snowmobile is necessary.

For this trip we will want to speak to everyone who is interested in booking. This will be an informal chat with someone in the office who has previously done this trip. Please feel free to call the office, email to book in a time, or come into the office in Keswick (please do get in touch to make sure the right person is in the office that day).

Itinerary

Version:

Holiday Information

What's Included

- Expedition leader
- All accommodation as described
- All meals as described
- Safety equipment

What's not Included

- Travel insurance (specific BMC insurance is required)
- Airport Transfers
- Visas (if applicable)
- Tips for staff
- Meals as described in the meal plan
- Miscellaneous expenses - drinks and souvenirs etc.

Joining Arrangements & Transfers

TRAVEL TO YOUR DESTINATION

If flying from the UK there are low cost airlines available to the start and from the end of your holiday.

To benefit from full financial protection, ease your holiday planning, and avoid dealing with airlines, we can book scheduled flights from the UK as part of a flight inclusive package. Scheduled flights are usually more expensive than low cost alternatives, however potentially less stressful if your flight is cancelled or delayed. If you book flights through KE Adventure Travel we will offset the carbon of your flight.

Food & Water

In Longyearbyen there is a variety of cafes and restaurants all within easy walking distance of our accommodation.

While out on expedition, all food is provided for you (meals and snacks) and all water is from melting snow.

All meals are freeze dried and have been carefully worked out to ensure there are plenty of calories for everyone, every day. Nearly all dietary requirements can be catered for and these can be talked through in detail by calling the KE office and talking to someone who has done this trip.

We also send out a very detailed check list prior to departure so you can request your favourite snacks and make sure that all food meets with any requirements and, as much as possible, any preferences too.

Altitude

This holiday does not involve any significant ascent to altitude and we would not expect any altitude issues with this trip.

Spending Money

Important - please make sure you already have local currency when you arrive in Svalbard as there is no where to change money at the airport and there are no ATMs in Longyearbyen. Credit cards are also widely accepted in Longyearbyen.

Approximately £350 per person (or equivalent in US dollars or Euros) should be allowed for additional expenses.

Additional Information

UK Training Weekend

Location: Based in the Glen Coe area in Scotland.

Dates: 16th - 18th Jan

Included

- Guiding and instruction on the 17th and 18th
- Accommodation for two nights in shared rooms

Not Included

- Travel to and from Glen Coe on 16th and 18th
- Meals

Once the trip is guaranteed we will send out specific details for this weekend, including an equipment list.

Group Size & Holiday Status

For each holiday there is a minimum number of participants required to enable it to go ahead. Once the minimum number is reached, the trip status will change from 'Available' to 'Guaranteed to run'. You can check the trip status for each departure in the 'Dates and Prices' table. Other than in exceptional circumstances, we will not cancel a trip once it has achieved this guaranteed to run status so you are free to proceed with your international flight booking and other travel arrangements.

General Information

Passport & Visas

The information that we provide is for UK passport holders.

A passport with 6 months remaining validity at the end of your stay is generally required, and you should have at least 2 blank pages for each country that you visit.

For other nationalities, please refer to your own Government website for the latest information.

It is your responsibility to ensure that you have the correct travel documents including vaccinations and health certificates (see *Health & Vaccinations below*), **and visas for your holiday**. Please ensure that you check the [FCDO](#) for the latest advice for **each country visited** before travel.

Health & Vaccinations

Vaccinations

You should contact your doctor or travel clinic to check whether you require any specific vaccinations.

GHIC / Medical cover

UK residents should carry a free Global Health Insurance Card (GHIC). This entitles you to state provided medical treatment when you're visiting an EU country or Switzerland. This is not a substitute for medical travel insurance which is vital when travelling overseas.

Severe Allergies

If you have a severe allergy please inform the KE office before you travel. We will do all we can to help, but we cannot guarantee an allergy free environment on KE trips. You will need to carry your own treatment for the allergy with you, as 'adrenaline auto-injectors' are not carried as standard by KE leaders and staff. You should inform your leader on arrival of your allergy, and let them know where you keep your adrenaline pen.

Currency

The currency for part or all of this holiday is the Euro.

Climate

The temperatures at this time of year (April / May). can vary from 3 / 4 to about minus 15 degrees Celsius.

In April, Svalbard experiences a transition from the long polar night to the beginning of the midnight sun. The sun starts to appear more and more during the day, and the length of daylight gradually increases throughout the month. By the end of April, the sun will stay visible for nearly 24 hours.

Travel Aware

As a reputable tour operator, KE supports the British Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office's '[Travel Aware](#)' campaign to enable British citizens to prepare for their journeys overseas. The 'Travel Aware' website provides a single, authoritative source of advice for all kinds of travellers and we recommend that before travel, all KE clients visit the official UK Government website at travelaware.campaign.gov.uk and read the FCDO Travel Advice for their chosen destination. North Americans can also check out the U.S. Department of State website: www.travel.state.gov for essential travel advice and tips.

KE treat the safety and security of all clients as the most important aspect of any trip we organise. We would not run any trip that we did not consider reasonably safe. Should the FCDO advise against travel for any reason, we will contact everyone booked to travel to discuss the situation. We receive regular updates directly from the FCDO and are in constant touch with our contacts on the ground. If you have any questions about government travel advice, please call our office.

Single Use Plastic

KE do not encourage the use of single use plastic items. We are ensuring that our agents all over the world are working together to reduce the problem and educate those around them. We are leading by example in our KE office by reducing our plastic use.

Travel Insurance

It is an essential condition of joining a holiday with KE Adventure Travel that you have a valid travel insurance policy to cover the cost of medical treatment and to protect the value of your holiday in the event of cancellation. When taking out insurance please ensure the policy you choose covers you for the activities and altitude included in your itinerary.

Specific Insurance with the BMC is required for this trip. Details of this will be sent with booking confirmations.

Equipment Information

Equipment List

Svalbard Crossing – Client Equipment List

This list includes additional guidance (in brackets) to help you prepare for your expedition.

We'll go through your full layering system and kit set-up during the UK-based training weekend, including demonstrations.

Key

E – Essential O – Optional R – Rentable & Essential

Client-Supplied Equipment

Personal Clothing

☐ 3 x Sock system that works for you in these environments with your boot set up. Example: 2 x thin liner socks, 3 x mid-thickness wool socks, 2 x underwear. We'll discuss further during the UK training course. (E)

☐ 1 x pair vapour barrier socks (E)

☐ 2 x long sleeve base layer tops (merino or synthetic), or 1 short and 1 long depending on preference (E)

☐ 2 x long johns/thermal leggings (merino or synthetic) (E)

☐ 2 x winter weight softshell trousers (bibbed or adjustable waist, snow gaiters, roomy over boots) (E)

☐ 1 x synthetic or down gilet (E)

☐ 1 x fleece or softshell (ideally with hood for versatility) (E)

☐ 1 x medium weight insulated jacket (ideally with hood) (E)

☐ 1 x waterproof hard-shell jacket with hood (with ventilation zips) (E)

☐ 1 x waterproof hard-shell trousers with full-length side zips (must fit over boots) (E)

☐ 1 x expedition weight down jacket (R)

☐ 1 x fluffy hat (e.g. Fjällräven Nordic Heater) (E)

☐ 1 x warm winter hat (E)

☐ 1 x buff or neck gaiter (E)

☐ 1 x balaclava (E)

☐ 1 x face mask (optional, one will be provided for the skidoo phase) (O)

☐ 1 x ski goggles (category 4, or reactive 2-4 lenses) (E)

☐ 1 x sunglasses (category 4 with side protection, or reactive 2-4 lenses) (E)

☐ 2 x liner gloves (E)

☐ 2 x midweight gloves (one mitt, one glove ideal) (E)

☐ 1 x waterproof, bulky, very warm mitt with inner and outer layers (R)

Personal Equipment

☐ 1 x Gaiters if not built into trousers or boots (E)

☐ 1 x insulated mountaineering or winter-specific boot (Baffin-style) (R)

☐ 1 x insulated boots for tent and sleeping use (R)

- ☐ 1 x Snowshoes (e.g. MSR Lightning Ascents - avoid TSL-style) (R)
- ☐ 1 x Ski poles or trekking poles with large baskets (R)
- ☐ 1 x Multi-tool or knife (e.g. Leatherman Squirt, for general use and emergency egress from tents) (E)
- ☐ 1 x Avalanche transceiver (R)
- ☐ 1 x Avalanche probe (R)
- ☐ 1 x Shovel (R)
- ☐ 1 x Crevasse rescue kit (harness, carabiners, prusik loops, ice screws) (R)
- ☐ 1 x Ice axe (lightweight) (R)
- ☐ 1 x Crampons (lightweight) (R)

Organisation System

- ☐ 1 x system for organising pulk (e.g. mix of dry bags, packing cubes, Ortlieb boot bag) (R)
- ☐ Dry bags (various sizes) - bring extras to adapt organisation as needed (E)
- ☐ 1 x Down sleeping bag rated to at least -30°C comfort + silk liner. (Some may double bag) (R)
- ☐ Extra dry bags (O)

Sleeping System

- ☐ 1 x Full-length foam mat (R)
- ☐ 1 x Inflatable insulated mat (e.g. Exped DownMat) (R)
- ☐ 1 x Sleeping bag liner (E)
- ☐ 1 x Head torch with lithium batteries (bring spares or charging option) (E)
- ☐ 1 x Earplugs and sleep mask (24-hour daylight) (O)

Eating, Drinking & Toilet

- ☐ 1 x Insulated mug with lid (E)
- ☐ 1 x Spoon or spork (E)
- ☐ 2 x 1L Nalgene bottles - one for drinking (insulated cover), one as pee bottle (Shewee optional) (E)
- ☐ 2 x Stanley Thermos flasks (1L minimum) (E)

Personal Care

- ☐ Personal first aid kit and blister care (Leukoplast zinc oxide tape, not generic brands) (E)
- ☐ Sunscreen and lip balm (e.g. Blistex, Uvistat 50, P20 sun cream) (E)

- ☐ Biodegradable toiletries and personal medication (E)
- ☐ Travel towel (for accommodation in Longyearbyen) and wipes (E)

Admin & Extras

- ☐ Passport (E)
- ☐ Travel insurance certificate (E)
- ☐ Medical certificate or fitness declaration (if required) (E)
- ☐ Power bank (minimum 20,000mAh, e.g. Anker) (E)
- ☐ Book or journal (O)

Group-Supplied Equipment (Provided)

- ☐ Pulk, hauling poles and harness system
- ☐ Hilleberg Keron 3GT tent
- ☐ MSR XGK stove, pot (with handle), and fuel
- ☐ Polar bear safety equipment (rifle, flares, IceBear tripwire system)
- ☐ Group first aid kit and emergency comms
- ☐ Group repair kit (snowshoe, tent, walking pole, pulk, general repairs)
- ☐ Expedition daily ration pack
- ☐ Permit for travel outside the D10 zone on Svalbard

Land Only Information

The LAND ONLY dates and prices are for the itinerary joining in Longyearbyen. For clients making their own flight arrangements, Longyearbyen Airport is the most convenient for transfers to the group hotel.

Flight Inclusive Information

The FLIGHT INCLUSIVE dates and prices are based on UK flights from London Heathrow to Longyearbyen airport with SAS via Oslo. Outbound flights will depart from the UK in the evening arriving in the morning of the following day (Day 1 of the itinerary), this requires an overnight in Norway (Oslo) which is included in the flight inclusive price. Return flights will depart Longyearbyen after lunch of the last day of the itinerary, arriving in the UK in the same evening. Due to flight schedules, on certain departures it is also required to overnight in Oslo on the return. Regional departures and/or alternative carriers are available on request. Please note that the Oslo hotel will be based at the airport. If you want to stay at an alternative hotel in the city, then these arrangements must be made independently. Please let our staff know when booking.

Please be aware that there are often only a limited number of seats available at the advertised price. To avoid paying flight supplements, we recommend that you book as early as possible, especially during peak times. If we are unable to secure seats at the price shown, or you have requested regional departures, we will contact you with an alternative quote. Please note that you may be asked to pay for your flights in advance of your final holiday balance. Note that if you book a package including flights with KE you will benefit from full financial protection.

Why Choose KE

Why KE

We are working with the fantastic Jamie Annetts for this spectacular addition to our Pioneer adventure range. Jamie is an expert in Polar Expeditions and will be our guide for the UK training weekend and the main Svalbard expedition.

Please Note This document was downloaded on 22/07/2025 and the trip is subject to change