

2024 CLOUD WOLVES OF THE KASKA COAST



November



Nanuk Polar Bear Lodge



ANSWER THE CALL OF THE WILD WOLVES on our newest program and discover the thrill of tracking, watching, photographing and studying these enigmatic creatures.

WHETHER YOU ARE A WOLF LOVER dreaming of seeing and hearing them in the wild, a photographer chasing National Geographic-worthy images, or a naturalist craving field experience—or all three!—our ten-day CLOUD WOLVES EXPEDITION will take you on an unforgettable journey.

Our base is the beautiful Nanuk Polar Bear Lodge in the heart of the Kaska Coast, an uninhabited wilderness ten times the size of Yellowstone National Park. Our resident packs of cloud wolves (*Canis lupus nubilus*) range along the narrow coast and while wolf sightings are not guaranteed, the pack often visits and spends time around the lodge. With no hunting or trapping pressure on them, these wolves have no fear of humans, giving us the possibility for encounters and photography unrivalled anywhere else in the world.

Join National Geographic photographer Jad Davenport, and naturalist guides, as we venture on foot and by ATV --and possibly snow machine and komatiq (Inuit sled)--through spruce forests and over coastal tundra on our quest to find and follow the wolves. Late autumn is an exciting time for wolves as the pack gathers to hunt together again after a dispersed summer season. The pups are almost full grown and eager to join in the action. But cloud wolves aren't the only creatures out here. If the Hudson Bay hasn't frozen yet (the timing varies each year), polar bears can often be seen along the coast; more regular visitors include moose, red and arctic fox, ptarmigan and snowy owls.

ITINERARY

DAY 1 - GET SETTLED, GEARED UP AND MEET YOUR TEAM

Arrive in Winnipeg where you will enjoy a relaxing stay at our choice hotel, The Grand by Lakeview at the Winnipeg Airport. Your winter gear fitting and collection will take place at 5 pm prior to meeting the rest of your group at an orientation dinner hosted by a Churchill Wild representative.

DAY 2 - WELCOME TO NANUK POLAR BEAR LODGE!

Arrive in Churchill by air where one of our expert staff will meet you at the airport and provide you with instructions of the morning transfer. You will then be transferred by fixed wing aircraft to Nanuk Polar Bear Lodge. This exciting 60-minute flight takes you over Wapusk National Park as well as the historic York Factory. Keep a sharp eye en-route for wildlife including wolves, caribou and polar bears.

Upon arrival, your hosts will provide a tour of the Lodge and get you settled into your room. A thorough orientation on travelling in polar bear country will be provided prior to any outings. Then it's time to assemble your cameras, hard drives, and tripods and start shooting. Time permitting, we'll head out for a shakedown hike.

After the excitement of the day prepare for the first of many fine meals from the award-winning Blueberries & Polar Bears cookbooks.

DAYS 3 TO 8 - FIND THE WOLVES!

Enjoy a hearty breakfast while our lead guide briefs us on what the scouts are reporting and our plan of attack for the day. After breakfast, it's time to head on safari!

These daily safaris (usually one in the morning and one in the afternoon) are a chance for us to track the wolf packs and get you as close as possible to observe and photograph their behavior and social interactions.

While it's often possible to observe wolves right from the viewing decks at the lodge, wolves regularly travel to hunt and mark their territory; they can easily cover 40km a day. We keep in close radio contact with our scouts as they monitor activity at various points along the coast. With our small group size and high-guide ratio, we are able move quickly along a network of established safari trails.

After morning safaris, we'll head back to the lodge to enjoy a light lunch and some well-earned downtime. By early afternoon we'll head back into the field. Some days, depending on wildlife and weather, we may opt for an all-day safari and extend our range.

For those interested in becoming involved with our citizen-science wolf study, the safaris are also a chance to conduct field work. Depending on the weather and wildlife situation, we may have opportunities to collect trailcam images, cast animal tracks, study social relationships, map territories, conduct and record howl surveys, and gather traditional knowledge from First Nation oral histories. Participants contributions will become part of the yearly study.

Evenings at Nanuk are a chance to unwind and enjoy a nightly happy hour with a short presentation on wolf biology and natural history, storytelling and wildlife photography, followed by a delicious dinner and socializing around the fire.

The Kaska Coast boasts over 300 nights a year of Auroral activity, making it one of the best places in the world to see the dazzling Northern Lights. November can be stormy, but if the skies are clear and the solar winds are active, we'll be sure and wake you up for a dazzling show. Jad will be on hand to help you set up your cameras and capture the haunting beauty.

This is your expedition. While we want to offer you as many experiences as possible, we also encourage you to relax. Take an afternoon or morning off (or a couple) and have the lodge to yourself. We'll stoke the fire, pour you some coffee and leave you with some tasty brownies. Some of our best wildlife viewing happens right from the lodge. You never know who might wander up to the window and look in on you.

DAY 9 - BACK TO WINNIPEG

After breakfast it's time for one last goodbye-howl to the wolves before we fly back to Churchill and on to Winnipeg.

Back in town, you'll spend the day with one of our tour guides exploring the town and surrounding area and learning about its rich history as a seaport and ex-military base. Your tour will include highlights such as the Parks Canada exhibit, the Itsanitaq Museum, the Polar Bear Jail, chatting with the Cree and Inuit ladies sewing moose-hide mitts at the Arctic Trading Post, or learning about the Lost Franklin Expedition while gazing at the stained-glass memorial in St. Paul's Anglican Church. Along the way, your guide will point out murals that were commissioned in 2016 as part of the SeaWalls mural festival. Before a group dinner, your guide will give you free time to shop for last-minute souvenirs at the unique gift stores in Churchill.

Your flight south to Winnipeg will take place this evening. Upon arrival, collect your bags, head out of the arrivals doors and back to The Grand Hotel.

DAY 10 - HOMEWARD BOUND

After a restful sleep you will pack your bags in preparation for your flight home.





ACCOMMODATIONS: One of the original National Geographic Unique Lodges of the World, Nanuk Polar Bear Lodge was built 40km east of the ghost town and national historic site of York Factory, the epicenter of the Canadian fur trade.

Designed and crafted in parkitecture style, the one-storey wooden-beamed lodge is a north-facing chevron. At its heart is a central Great Room, dining area, bar, kitchen, boutique and office. The Great Room features a roaring river-rock fireplace, lots of deep leather couches and chairs, spotting scopes, bookshelves and maps, and a collection of Arctic artifacts. Panoramic windows face the Hudson Bay and offer fantastic (and comfortable) wildlife viewing.

Two spacious wooden decks (also excellent for wildlife viewing) lead off either side of the Great Room, connecting it to the two guest wings with four private rooms and en suites each. The hallways are wide and feature more panoramic windows for excellent wildlife viewing.

Because this is prime wolf and polar bear country, and both are curious about the sights, sounds and smells emanating from here, the lodge is guarded by a tall fence. Guests are welcome to roam this inverse zoo on their own—the wooden decks and a three-storey observation tower make for excellent wildlife and Northern Light viewing and photography. For your safety, however, no guests are permitted to leave the compound without being accompanied by an armed guide.

GUIDES AND EQUIPMENT: Expedition is fully guided with all related transportation and safety equipment provided.

CLOTHING: Temperatures will range from -10 to -30C, likely with high wind chills. Blowing snow and/or blizzard conditions can be experienced at any time. Only the very best winter clothing is acceptable and for this reason we will provide you with high-end insulated boots, pants, and parka for the expedition* For your own safety and comfort, we will provide you with an additional gear list. Laundry facilities will not be available to you during your stay.

*We are unable to accommodate boots larger than a men's size 13. We have limited gear available for guests over 6'4."

ADDITIONAL PHOTO OPS: While our focus is on wolves, we hope to encounter other wildlife including polar bears, wolverines, foxes, moose, snowy owls and ptarmigan. Aurora Borealis viewings are some of the best in the world here, so be prepared for a few sleepless nights! Many viewing and photo ops take place near the lodge so it is not always necessary to venture further abroad for wildlife encounters should we have what we call a very blustery day.

ADDITIONAL NOTES: While your guides make every effort to find and track animals, wildlife encounters, including wolves, are not guaranteed. Due to the customized nature of this safari and the extreme weather that may be encountered, please allow for flexibility in daily activities and flight times. To ensure a high level of personal service, this expedition is limited to only 12 participants.

Due to extreme cold there may be times when it's difficult to maintain running water, but we know how to handle this!

YOUR ADVENTURE INCLUDES: All air and ground transfers between Winnipeg and our lodge, winter pants, boots and parka, accommodations, guide services and excursions, and meals, as follows:

- Day 1: Dinner
- Day 2 to 9: Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner
- Day 10: None

2024 RATE: \$22,095 CAD per person plus tax (based on double occupancy)

Prices are subject to taxes of 8.5%.

Single guests can sign up to share a room with another person of the same gender at the regular rate per person based on double occupancy.