

POLAR BEARS

& THE WILDLIFE *of* CHURCHILL, CANADA



**ALUMNI
ASSOCIATION**

October 23-28, 2017



ALUMNI ASSOCIATION

Dear Friends of the Arizona Alumni Association,

Almost every person who is fortunate enough to see a polar bear does so with the bear in captivity. However, in the remote grain port of Churchill, located on the west coast of Canada's Hudson Bay, a small group of people can experience the excitement of witnessing bears living freely in their own natural habitat!

Every fall, the tundra surrounding Churchill becomes a stopover for more than 1,000 bears on their annual migration to hunt for food on the frozen ice of the Hudson Bay. Large numbers of these usually solitary bears can be found in Churchill at this time of year, making it the "Polar Bear Capital of the World." From the safety of tundra vehicles, we can view these majestic creatures within close range. It is also common to see gyrfalcons, snowy owls, ptarmigans and Arctic foxes. Our knowledgeable Expedition Leader will be on hand to talk about polar bear behavior, natural history and adaptations to the Arctic way of life.

During the day, young male bears play-fight, mothers cautiously explore with their cubs at their sides, and solitary adult bears lumber across the tundra. On this unique northern adventure, we will take a special evening trip in addition to our daytime excursions to observe nightfall on the pristine and isolated tundra landscape – an unforgettable experience. It is a rare opportunity to view the tundra at night, when the northern environs provide an eerie and remote adventure. If conditions are right, we may also be able to observe the aurora borealis, or northern lights, as radiating colors illuminate the night sky.

An increased awareness of the importance of protecting the bears, along with growing tourist interest in their yearly migration, has brought about a sense of commitment by the people of Churchill to help these mighty animals migrate safely through their now famous town. Please join fellow University of Arizona Alumni Association members on this unforgettable Arctic journey to view polar bears in the wild!

Kind Regards,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Lisa Valentine".

Lisa Valentine
Director, UA Alumni Travel
University of Arizona Alumni Association



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Day 1: Arrive in Winnipeg

Fly to Winnipeg, where a shuttle will meet you upon arrival and take you to the Fort Garry Hotel. Gather at 7 p.m. for a welcome dinner and briefing with your Expedition Leader. (D)

Day 2: Winnipeg / Churchill

This morning, we fly north to the town of Churchill, on the western shore of Hudson Bay. Upon arrival in Churchill, we briefly tour this historic fur-trading post. Tonight, we travel to the edge of town for your evening on the tundra—a night drive that begins at dusk and lasts until well after dark. After boarding your unique tundra vehicle, your Expedition Leader and knowledgeable driver keep a sharp lookout while we travel to areas where the polar bears frequently congregate. Using special lighting, the bears are not disturbed upon approach and you can see them in the darkness. Watch, too, for the luminescent eyes of night-time animals, such as the arctic fox and snowy owl. Dinner is served aboard the vehicle, and you have ample time to experience the evening stillness of the tundra before returning to Churchill. (B, L, D)

Days 3 & 4: Churchill

On these days, after a hearty breakfast, we depart for all-day bear-viewing aboard your tundra vehicle. Built specifically for tundra travel, this unique vehicle was the catalyst for bringing worldwide attention and protection to the polar bear; the views aboard are unparalleled! Your Expedition Leader and driver know the best places to

view bears, and throughout the day they provide commentary on your observations in this harsh arctic environment. Bear sightings dictate the pace of the day, and you may see many bears in a single day, or maybe just a few. The fascination of the experience is not in the quantity of sightings, but in the quality. Sometimes we may linger for an hour or more to watch a single bear's behavior before heading off in search of more bears. Enjoy a picnic-style lunch aboard the tundra vehicle and then return to Churchill in the late afternoon for dinner and an evening presentation on wildlife or local culture. (B, L, D)

Day 5: Churchill / Winnipeg

On our final morning in Churchill, enjoy free time to explore the town and gather souvenirs of your northern expedition. View the exhibits at the small but excellent Eskimo Museum or visit the local shops to pick up native handicrafts, such as Inuit carvings or other arctic arts and crafts. If time and weather permit, take an optional dog sled ride or helicopter journey over the tundra. Later today, we fly to Winnipeg and check into our hotel. Depending on our flight schedule, we celebrate our trip with either a farewell lunch in Churchill or a farewell dinner in Winnipeg. (B, L or D)

Day 6: Return Home

Transfer by shuttle to the airport any time for your homebound flight. Hotel checkout time is noon. (B)

B=Breakfast L=Lunch D=Dinner



Every autumn, more than one thousand polar bears congregate on the alpine tundra surrounding Hudson Bay, anticipating the winter freeze. Churchill's unique setting in this environment makes it the only place in the world where travelers can safely and comfortably view large numbers of wild polar bears in their natural habitat.

Our trip is scheduled during the peak season, which begins in early October and lasts until late November or December, when the bay freezes over and the bears migrate onto the pack ice. Daily sightings are impossible to predict and vary in number, but bears are always present. In past years we've seen as many as fifty bears in a day and other times only one.

We search for polar bears aboard a spacious bus-like vehicle mounted on huge all-terrain tires, following established routes as not to damage the fragile tundra. Vehicles travel at a leisurely pace to areas of high bear density, approximately a 45-minute drive. The dirt trails are rough and rocky in places, making for the occasional bumpy ride, but our drivers keep the speed down to minimize bouncing and maximize bear sightings. All vehicles are heated and have bathrooms. Passenger numbers are

kept small to ensure optimal visibility from the indoor windows and to provide ample room on the open viewing deck. In addition to a picnic lunch, hot and cold drinks are provided on board.

Temperatures during peak viewing season vary between 0° and 45° Fahrenheit. Conditions range from sunny and clear to snowy and overcast; windy days are common. Deep snow is unlikely, but Churchill's streets can be icy and slippery. Warm parkas and boots are available upon request; participants will receive details after registration. Our trip to the tundra does not require a high degree of physical fitness.

Hotel accommodations are first class in Winnipeg. Churchill's hotel rooms are less elegant but clean and comfortable with meals that are simple and hearty.

Please recognize that Churchill's resources are stretched to capacity this time of year, and as a result, flight changes, mechanical delays and other similar issues are not uncommon. Participants are encouraged to be patient, flexible and respectful of the local infrastructure. For those who travel with a spirit of adventure, this tour is the experience of a lifetime!



Tour Cost

\$6,395 per person, based on double occupancy. Group size is limited to approximately 15 participants.

Tour Cost Includes

Trips to the tundra on specially designed tundra vehicles; all accommodations; all meals from dinner on Day 1 through breakfast on Day 6 (except either lunch or dinner on your final day in Churchill, depending on your flight schedule); services of Natural Habitat Adventure's (NHA) professional Expedition Leader and assistants; all ground transportation in Churchill and airport transfers in Winnipeg; roundtrip air transportation between Winnipeg and Churchill; permits and entrance fees; all taxes and service charges including Canada's GST.

Tour Cost Does Not Include

Roundtrip air transportation between your home city and Winnipeg; alcoholic beverages; lunch or dinner on your final day in Churchill; items of a personal nature (telephone calls, laundry, etc.); gratuities; and travel insurance.

Travel Insurance

We strongly suggest purchasing travel insurance. Information will be sent to you upon receipt of your reservation.

Helicopter Flights

On this trip, travelers also have the opportunity to participate in an optional helicopter journey. From the air, you may observe caribou, arctic fox and polar bears located in areas where our tundra vehicles cannot travel. Participants will receive further information on helicopter flights approximately 60 days prior to departure.

Dog Sledding Excursion

A dog sledding excursion is included during your Arizona Alumni Association Polar Bears trip (weather dependent). You will receive more information approximately 60 days prior to departure.

Extra Day in Winnipeg Program

For those travelers who would like to see as much as possible during their trip to this area of the world, we have arranged a guided Extra Day in Winnipeg Program that takes place prior to the Polar Bear program. Included are hotel accommodations, breakfast and lunch, a tour of the city highlighting historical and cultural points of interest and a guided visit to the acclaimed Manitoba Museum, winner of numerous awards of excellence in tourism and service. This program is \$265 per person, double occupancy.

Air Transportation

We urge you to check airline cancellation penalties before purchasing airline tickets because international departure times and flights can change. Tours can also be cancelled because of low enrollment. Neither Northwestern Alumni Association nor NHA accepts liability for cancellation penalties related to domestic or international airline tickets purchased independently in conjunction with a tour.

Travel Documents

All U.S. citizens traveling via air or sea will require a valid passport to enter Canada. Please note that birth certificates and other government issued photo identification will no longer be accepted for entry.



RESERVATION FORM

Please reserve _____ place(s) **University of Arizona Polar Bears of Churchill**, October 23-28, 2017.

Name: _____

Date of Birth: _____ Dietary Preference: Regular Vegetarian

Name: _____

Date of Birth: _____ Dietary Preference: Regular Vegetarian

*Street Address: _____

City: _____ State: _____ ZIP: _____

Phone: _____ E-mail: _____

*PLEASE NOTE: Travelers not living at the same address must fill out separate reservation forms.

Please call me to arrange air travel from my home city of: _____.

Deposit Information:

\$500 per person.

Check enclosed, payable to Natural Habitat Adventures

VISA MasterCard Discover Card

Account #: _____ CVV # _____ Exp Date: ____/____/____

Cardholder Name: _____

PLEASE NOTE: Your final payment will be charged to your credit card at 90 days prior to departure. Should you prefer to pay by check, you must indicate your preference below.

I will pay my final payment by check. Please do not charge my credit card for final payment.

Accommodations

_____ Double \$6,395 (please provide name of accompanying person if not shown above):

_____ Two beds (if available)

Waiver of Liability

I understand that by signing below I am acting for myself and for everyone in my party in acknowledging that the Refund & Cancellation Policy, Wildlife Viewing, Terms & Conditions and Please Note sections in this brochure have been read and accepted. I also understand that I and everyone in my party will be required to sign a release of liability form prior to and/or during my trip. I give my permission for NHA to charge my final balance on my credit card at 90 days prior to departure, unless otherwise noted on this form. I also give my permission for NHA to use any image taken of me or anyone in my party by NHA or its affiliates for promotional purposes.

Signature: _____ Date: _____

Signature: _____ Date: _____

PLEASE NOTE: Each participant must sign this waiver.

For more information or to make your reservation on University of Arizona Alumni Association Polar Bears of Churchill, please call Lisa Valentine at 520-621-7576 or 800-232-8278 or email lisaval@al.arizona.edu

Please complete this form and mail or fax to:



University of Arizona Alumni Association

1111 North Cherry Avenue

PO Box 210109

Tucson, AZ 85721-0109

Fax: 520-621-9030

Payment Policy

A deposit of \$500 is required to confirm your reservation. Final payment is due 90 days prior to departure, approximately July 23, 2017. Your final payment will be charged to your credit card 90 days prior to departure, unless you indicate otherwise on your reservation form. Please submit a check prior to the final payment due date should you prefer to pay by check.

Refund & Cancellation Policy

All cancellations must be made in writing. Cancellations processed more than 90 days prior to departure will require a \$100 handling fee. Cancellations made 90 to 45 days prior to departure require a loss of 50% of the entire program fee, including all extensions. Cancellations made within 44 days of departure require a loss of the entire program fee, including all extensions. We reserve the right to cancel this tour, and in such case the entire payment will be refunded without penalty or handling fee or any further obligation on our part.



Wildlife Viewing

Because our programs specialize in viewing wildlife, every effort is made to plan programs where wildlife is known to exist. However, the animals we visit live wild and free and we cannot fully predict or control their migratory patterns (nor would we want to). In an attempt to locate wildlife which may have deviated from its normal pattern, or in the interest of traveler comfort or safety, we may be required to make reasonable changes in itineraries. If it is necessary to change hotels or other facilities, comparable accommodations will be substituted wherever possible. If changes or fluctuations in exchange rates occur, additional costs may require the program fee to change with little or no notice. Should Natural Habitat Adventures (NHA) be required to cancel a trip due to unforeseen circumstances, travelers will be refunded for their trip cost, but neither NHA, nor University of Arizona Alumni Association will be liable for accompanying expenses (such as gear purchases, airline tickets, etc.).

Health

All participants should be in good health and capable of walking over rough terrain. By forwarding the deposit for passage, the passenger certifies that he/she does not have any physical or other condition or disability that would create a hazard for him/herself or other passengers.

Currency, Fuel & Other Fluctuations

Significant fluctuations in exchange rates, energy prices and other cost factors may necessitate an increase in trip prices before or after your booking. A price increase would be implemented only if absolutely necessary and would serve only to maintain the highest quality of your adventure.

Terms & Conditions

It is University of Arizona Alumni Association's, NHA's and our cooperating agents' and representatives' goal to select reliable suppliers and contractors to provide air and other transportation, hotels, guides and other travel-related services; we do not assume responsibility,

directly or indirectly, for any loss, damage or injury to property or person in connection with such services. Each traveler agrees not to hold Arizona Alumni Association, NHA, its owners, employees, agents and representatives liable, in the

absence of their own gross negligence, for any loss or injury, expense or damage that results directly or indirectly from any act or omission of any person or firm that is to or does provide goods or services in connection with the trip or with any available option. You agree that Arizona Alumni Association, NHA and its cooperating agents and representatives shall not be liable for circumstances arising as a result of acts of God, weather, detention, annoyance, delays and expenses arising from quarantine, strikes, theft, pilferage, force majeure, military, political or terrorist action, civil disturbances, government restrictions, failure of any means of conveyance to arrive or depart as scheduled, and discrepancies or changes in transit over which they have no control. NHA reserves the right to change the program fee, dates or itinerary with little or no notice. If such changes do occur, no refunds will be made beyond those described in our cancellation policy, and NHA will not be liable for expenses incurred as a result of the change (such as air ticket change fees, etc.).

Please Note

The information contained in this brochure was prepared well in advance of the departure date. Because of the program provided, dates, pricing, hotels, modes of transportation and in some cases, itineraries, change. If this situation does occur, we will attempt to provide similar alternatives but are not always able to do so. We hope you understand. Please be certain to read Terms & Conditions and Refund & Cancellation Policy prior to signing on to this adventure.



Arizona Alumni Association
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PO Box 210109, Tucson, AZ
85721-0109

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