

MEETING WITH THE POLAR BEARS

The town of Churchill, nestled on the shores of Hudson Bay, is 650 miles north of Winnipeg. It is known as the “Polar Bear Capital of the World”. Every autumn, polar bears gather along the water’s edge near the town, anxiously waiting for the sea ice to form. This trip allows you to experience the excitement of polar bear viewing from a world-famous Tundra Buggy®, as well as enjoy the eclectic charm of this unique Northern town.

 Region	Northern Canada
 Activity	Nature - Adventure
	Winter
 Duration	6 days
 Code	HIVER-17
 Price	From €7,391
 Level	1/5
 Comfort	3/5

ITINERARY

Day 1 Winnipeg



Check in at your airport accommodation upon arrival in Winnipeg and look through your pre departure material. You may wish to explore the colorful Exchange District which is a National Historic Site of Canada or stroll through St. Boniface, the city's French Quarter, or explore the newly opened Canadian Museum for Human Rights! Night at Four Points Sheraton Hotel or similar.

- Accommodation : Hotel

Day 2 Churchill



Early morning departure for Churchill. Upon arrival we will have a town and area tour, a guided tour of local and historical points of interest surrounding Churchill, including such attractions as Cape Merry, Port of Churchill and Manitoba Conservation's Polar Bear Holding Facility and a stop at the Churchill Eskimo Museum. After a delicious dinner at a locally owned restaurant, guests will enjoy an evening slide presentation by a local photographer. Night at Tundra Inn hotel or similar. (B, L, D)

- Accommodation : Hotel

Day 3 Churchill



Welcome to the Kingdom of the Ice Bears! Today we will venture out onto the vast tundra where we will look for the kings of the Arctic! The phenomenal migration of these extraordinary animals takes place annually, as they prowl the coast of the Hudson Bay while waiting for the sea ice to form. We will navigate on the tundra in search of polar bears and other arctic wildlife while our knowledgeable interpretive guide will offer insights into the lives of these incredible animals. A delicious lunch will be served right out on the tundra. After our first full day, we will return to Churchill where guests will have free time to discover local specialties and popular meeting places. Night at Tundra Inn hotel or similar. (B, L, D)

- Accommodation : Hotel

Day 4 Churchill



Early departure on this morning to an other Tundra Buggy excursion. The best way to experience an intimate encounter with a wild polar bear is on an authentic Tundra Buggy. All of our Tundra Buggies are furnished with dual-pane frost-free windows and contain propane heating systems that closely resemble a cozy fireplace, with real flames (behind glass). Keep your eyes open to enjoy this magnificent moment, and see one more time this great polar bear. Lunch and refreshments will be served on the buggy while our driver seeks out more incredible wildlife viewing experiences. Night at Tundra Inn hotel or similar. (B, L, D)

- Accommodation : Hotel

📍 Day 5 **Churchill - Winnipeg**



Final day in Churchill. In the morning you will visit a local dog musher for an exciting and informative dog sled program. Hosted by a local resident and dog sledding expert, you will learn about the history associated with dog sledding in Northern Canada. Enjoy an exhilarating ride behind a strong team of huskies on a custom-made sled. Join the musher for hot chocolate and freshly made bannock after your ride of about 5 minutes and share their personal stories of their dog sledding adventures. After lunch, we will visit the Parks Canada Interpretive Centre, walk back in time viewing detailed and exciting wildlife dioramas as well as fur trade exhibits. You will leave chock-full of natural and historical information from the Churchill region.

You will be transferred to the Churchill airport for an evening flight to Winnipeg. Night at the Four Points Sheraton hotel. (B, L, D)

- Accommodation : Hotel

📍 Day 6 **Winnipeg**



Depart from Winnipeg at leisure.

PERIOD & BUDGET

When to travel?

The best period for travelling is during the following months:

Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----

Price

From 10 410 \$C (based on double occupancy)

This budget is indicated per person, according to availability. Your local agent will send you a personalized quote with the exact price. Indeed, the latter can vary according to several elements (availability, service levels, period, number of participants, reservation time and many others).

The budget is an indication of the price per person, subject to availability. Your local agent will send you a customized quote with the exact price. The price can vary according to availability, level of services, period of travel, number of participants, booking time frame and other items.

Included

- Roundtrip flight between Winnipeg and Churchill
- Round trip transfer between airport and hotel in Churchill
- Churchill town & area guided tour of 2h30
- Dog-sledding introduction and conference
- Visit of the Eskimo Museum
- Visit of the Parks Canada Interpretive Centre
- Services of an interpretive guide
- 2 full days tour in a «Tundra Buggy»
- 5 nights accommodation
- 12 meals (see abbreviations)
- Applicable taxes

Not included

- Air travel (except flight between Winnipeg and Churchill)
- Round trip transfer from hotel to airport in Winnipeg (day 1 and 6)
- Drinks (excluding coffee and tea with meals included)
- Personal expenses
- Tips for guide

International flights

On request, ask your advisor at canada@altaibasecamp.com

Terms and conditions

Final payment: 90 days before departure.

Cancellation: Up to 90 days before departure: \$750 From 90 to 61 days before departure: 50% of the total non-refundable invoice Less than 61 days before departure: 100% of the total non-refundable invoice

Insurance

On request, ask your advisor at canada@altaibasecamp.com

PRACTICAL INFO

Budget & exchange

Visa and Mastercard credit cards are accepted almost everywhere. You can also change euros. 1 Euro = C\$1.50 as at 01/01/2024

Tips

In the United States and Canada, service is never included in the prices. In bars, restaurants and all places where a service is provided, you are expected to leave a tip of between 15 and 20% of the total amount. Be aware that many employees in service occupations only pay themselves with tips. It would be very wrong to give nothing, or not give enough. Even when paying by credit card, you will indicate the amount of the tip you wish to leave. On this type of trip, it is customary to leave \$6 per person per day for the driver guide and \$20 per group for the city guides.

Vital equipment

- A pair of warm shoes or a pair of padded boots
- Slippers or light sneakers for the chalet
- Pair of wool socks
- Anorak
- Warm trousers
- Warm sweaters or fleece furs
- Underwear made of fine technical fibres
- Bathing suit
- Gloves, hat, scarf (depending on the season)

Material

- Toilet bag
- Pair of sunglasses
- Sun protection cream (face and lip)
- Pocket knife
- Flashlight or front light with spare batteries
- 1.5 litre minimum flask, light and isothermal.

You can also provide a 2-litre water bag. The latter has the advantage of allowing direct consumption thanks to its pipette. So you don't have to drop the backpack to grab the canteen. This way you drink more regularly and in small quantities, which is recommended for a good hydration. Tip: having two containers allows you to consume one while the other is being processed.

Helpful equipment

- Waterproof pocket for your passport and/or identity card
- Your driver's license
- Your vaccination record
- Your travel insurance brochure
- Your currencies
- Your credit card and personal papers
- Plastic bags to guarantee the waterproofness of your belongings
- Clothing
- Dirty laundry bag
- Earplugs
- Notepad and pen Book, card game....
- Walking sticks (optional). They are a precious help to save your knees during the descent (up to 30% of your weight + that of your bag are supported by the poles) and support your effort during the ascent (the arms help in addition to the legs)
- Pair of binoculars
- Camera and battery charger
- Adapter for electrical plug

Luggage

A flexible travel bag with side zipper giving easier access to its contents than a sailor bag, it will contain the things you will not use during the day a small backpack (capacity about 40L) for your daily stuff such as sweaters, spare tee shirts, water bottles, glasses, lunch picnic etc.

In case of delay in your checked baggage (toothbrush, t-shirt, walking shoes, etc.), please bring something to the cabin to survive the first few days.

Passport

Consular formalities for Europeans and Swiss nationals:

Upon your registration, please transmit your passport information (name, first name, passport number, date of issues and expiration). Currently, to stay as a tourist for less than six months, a visa is not mandatory and a valid passport is sufficient with a validity exceeding by one day your stay in Canada.

Travelers must imperatively have an **electronic travel authorization (eTA) to enter Canada**. You will have to fill the form online and individually (**one application per person**) on <http://www.cic.gc.ca/english/visit/ave.asp> It is essential that you have a valid email address. The 7 CAD fees are payable by Visa, Mastercard or American Express credit cards. The eTA is granted in just a few minutes but we advise you to apply for it as soon as your trip is confirmed. The eTA is an electronic document linked to your passport and **stays valid for 5 years or until the expiration of the passport**, depending on the first of these eventualities to occur. You must then travel with the passport used to apply for it.

CAREFUL: for French women, the eTA must be filled with your maiden name. Hence, to facilitate the check-in at the airport, we ask travelers in Canada to indicate their maiden name for the booking of their tickets.

You travel with children:

Children and adults are submitted to the same obligations regarding passports and visa described above. Registration of minors on parents' passports is now impossible; children must hold an individual passport. It is compulsory to apply for an eTA for each child individually.

CAREFUL, from January 15th 2017 onwards, for all French minors traveling abroad alone, an authorization to leave the country is compulsory.

The child will have to submit the three following documents:

- The minor's valid passport
- A photocopy of the signatory's identity card, valid or expired for less than 5 years and the birth certificate
- The form, signed by one of the legal guardians, available online on <https://www.service-public.fr/particuliers/vosdroits/F1359>

Concerning other nationalities, seek the Canadian consular authority of your country.

ARRIVAL IN CANADA VIA A TRANSIT THROUGH THE UNITED STATES :

CAREFUL, we can exceptionally use American airlines for travels bound for the American continent (North and South).

They stop over in the US: **you must possess an electronic or biometric passport which is still valid 6 months after your departure from the US** (under "passport", a rectangle under a circle meaning a secure symbol).

You must also **apply for an electronic travel authorization (ESTA)** on the official website <https://esta.cbp.dhs.gov>. Valid for a duration of two years or until the expiration of the passport, this authorization must be requested at the latest 72h before your departure: we advise you to apply to it as soon as your trip is confirmed. It has to be paid for (14 USD online by credit card). The name you put on the form must be the same as the one that figures on your plane tickets and must of course appears on your passport. If the name used on the ESTA form is different from the one on your tickets, the airline can deny your boarding. Minors must also fill out an ESTA authorization.

The Visa Waiver Program allows French nationals to enter the American territory without a visa, either via transit or for a stay of 90 days to the maximum. A visa is nevertheless necessary if you only have an emergency passport. Furthermore, travelers who went to Iran, Iraq, Syria, Somalia, Yemen or Soudan since March 11th 2011 and people who are national of Iran, Iraq, Syria or Soudan cannot benefit from the Visa Waiver program anymore: more information on <http://www.diplomatie.gouv.fr/fr/conseils-aux-voyageurs/conseils-par-pays/etats-unis/>

ARRIVAL IN THE US OR TRANSIT THROUGH THE US :

Upon your arrival, the immigration service will take your photo and fingerprints. You'll have to wait behind the yellow line and not cross it unless you're told to, it can take some time. Customs controls will take place at the first access point to the territory (in case of a transit through a Canadian airport, it will be considered as a first access point to the US and the following process must be applied). Once you've been through the immigration service, you'll get your luggage back from the conveyor belt and go to the customs. In case of a continuation of your trip, you'll have to get your luggage back and bring them the baggage conveyor which serves.

Health information & recommendations

It is recommended that participants bring their own medication:

- Aspirin
- Intestinal antiseptic
- Small scissors
- Tricosteril
- Protective cream
- Sun face and lips
- Mosquito repellent cream or lotion

Also think about your feet: elastoplast, eosin etc.

No vaccination required.

Hygiene Tap water is safe to drink.

Weather

<https://www.meteomedia.com/ca>

Electricity

As everywhere in the US, voltage runs at 110 Volts/60 cycles. New electric devices can be adapted to the current. It's preferable to check whether or not your device is equipped with a current transformer. In general, it is a black box located between the electric plug and your device. If your device isn't compatible with the 110-volt current, you'll need to get a current transformer sold separately. As electrical plugs are flat, you'll also need an adaptor to plug your device in. you'll find it easily on the spot or before departure in a shop specialized in travels. A waterproof Zip Lock bag is a good way to keep your equipment in a dry place.

Sustainable tourism

Since the outset, Altai works for an eco-tourism and an organization of trips that respects equitable and sustainable principles.

The harmonization of practices assures:

- A fair economical repartition
- The improvement of local teams' working conditions and their awareness of the protection of the environment
- The information of travelers about respecting the local population and environment and the collection of their feelings at their return.

You can also act in favor of an eco-tourism by adopting simple green gestures during your trips:

- Avoid letting waste out, throw it in the trash can or bring it with you
- Use potable water sparingly (take a shower instead of a bath and report any leaks) and avoid wasting it (use biodegradable soap to wash yourself)
- Avoid damaging cultural sites: don't touch the statues, don't move the stones and objects
- Exchange instead of giving (too Important gifts can destabilize the local economic stability of the country depending on their living standards)
- When taking a walk, especially in some fragile ecosystems, observe the fauna from afar, do not go beyond beaten roads, limit stamping and do not bring any souvenirs: give up picking rare flowers picking fossils...
- In some hotels, you can have individual air conditioning. It is advised to systematically switching it off when you're out of the room to avoid energetical overconsumption and greenhouse gas emission.