



Baffin Island Dive Safari

Dive among the most incredible ice formations in the world with the best and only Canadian Arctic dive operator. The ultimate Arctic dive experience at the only dive camp of its kind in the world. Immerse yourself in a world of icebergs, drifting pack ice, the Arctic sea floor and fascinating wildlife including narwhal, bowhead whales and polar bears, under the glow of the 24-hour sun.

Enter a world unlike anything you have ever imagined. The intriguing ice formations along with the fascinating wildlife you may encounter above and below water will leave you feeling exhilarated and surprised. With each passing day, your dives only get better.

After a day of excellent Arctic diving, retreat to our safari-style ice camp nestled between the majestic mountains of north Baffin Island and Bylot Island near Sirmilik National Park. The spring floe edge is a fascinating eco-

system where wildlife thrives. You may see pods of narwhal resting only meters from the floe edge, their misty breath sparkling in the 24-hour sun. This location also provides opportunities to see polar bears, a number of seal species plus an incredible variety of sea birds including Thick-billed Murre, Kittiwake, Guillemot, and the rare Ivory Gull. Bowhead and beluga also occasion this area.

Arctic Kingdom has been leading SCUBA diving trips throughout the Arctic since 1999. We are committed to making the Arctic an accessible diving destination. As cold-water experts, we can help you become comfortable in the Arctic waters so you can truly enjoy one of our favourite dive locations.

Contact a trip advisor to book your safari

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Highlights

- Get aerial views of dramatic landscapes during a fly-in experience to our Premium Safari Camp
- Dive in the most incredible ice formations found anywhere on the planet – pack ice, cracks, the Arctic sea floor.
- Dive under the light of the Midnight Sun, and possibly near grounded icebergs.
- View an array of wildlife at the floe edge during their annual migration, including narwhal, bowhead whales, and polar bears.
- Possibly visit the Bylot Island Migratory Bird Sanctuary, which attracts more than 70 species and over 300,000 birds annually.
- Possibly touch and climb icebergs to get that once in a lifetime picture.

Required diving certifications

If you have your Advanced Open Water for PADI certification, or equivalent, you are good to go! We highly recommend having your Drysuit Specialty.



 PIXNAT NATHALIE LASSELIN

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Itinerary

Discover a magical underwater world while diving in the Arctic while following a program of progressive dives. We may start off with simple dives in an open water environment off the floe edge and finish the trip with diving a grounded iceberg. Diving in the Arctic Ocean in a drysuit will require more weight than you are normally accustomed to, so we will inspect your equipment and ensure all is functioning correctly and that you are weighted for neutral buoyancy. Each dive will progressively build on the previous dive.

As we evaluate your diving comfort, we will attempt to dive in an overhead environment, perhaps through a seal hole, or through a crack in the sea ice, or maybe even under the floe edge on a line. Finally, the pinnacle of diving in the Arctic will be on a grounded iceberg. (Subject to local conditions: An iceberg must be present and a safe entry/exit point such as a crack or melt-water pool must be available)

Day 1

Upon landing in Pond Inlet, you will be welcomed by an Arctic Kingdom representative. Participate in a Parks Canada orientation before boarding the private charter flight for your short flight into camp. Have your cameras ready for stunning aerial views of the vast Arctic landscapes, including dramatic mountains and icebergs in Sirmilik National Park. Settle in to camp and enjoy a hot dinner with your fellow adventurers.

Days 2 – 5

Spend these days reveling in some of the best diving you'll ever experience. Following a program of progressive dives, you'll enjoy new experiences every day as you become more comfortable with this unique underwater environment. Explore the Arctic sea floor and discover urchins, starfish, and glittering jellyfish. Witness the surreal world of blue and turquoise ice juxtaposed with the black depths below. This is an underwater photographer's paradise.

Above the water and on land, you'll experience other spectacular scenes and exciting adventures. Expect to see icebergs, 'berg- bits', and drifting pack ice with playful seals poking their heads up out of the water to look directly at you.

On the floe edge, you will have the opportunity to see narwhals, bowhead, and polar bears on the prowl, seals sunning themselves, possibly walrus and beluga, and other Arctic wildlife. Migratory birds can also be seen in abundance. Pure white Ivory Gulls, gaudy King Eider, low flying Northern Fulmars, Thick-billed Murres, Kittiwakes, and Greater Snow Geese are just a few of the bird species known to frequent the area. Ice conditions permitting, you may also visit the Bylot Island Migratory Bird Sanctuary, where more than 300,000 birds choose to nest each year. Other activities include kayaking and hiking.



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Day 6

After another full day enjoying the High Arctic wilderness, fly directly out of camp to Pond Inlet. Explore the town at your leisure and spend your final night in a hotel.

Day 7

Transfer to the Pond Inlet airport. Board your flight back to Ottawa and onwards to home.

Included

- Services of Inuit Guides, Arctic Kingdom expedition staff, and Dive Supervisor
- All accommodations from Pond Inlet:
 - 5 nights in Premium Safari Camp on land
 - 1 night in Pond Inlet hotel
- All transportation for duration of stay in camp
- Meals: 6 breakfasts, 6 lunches and snacks, 6 dinners
- Use of kayaks
- Dive equipment including tanks, weights, weight belt, harness, all ice diving safety equipment, and remote DAN 02 kit. (Drysuit and personal dive equipment may be available on request)
- Return transfers in Pond Inlet

Not Included

- Round-trip flight to Pond Inlet from Ottawa (Ask about our special rates!)
- Accommodation in Ottawa
- Tips, gratuities, personal expenses
- Travel, medical, dive and evacuation insurance
- Additional costs associated with weather and/or layovers in Pond Inlet, Iqaluit or Ottawa





Types of dives

Floe Edge Diving

Dive off the edge of the floe edge – the “line of life”. This dive will be similar to a shore dive, yet we are on a crust of 6-foot thick ice over the Arctic Ocean. Travel by snowmobile and qamutik to the floe edge and set up dive operations to dive under the ice or in open water if no ice is present.

Experience your first Arctic dive by dropping off the edge and seeing far under the ice. With visibility anywhere from 30 to 90 meters (100 to 300 feet) horizontal, this will be a memorable first dive. From luminescent organisms to lion mane jellyfish, the macro life at the floe edge is fascinating. Make sure to bring your underwater camera.

Pack Ice Diving

Every day at the floe edge is different. Pack ice, bits of floating ice anywhere from the size of a football to the size of a football field, come and go against the floe edge with the currents and shifting winds. One day the floe edge can be completely open water, mirror smooth reflecting the wispy clouds and mountains all around. Other days, the currents will bring in the ice. This allows for incredible ice diving opportunities. Divers will find a dynamic play of light and shadow amongst the cathedral-like spires of ice that have been pushed up against one another.

See Mother Nature’s greatest works of art from under the ice. Surreal, sublime, amazing to photograph, and breathtakingly beautiful.



© Fernando Garcia

Crack Diving

The sea ice, though stable, will have cracks that form at stress points. These cracks are typically very stable once they have formed. We will only dive in a crack that has remained open for quite some time. Diving through a crack allows opportunities to access walls, the sea floor, and other interesting dive sites. The play of light through a long crack from below as we dive amongst pillows of shore ice is a memorable experience. These dives are considered an overhead environment and we will ensure you are attached to the surface with a line. All signals between diver and line tender are practiced in advanced. To dive through 8 feet of ice on either side of you, opening a world below illuminated by a long beam of bright sunlight will feel incredible.

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Iceberg Diving

Arctic Kingdom has pioneered diving on grounded, frozen-in icebergs. Diving on an iceberg can only be done safely in the Arctic on a grounded iceberg. These icebergs are calved from glaciers in nearby Devon Island or Greenland. The icebergs have grounded in anywhere from 30 to 150 meters (100 to 500 feet) of water. The sea ice has frozen around the icebergs and in some cases, we are able to find either melt-water pools that we can dive through or a crack that has formed to permit access.

Our most seasoned Arctic divers have stated that diving on an iceberg was the most incredible dive they have ever experienced. You may see icebergs towering overhead by a hundred feet or more. Remember, this is literally just the “tip of the iceberg”. Down below, the icebergs drop hundreds of more feet.

Diving through a crack will be one of the most memorable dives you’ll ever experience. The golf-ball dimpled icebergs will dwarf all divers and seem impossibly large. From underneath the sea ice, the plays of thinner ice, to melt-water pools, and a spider web of cracks that emanate from the iceberg will make you feel like you have entered an alien world. You’ll find it hard to believe that this is actually real – until you look at your pictures afterwards.



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Accommodations

Premium Safari Camp on land

Inspired by African mobile safari camps, our Premium Safari Camp brings elegance and comfort to the Arctic. The modern, specially designed Arctic yurt-style safari camp structures provide a warm and inviting home-away-from-home in one of the world's most remote, yet breathtaking places. The safari camp features a large dining and lounge areas, with a 24-hour snack and drink buffet.

Sleep quarters are spacious and warm, 4.8m (16') in diameter, with over 3m (10') cathedral ceilings. They have double walls with insulation and are entered via a lockable door. The camp includes a shared washroom facility with on-demand hot water showers. Accommodations with private washrooms are also available.

Accommodation choices include:

- **Premium Yurt:** Our standard accommodation is a heated, premium yurt. These double occupancy accommodations can include two twin beds or one king bed.
- **Deluxe Yurt:** This option includes a heated, double occupancy, premium yurt with a private en-suite bathroom. Configurations can be with two twin beds, or one king bed.

No matter the accommodation option you choose, each bed is complete with mattress, duvets, pillow, and a warm comforter. No detail has been overlooked – from large windows, to coat hooks and heaters for those that would like it a little toastier.





Trip Notes

The intent of our Baffin Island Dive Safari is to introduce you to diving in the Arctic and the wonder of the Arctic as spring transitions into summer and wildlife is abundant.

During this time, Arctic wildlife is abundant and both land and sea are filled with their presence. This Arctic safari will provide you with opportunities to enjoy progressive Arctic dives in a unique environment, observe Arctic wildlife both in and above the water, and view incredible icescapes and landscapes. You will also be exposed to intriguing Inuit culture, with an opportunity to learn about some of the ancient settlements and ancestral people that inhabited the area. While we cannot guarantee sightings of specific Arctic animals, you can expect to find an array of natural wonders and a truly unique experience on this exciting Arctic adventure.

The Arctic has many variables that can influence travel plans. Being relaxed, patient, and flexible are important attitudes. Itineraries are general guidelines and may change due to weather and unexpected conditions.

Getting There

Travel arrangements between your point of origin and Ottawa (YOW) are the responsibility of the traveller. We strongly recommend that participants travelling on reduced fare airline tickets not try to continue their journey home on the final day of the trip; any deviation from the ticketed itinerary will result in a penalty regardless of the cause. We

highly recommend that you do not plan on having any important meetings or events the day after your trip end date as we recommend planning on 'buffer time' to account for any possible delays in getting home.

Daylight Hours

In mid to late spring, the sun is constantly shining for 24 hours. The sun shines high above at noon, and by 10PM it sinks low on the western horizon and continues to skim across the tops of the distant mountain ranges until it reaches the eastern horizon, where it then begins to climb higher into the sky again. The warm, soft glow of the midnight sun is a photographer's delight.

Weather

Temperatures during this season range from -5°C (23°F) to +10°C (50°F). The month of May will be cold (usually around -5°C), but the temperatures rise as the days lengthen. Dressing in layers will make adjusting to the temperatures easier.

Is this Adventure for You?

This safari is perfect for anyone looking for an Arctic diving adventure. Things won't always be easy and we'll be heading off the beaten track and out of the usual tourist route. You don't need to have previous Arctic experience, but you do need to have an adventurous spirit. Our expeditions are typically represented by a range of international participants. Having a laid back, open-minded and patient demeanor is important.



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Level of Difficulty

Arctic Kingdom’s expeditions are somewhat active, but not too strenuous. One can choose to do as little or as much as he/she would like throughout the adventure.

Spirit of Adventure Required

Arctic Kingdom trips are not intended to have set itineraries or sights to be seen crossed off in a short period of time. We believe in taking things as they come, to relax and enjoy the opportunities, be it a sunny or foggy day, to appreciate where you are in the moment, and fall into the lifestyle of the local people.

It is assumed that participants have the spirit within themselves to enjoy the unique solitude of the Arctic and free time provided. If this outlook is not for you we can assist in finding an alternative Arctic trip that offers a more structured itinerary, and “observer” role versus actively participating in an adventure of discovery. Of course, good health is fundamental to travel in any remote region. All participants will be required to obtain emergency medical and evacuation travel insurance. Age should not be considered a deterrent.



Polar Clothing Package

A recommended clothing packing list will be provided upon enrollment confirmation. We recommend that anyone travelling to the Arctic dresses in layers. The insulating outer layer is of particular importance. Regular ski jackets and pants are not suitable for the changing Arctic climate.

We realize that good quality Arctic-worthy equipment is expensive to purchase all at once, and may not be necessary for a one-time Arctic adventure. Arctic Kingdom has a top-of-the-line Arctic Polar Clothing Rental Package that will enhance your Arctic experience and allow you to enjoy your expedition in comfort, no matter what Mother Nature brings.

With more than a decade of experience in all types of Arctic weather, we know what works and what doesn’t. All of our staff have depended on the same clothing package for years of Arctic adventures, so you can rest assured you are getting the best options available.

Gourmet Meals

We know that no amazing Arctic experience is complete without delicious food. Our private chef manages the kitchen tent. It will be here that your chef and culinary team will prepare the day’s meals, snacks and delicious desserts. The dining/lounge area will have a convenient buffet table where snacks and hot drinks are provided all day long.

The kitchen is not kosher. If you have special dietary needs, please advise us at time of booking.



Responsible Tourism

It is our desire that the Baffin Island Dive Safari contribute to the transformation of the economic base of this region from hunting to one that is focused on tourism. Tourism and film production can be a real boon to local communities, providing income, positive cultural exchanges, and a financial incentive to protect their natural environment.

Arctic Kingdom takes a 'total approach' to responsible tourism. Everything, from the way we plan and operate our trips to the practices of Arctic Kingdom as a company, is geared toward making a positive impact on the regions we visit. Arctic Kingdom trips are designed to allow a high degree of economic benefit to the local communities; we hire local guides and local drivers, buy local produce (whenever possible), eat local food, and use local services to ensure as much money as possible is retained within the local economy and the host communities. We are continually reassessing our trips, always ensuring that they are socially, economically, and environmentally sound.

What to Expect

This Arctic expedition is designed for diving in the Arctic and viewing animals in their natural habitat. However, there is more to this stunning vista of ice, land, and sea than the wildlife that inhabits it. For centuries, these creatures have shared this wilderness with Inuit people.

We encourage our trip participants to be sensitive to the cultural and historical ways of Inuit, including their traditional hunting lifestyle. You may see evidence of hunting, including dead animals, as you wander through the communities. Examples include the stretching of seal skin boots or gloves, and Inuit dog teams being fed Arctic char or seal meat. While on our adventures, we may also come across an Inuit hunting party returning or going to a hunt.

If you are open to the experience, these sights can provide a window into cultural traditions that stretch back for generations and exist in harmony with the wild Arctic. As part of the Inuit cultural experience and to enjoy some local food such as seal, caribou or Arctic char, you may even observe how an Inuit hunts the local wildlife. This tradition dates back thousands of years. They will show you how to stalk wildlife for viewing and photography, the same techniques a hunter does.



What to Expect on a Qamutik Ride

The mode of transportation to move over the ice is the traditional Inuit sledge pulled by a snowmobile called a qamutik (also spelled qamutiq or komatik). Each of the two to four persons on a qamutik is provided with a suspension seat to sit on. We move over flat sea ice and even though Arctic Kingdom has added suspension seats to the qamutiks for a smoother ride, the later one goes in the season, the bumpier the ride could potentially be. Anyone with a history of back problems should contact Arctic Kingdom to see if this trip is for you.

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Details

Trip Length	7 Days / 6 Nights	Location	Navy Board Inlet, Nunavut
2019 Dates	May 19 – 25 May 25 – 31 May 31 – June 6	Booking Terms	\$2500 deposit require at time of booking. Full payment due 120 days prior to departure date.
Price Per Person	\$14,995 CAD + tax *Based on double occupancy, Premium Yurt accommodation	Single Supplement	X 1.8
Flight Package	Round-trip flights from Ottawa (YOW) to Pond Inlet (YIO) available. Ask us about our special rates! As there are a limited number of seats available that connect with our trip departure dates, we encourage you to book and pay for your flight package at the same time as you book your trip.	Insurance	Due to the nature of this trip, trip cancellation/interruption insurance is highly recommended. It is a condition of joining this expedition that you must be insured against medical and personal accident risks, have search and rescue coverage, and evacuation insurance. (www.globalrescue.com)
Group Size	Up to 8 divers		
Cancellation Terms	All requests for cancellations must be received in writing. Cancellations received up to 180 days prior to departure are refunded less an administrative fee of \$500 per person. If cancellation is received between 179 and 120 days prior to departure, the deposit is forfeited. For cancellations received between 119 days and the departure date, all deposits and payments are forfeited.		



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