

# WILD PHOTOGRAPHY HOLIDAYS



## GREENLAND

### ICEBERGS GLACIERS AND INUIT SETTLEMENTS

#### HIGHLIGHTS INCLUDE

- Flights Reykjavík – Ilulissat – Reykjavík
- Sunset by boat in the Ice Fjord
- Disko Island
- Possibility of aurora borealis
- Traditional village settlements
- Colourful wooden houses
- Qeqertarsuaq ice beach
- Stunning autumn colours
- Striking basalt landscapes
- Two nights in Reykjavík, Iceland
- Various Boat trips
- Aerial photography (optional)
- Hotel overlooking the Ice Fjord

#### INTRODUCTION

Wild Photography Holidays are excited to offer a brand new trip to Greenland. This destination has been at the top of our own personal 'bucket list' for a while. Prompted by our enthusiastic following of intrepid photographers in search of a new adventure, we knew that now was time to extend our horizons northwards; thanks folks!

The dates of these first two departures have been chosen to make the most of the stunning late autumn tundra colours when the big arctic skies are dark enough for the possibility of aurora. We start and finish the trip in Reykjavík giving participants the possibility to add a few days in Iceland before or after the main trip. Our main Greenland base, Ilulissat (formerly Jacobshavn) means "Icebergs" in the West Greenlandic language. Each year, the

massive Jakobshavn Glacier calves some 35 billion tons of icebergs into the sheltered waters of Disko Bay and the ice fiord. It is the only UNESCO World Heritage Site on the world's largest island. Towers, arches, and walls of ancient blue ice thrust skyward from the water's surface. The whole fiord gives an ever-changing vista as huge icebergs float past in dramatic light en route to open sea. It's believed that an iceberg that calved from this magnificent glacier sank the Titanic itself. A first sighting of this unique arctic wonderland is guaranteed to make your photographic heart beat faster. A huge country, it is populated rather sparsely only around the coast. Indeed, there are no roads to anywhere except in and around the settlements and the only way to travel is by boat, air, dog sledge and foot. Travelling by boat, we



navigate the ice filled waters at sunset. We sail to small settlements still alive with ancient traditions with a culture still very much tied to the ocean and prevailing weather conditions. We walk through the tundra to some spectacular viewpoints. Brightly coloured wooden houses sit on rocky bluffs; small fishing boats bring in Halibut, Crab plus the occasional Seal. There will be an optional opportunity to experience some aerial photography. This is a truly an inspiring adventure exploring locations that are only now becoming more accessible to photographers.

### PHOTOGRAPHIC TUTORS

Contact the WPH office for Information regarding the tutors on your particular trip.

### DAILY ITINERARY

#### Day 1: Arrive Reykjavík

Transfer from Keflavik, Iceland's international airport to our hotel in the heart of Reykjavík. We meet in the even-

ing for introductions, a trip briefing and dinner together in town.

Hotel Reykjavík

#### Day 2: To Ilulissat Greenland

This morning we take a flight north over Iceland and Greenland's vast Ice Cap. Remote Greenland is the world's biggest island. The sea that surrounds it is either permanently frozen or chilled by the mainly cold currents. In the centre of the country ice can be up to 3km thick. It is no wonder that most of its population huddles around the ice-free coastal region. Our destination Ilulissat is on the west coast of Greenland. On arrival we transfer to our hotel perfectly situated and directly overlooking the ice fiord. The hotel is modern and well run with great selection of food including many vegetarian options. "The Board" is the local term for Kalaaliavaq, the markets that are found in all Greenlandic towns. Here you can buy the day's harvest such as seal, whale, musk, reindeer, fish and berries straight from the hunter, fisherman or picker. They are usually situated close to the town's harbour and make good subjects for photo-



graphy. We spend the afternoon exploring by foot the photographic potential of the area. In the evening we board a private boat to glide serenely through icebergs allowing photography at close quarters in the dramatic evening light.

Ice Fiord Hotel

#### Day 3–4: To Qeqertarsuaq – Disko Island

After an early breakfast we leave by boat through an iceberg choked sea for a journey to Qeqertarsuaq (Godhavn) a town on the Disko Island founded in 1773 by the Danish whaler Svend Sandgreen. For two centuries, whaling was the main trade here. These days it's fishing and hunting. The landscapes are dramatically different than most of Greenland. The settlement comprises colourful wooden houses spread randomly over rocky bluffs. The area is littered with all the paraphernalia of a community whose main occupation is making a living from the land and sea. Small fishing boats come and go from the tiny harbour, the locals bring in Halibut, Crab and Seal, this is not a trip for the faint hearted! This small town has an





unusual and dramatic backdrop of basalt mountains reminiscent of Iceland. At this time of year autumn colours on the mountain and around the settlement are very striking. Icebergs of all shapes and sizes float randomly in the sea and can often be found in huge quantities on the local black sand beach just ten minutes walk from our accommodation. The colourful strata of the beach rocks make good foreground for the sea ice or indeed excellent macro subjects by themselves. We will take a small boat to Kuánit where we land to photograph some remarkable basalt architecture including sea arches. Two nights here will allow us to explore all possible locations fully. When not on deck photographing, the journey to

and from Disco Island will give a good opportunity to review your images and talk through photographic questions with the tutors.

Hotel Qeqertarsuaq

#### **Day 5: To Ilulissat**

This morning we make the return journey to Ilulissat and our ice fiord Hotel. The boat trip provides an excellent opportunity for us to review our images, or get assistance from the photographic tutors should there be questions. We will be back in time for dinner and sunset photography over the Ice Fiord. It is possible to photograph the ice fiord from many places around the town; indeed

some photographs in the accompanying trip gallery were taken from the hotel veranda!

Ice Fiord Hotel

#### **Day 6: Around Ilulissat**

Following a sunrise shoot and breakfast we set off to walk through the tundra to some fabulous view points over the ice fjord. We will take it slowly as it seems that there is something worth photographing at each corner. The tundra at this time of year is magnificent, reds, yellows and greens interspersed with attractive bog cotton spread over the attractive rocky bluffs. If the day is fine we may take a packed lunch. The energetic may want to

extend this walk by exploring the ancient settlement of Sermermiut. For 4000 years, different Inuit cultures lived in the settlement and today, you can still see the relics which indicate their presence. Today is the day when it may be possible to try out some optional activities that are not included in the price of the trip. For example some aerial photography over the ice cap or a Whale watching excursion.

Ice Fiord Hotel

### **Day 7: Sail to Oqaatsut**

After lunch we board a small private boat sailing to the tiny settlement of Oqaatsut where we spend the afternoon and evening exploring. Oqaatsut, formerly Rodebay, is a settlement in the Qaasuitsup municipality; it had 46 inhabitants in 2010. The modern name of the settlement is Kalaallisut for “Cormorants”. The tiny settlement has its own small gourmet restaurant, H8, where we enjoy Greenlandic cuisine for dinner. There is not a single road here, just colourful wooden houses on stark rounded rocks. Each little house is uniquely built and painted in a different colour. Ice from the fiord makes it's way here and is often lit up with a spectacular light. To the north of the settlement sloping down into the ocean are rocky slabs covered with attractive low vegetation and small pools. To the south is a small harbour where a multitude of small fishing boats are moored. The splendid autumn colours here provide great foreground for the Icebergs floating in the sea. Our hotel is in the middle of the settlement, near to the quayside.

Settlement Hotel



### **Day 8: To Ilulissat**

After a sunrise shoot and breakfast we will explore the settlement further. There is so much of interest to photograph here and it is all very accessible by foot. After lunch we board our boat for the return journey to Ilulissat and the ice fiord. Arriving back mid afternoon we are in plenty of time for dinner and a presentation of images taken during our fabulous arctic adventure.

Ice Fiord Hotel

Note: during our stay in Ilulissat we can organise optional activities such as a whale watching trip or some aerial photography. We have not included these outings in the price of the trip as often in the past the weather has proved inclement and participants have been disappointed. This is the ‘aurora’ time of year and wherever possible we will try to capture these incredible phenomena. All the tutors are experienced ‘aurora’ shooters and will be passing on their expert knowledge to ensure that you go home with some good high quality images. We will need clear skies for aurora photography.

### **Day 9: To Reykjavík**

Hopefully this morning there will be a final opportunity to photograph around the Ice Fiord at sunrise before breakfast and our midday flight to Reykjavík. There will be time for some late afternoon sightseeing/shopping in Iceland’s capital city before we meet in the evening for a final celebratory dinner.

Hotel Reykjavík

### **Day 10: Homeward flights**

After breakfast, or before if your flight is very early, there is Flybus transfer to Iceland’s international airport for





homeward flights. You may be thinking of extending your stay in Iceland for a few days, if this is the case just get in touch and we may have some ideas to help you plan this!

#### WHAT'S INCLUDED

- Transfers from/to Keflavik (Iceland) airport
- Flights Reykjavík – Ilulissat – Reykjavík
- All meals
- All accommodation
- Boat tours in as per itinerary

#### WHAT'S NOT INCLUDED

- International flights to and from Iceland
- Beverages or additional items ordered during meals
- Anything not mentioned in the included list

#### ACCOMMODATION

Accommodation is included in the price of the holiday and mostly has en suite facilities. The only exception to this is the settlement hotel in Oqaatsut. Here, there may be two to a room with shared bathroom facilities. There

are hot showers. It has to be noted that this is a rather remote settlement. The standard of rooms and furnishings are very warm and comfortable. To a certain extent single supplements are available for this trip and will ensure a single room with private facilities in all hotels except Oqaatsut Settlement. However the availability of a single supplement will depend on whether or not there is a person of the same sex for participants to share a room with during the trip.

Our main base in Ilulissat is the Hotel Icefiord. Check out [their website for images and videos.](#)

#### FOOD

We enjoy a good standard and variety of food, indeed the hotel in Ilulissat boasts Thai/Greenland chefs who have worked there for many years. They manage to produce an amazing array of excellent menus using local produce including some Thai variations and several vegetarian options. There will be an opportunity to try local food such as Whale, Seal, Reindeer, Halibut, berries, Crab, Lobster etc. all is optional! The price of the holiday in-



cludes breakfast, lunch and dinner (two courses) and tea/coffee with meals.

#### ALCOHOL

This is expensive, maybe consider bringing along a bottle of your favourite tippie, this can be purchased at the Iceland airport.

#### SPENDING MONEY

You will need money for Wi-Fi. This will cost around 10 UK pounds for 2 hours and can be used over a long period of time. It will not be available at Oqaatsut Settlement. Snacks, sweets and gifts are expensive. Special purchases include bone and soapstone carvings, skin products and beadwork. Credit cards are accepted; there is a bank and ATM in Ilulissat.

#### TRAVEL INSURANCE

It is recommended that you take out appropriate insurance to cover personal accident, medical costs, death, repatriation and loss of baggage. We will need a copy of your travel insurance at the time of booking.



## PASSPORT AND VISA REQUIREMENTS

Please check with the appropriate authorities to check if you require a visa for Greenland. There is also some further information on Visas and Greenland generally here <http://www.worldtravelguide.net/greenland/passport-visa>

## LANGUAGE

The official languages are Greenlandic, an Inuit (Eskimo) language and Danish. Greenlanders connected with tourism will normally speak some English.

## CLIMATE

Greenland has an Arctic climate, but owing to the size of the country there are great variations in the weather. Winters can be severe and the summers comparatively

mild, particularly in areas which are sheltered from the prevailing winds. Precipitation, mostly snow, is moderately heavy around the coast from October – April. September can be milder but expect temperatures from around freezing to 7°C.

## CLOTHING SUGGESTIONS

The best solution to temperature control is to have a number of layers available from lightweight thermal underwear through mid-layer insulation to a windproof/waterproof jacket/trousers. If you have any questions feel free to contact us at anytime before the trip.

## SUGGESTED CLOTHING/EQUIPMENT

- Down or artificial fibre duvet jacket – we wear [Rab](#)

- Warm trousers that allow flexibility of movement
- Long sleeved thermal tops and leggings
- Light fleece/wool jumpers
- Thicker warm fleece type jacket
- Waterproof jacket
- Waterproof trousers
- Warm socks, a few pairs
- Boots/shoes with good tread
- Warm hat
- Neck warmer such as 'Buff'
- Wellington boots for the beaches
- 1–2 pairs warm gloves that enable using camera controls whilst wearing
- Casual clothes, jeans etc for hotel wear
- Indoor shoes/slippers
- Sun cream and sunglasses
- Head torch
- Small basic first aid & any personal medicines
- Small towel
- "Hot Hands"
- Wash kit

## PHOTOGRAPHIC EQUIPMENT AND INFORMATION

- Camera bag or backpack such as the Flipside or Trekker series designed by LowePro.
- Any extra equipment that doesn't fit in your camera bag/hand luggage will need to go in a hard case that can be put in the aircraft hold.
- Spare camera – highly recommended!
- Sturdy tripod – not only useful for low light photography but also for accurate framing and composition of landscape and close-up images.

- Cable release – mechanical or electronic remote to avoid shake on long exposures.
- Neutral density, graduated filters and polariser, if you use these.
- Lens cloth
- Sensor cleaning device (optional)
- Lightweight 'trekking' absorbent towel for drying cameras and equipment
- Camera rain cover for camera and camera bag.
- Sufficient memory cards for the whole holiday as it may not be possible to buy more during the trip.
- Film users should bring enough film, as it may not be possible to buy in many places.
- A laptop with the image editing applications of your choice, essential for checking and presenting images during the trip and for one-on-one sessions with the tutor. WiFi is available in many places but is very expensive.
- Backup storage device (optional)
- Spare batteries and chargers
- All electrical sockets are compatible with European two-pin plugs, so you might need a travel plug adapter.

### USEFUL LINKS

[Hotel Icefiord](#) – our base in Ilulissat

### PARTNERS

Although this is primarily a photography holiday, non-photographer partners will be very welcome as there are



many options and interesting possibilities in addition to taking photographs.

### MORE QUESTIONS?

While we hope that this information has answered most of your questions about the holiday, we know it will not give you all the information you need. If you have any more questions, please get in touch. Talking to us on the phone (we will always call you back) can often be a quick way of sorting out individual questions. It also helps us to get to know each other before the holiday.

### BOOKING THIS HOLIDAY

Fill in the [online booking form](#), or give us a call on +44 (0)1630 647828.

### LINKS

View [images and information for this tour](#) on the website. Read about [our approach to teaching photography](#)





Map of Ilulissat and surroundings, Hotel Icefiord at the centre.