SVALBARD, THE HIGH ARCTIC
ICE AND BEARS WINTER EXPEDITION
23 APRIL - 1 MAY 2020
Ignacio Palacios – Ken Duncan
Svalbard is a Norwegian archipelago in the Arctic Ocean situated north of mainland Europe, about midway between continental Norway and the North Pole.
It features an Arctic climate, although with significantly higher temperatures than other areas at the same latitude. The flora takes advantage of the long period of midnight sun to compensate for the polar night. It is a breeding ground for many seabirds, and also features polar bears, reindeer, the Arctic fox, and certain marine mammals. Seven national parks and twenty-three nature reserves cover two-thirds of the archipelago, protecting the largely untouched, yet fragile, natural environment. Approximately 60% of the archipelago is covered with glaciers, and the islands feature many mountains and fjords.
The focus on this expedition will be Arctic winter light, landscape and wildlife. In April the light conditions on Svalbard are magical. The plan is to visit the western and northern areas of Spitsbergen. Usually winter trips to Svalbard are limited to snowmobiles quite close to Longyearbyen. With our expedition ship we will explore a much bigger area.

We expect to meet wildlife like polar bears, walruses, seals and reindeer. Polar bears and walrus are not as numerous as in summer time, mostly because there is more ice to hide on in winter, but we’ve had some great encounters on our winter expeditions in the past. The seabirds are getting back to their breeding grounds.

The group size is limited to 12 participants plus two photography instructors and our guides giving us plenty of space and time to explore and to photograph the magical Arctic winter.

Svalbard is situated at about 80 degrees N, so we schedule the expedition in accordance with prevailing weather and ice conditions.

“Prior to 1925 Svalbard was known by its Dutch name Spitsbergen, which is still the name of its largest island.”

Sea ice, photographed from the boat
ITINERARY

We always recommend arriving Longyearbyen at least one day in advance.

Day 1 - Departure from Longyearbyen through Isfjorden.

Day 2-4 - Western coast of Spitsbergen, visiting Kongsfjorden, Lilliehöökfjorden, Magdalenefjorden, Prins Karls Forland and other areas where we will have great landscape, glaciers and good chances for wildlife as Polar bear, Walrus and seals.

Day 5-7 - North-western coast of Spitsbergen with Smeerenburgfjorden, Raudfjorden and Liefdefjorden, with great landscape and good chances for wildlife on the ice. The weather and ice conditions must be in our favor to get into these areas in April. It is also an option to head south to Bellsund and Hornsund if the northwestern corner is not accessible.

Day 8 - Sailing back to Isfjorden and arrive Longyearbyen late in the evening around 24:00.

Day 9 - Leaving the ship after breakfast and prepare the travel home. We will have some zodiac excursions and also go ashore near walrus colonies or other interesting places.

Note: We strongly recommend you arriving in Longyearbyen the day before the expedition starts. Sometimes the luggage is delayed and will be sent on a later flight. Book your accommodation in Longyearbyen below to get good rates, and you can easily manage your bookings at the booking.com app or website.

Our recommended hotels in Longyearbyen are:
• Hotel Radisson
• Blu Polar Hotel
• Basecamp Hotel
• Svalbard Hotel & Lodge
• Gjestehuset 102
• Funken Lodge
• Svalbard hotel

“... There it was, the land under 80 degrees, a land of stern magnificence, where icebergs rear up almost to the very mountaintops, and mountain rises above mountain; there it was, inviolate, alive to the raucous voice of millions of birds, the continuous staccato bark of foxes, the castanet click as the hoofs of great herds of deer fell in a swinging trot, there it was, surrounded by waters whose surface was slashed and sprayed by schools of walrus and whales that had swum there before ever man was born.”

Jeannette Mirsky, To the Arctic: The Story of Northern Exploration from Earliest Times

Arctic fox

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Jeannette Mirsky, To the Arctic: The Story of Northern Exploration from Earliest Times
Camera skills
We will assist you out in the field with the camera skills needed to capture those incredible moments. Regardless of your level and your camera equipment, you will improve your skills as a photographer and you will learn the craft with an expert team.

Post-processing
During the workshop, we will have the opportunity to process and enhance your images using Lightroom, Photoshop, Capture One and other editing software. If the weather is good, we will be out in the nature photographing but there are always opportunities to sit down and work on your images when we are in the boat.

Critique sessions
The purpose of critiques is to offer one’s impression of a photo. During sessions, you will have professional views of your work with a constructive evaluation to include feedback, suggestions and tips. Photography is an art and therefore critiques can often feel personal, but it is often a great learning exercise to have your images reviewed by some professional photographers.

Level of photography
All skill levels are welcome. We will be providing instruction on all aspects of image capture and post processing and it does not really matter whether you are a beginner or an expert photographer. We welcome photographers using equipment from mobile phones and tablets, compact cameras to digital SLR cameras. If you haven’t traveled with me before, you will need to fill a pre-tour questionnaire, so I understand your level and where to focus.

Physical requirements
Our guides will take us to a range of different locations most of which involve some short walks. Sometimes, we may take longer walks, but all excursions are optional and if you are tired, you can always sleep in and relax in the boat.

"Svalbard may appear desolate and barren with large open landscapes, sparse vegetation and huge glaciers. But if you look beyond, you will discover an incredible amount of nature-based experiences – all year round."

Polar bear at sunrise
IGNACIO PALACIOS

Ignacio Palacios is a Spanish/Australian travel photographer based on Planet Earth that stops in Sydney from time to time. He is best known for his travel, landscapes and fine art photography. His previous background was in engineering and management consultant for various companies in wind and renewable energies. Although he has been a part time photographer since 1998, he became a full time professional photographer in 2012 following the footsteps of three generations of photographers in his family. Ignacio has traveled around the world since 1998, gathering an extensive collection of images of people, places, wildlife and landscapes across more than 80 countries in five different continents. He is one of the world’s few full-time professional photographers/guides and he has led tours to Patagonia, the Atacama Desert, Galapagos, Spain, Norway, Finland, and Iceland since 2013.

Ignacio writes and provides images to numerous magazines and publications around the world, such as Luminous Landscape and Lonely Planet books and guides. He has received Australian and International awards and has been a finalist and highly commended in some prestigious competitions such as the NSW AIPP Epson Awards, BBC Veolia Environment Wildlife Photographer, National Geographic Travel Contest, Australian Geographic Photographer of the Year, Travel Photography or the Year, IPA, Head On, Eyes on Asia and the International Loupe Awards. In 2014 he was awarded with a LUX Gold in Spain (the most prestigious professional photography award in his country). www.iptravelphotography.com.au

KEN DUNCAN

Ken Duncan is well known as the pioneer of Limited Edition Photographic Art in Australia. After a visit to New York in the early 1980s, Ken returned home with a dream to have photography widely accepted as an art form in this country. The increasing number of Australian photographers now emulating his panoramic style and finding a market for their work is testimony to Ken’s success.

Ken is truly passionate about his craft. Always striving for excellence, he travels extensively throughout the world in search of the stunning panoramic landscapes – or Panographs – for which he is best known. Internationally acclaimed as a gifted and prolific landscape photographer, Ken still chooses to describe himself as “… an average photographer, with a great God – merely an interpreter of God’s creation”. The art, he says, is in seeing, capturing and presenting these images to others. And this Ken does with his own unique style and his exceptional ability to capture the very spirit of a place at a given moment in time.

His first solo book was published in 1987, and he later went on to become a publisher in his own right. Since 1992, over 60 individual titles have been released under the Ken Duncan Panographs trademark. Although Ken prefers the panoramic format – “that’s the way we see”, he says – he is well versed in a multitude of formats and media. He has even dabbled in cinematography and would like to do more with this medium in the future. He can turn his hand to any type of photography – from portraits to landscapes to 3-D and everything in between – and produce consistently creative results. Ken Duncan Limited Edition Art Prints grace the walls of many fine homes and businesses right around the world. www.kenduncan.com

“Photography is a two parts creative process, the first part is to take the photograph and the second part, as Ansel Adams said, is performing it. It is in the second part that I have the opportunity to make the images my own and bringing out qualities that communicate my vision.”

Ignacio Palacios

Arctic fox at sunrise
Terms and conditions

Terms of payment
- A deposit of US$2,000 must be paid to secure your place. The deposit is non-refundable unless you can sell your place to someone else.

Workshop dates and prices
- A deposit of US$2,000 is required when you book the workshop. The maximum number of participants is 12, with two photography instructors.

Price
- USD $11,195
- USD $9,595

Single cabin with shared shower/WC: 14

Conditions

- Rental of warm survival suite
- Excursions with two Zodiacs
- All meals onboard the vessel
- All nights onboard the vessel
- Bookings will be accepted strictly in the order they are received
- The Registration Form must be filled in and signed by each participant at the time of paying the first deposit. Participation will otherwise be declined.
- The remaining balance must be paid on or before 1 November 2019
- Bookings will be accepted only if paid in full
- Important: this workshop requires a minimum of 6 participants to run, please do not book your flights until the trip has been confirmed.

What’s included
- All nights onboard the MS Grizo
- All meals onboard the vessel
- Expedition leader, guide, guards and other personnel
- Excursions with two Zodiacs
- Rental of warm survival suite for use in the zodiac
- English speaking guide throughout the tour
- All local taxes
- Entrance fees in the parks/

What’s not included
- Flights to/from Svalbard
- Overnight accommodation prior to and following the expedition
- Travel and cancellation insurance. Please note that Travel insurance with emergency evacuation is mandatory as a condition of booking
- Visa(s) (if required)
- Camera/Equipment
- Insurance
- Optional personal activities
- Alcohol consumption, extra beverages and souvenirs purchased on the boat
- Any other personal expenses
- Tips for the vessel’s crew members

Cancellations POLICY

A written notice of any cancellation must be received by us at the time which the following cancellation fees will apply:

- If cancelled before 1 November 2019 and end of January 2019, 50% of the workshop cost will be payable
- If cancelled between 1 February 2019 and before departure, a fee equal to 100% of the workshop cost will be payable
- Failure to pay by the due dates will be considered a cancellation of the booking and fees paid will not be refundable

- Bookings made after 1 January 2019 must be paid in full
- No refunds will be made for unused portions of the workshop
- The workshop cost is sold as a land package (no airfares included)
- Cancellation fees are not transferable

Camera gear

There is really no limit to what camera gear you take. Check with us about weight restrictions. Whatever level of camera equipment you have, we will help to ensure you get the most out of your trip. Check the camera equipment checklist at the end of the brochure but if you want to discuss specific equipment for this trip, contact me.

Fitness and health considerations

Sometimes participants will be required to walk on uneven terrain or tracks and hiking. A basic level of walking fitness will help, but this tour is not a hiking tour or a trekking tour so nothing extreme will be required. If you have concerns about your own abilities or health, please check with your doctor before booking a place. By signing the Registration Form, you guarantee that to the best of your knowledge, you do not have any physical or other disability that could create a risk for you or other tour participants. Once a booking has been accepted by IP Travel Photography, medical circumstances will not be accepted as an exemption to the Cancellation Policy above.

Within the Registration Form, please indicate any health issues, allergies or dietary requirements. IP Travel Photography does not assume any responsibility or liability for medical care or special dietary requirements. If a participant become ill during the workshop, IP Travel Photography will make every effort to assist you whilst trying to minimise disruption of the workshop for other participants.

Visas

A visitor’s visa allows you to stay in Norway or other countries in the Schengen area for up to 90 days over a period of 180 days. Citizens of Australia, travelling on Australian passports, do not need a visitor’s visa. If you are not Australian, please check your particular situation with the Norwegian consulate or embassy. For nationals of other countries:
- Nationals of EU/EEA countries and of countries that have a visa exemption agreement with Norway do not need a visa to visit Norway.
- Nationals of all other countries need a visitor’s visa.

Rights

IP Travel Photography reserves the right to:
- Substitute hotels/accommodation
- Make changes in the itinerary or transport if required due to changes in airline schedules, or when necessary
- Cancel the workshop prior to departure, in which case a full refund of all payments received will be given. If such event occurred, IP Travel Photography will not be responsible for any other expenses such as nonrefundable air fares, visa fees and other related expenses. The responsibility for such bookings lies with the participant. As such, IP Travel Photography recommends participants to purchase a travel protection and cancellation insurance prior to paying the first deposit.
- Substitute the tour leader and guest photographer as originally specified, in which case this substitution will not entitle the participant of a refund
- Run the photography workshop without the guest photographer if the group size is less than 6 participants
- Accept or refuse any person as a participant in the workshop
- Change the price of the workshop at any time due to adverse currency exchange fluctuations, airline schedule changes, fuel and tax price charges.

Liability

The operation of the workshop is at the sole discretion of Ignacio Palacios (IP Travel Photography Pty Ltd) and Ken Duncan, having in mind the wellbeing and interests of all participants and the safe and sensible operation of the program as specified within this itinerary. IP Travel Photography does not accept any liability for the acts, omissions or default, whether negligent or otherwise of third party providers. IP Travel Photography disclaims liability for any injury, damage, loss, delay, additional expense or trouble caused by force majeure or any other event which is not preventable by reasonable diligence on IP Travel Photography’s part.

IP Travel Photography

IP Travel Photography is an ASIC business named with Australian Business Number 16578586693 and registered in Australia under the Business Names Registration Act 2011. IP Travel Photography Pty Ltd (Ignacio Palacios) will guide and provide photography tuition to all participants during the tour. IP Travel Photography is not a travel agent or travel service provider.

Tour dates: 23 April – 1 May 2020

The tour commences and ends in Longyearbyen (Norway).

Single cabin with private shower/WC: USD $11,195
Single cabin with shared shower/WC: USD $10,395
Twin cabin with shared shower/WC: USD $9,595
Twin cabin with private shower/WC: USD $11,195

Maximum 12 participants and two photography instructors.

A deposit of US$2,000 is required when you book the workshop.

Note: the workshop is quoted in US$. To calculate the rate in AUD, the currency exchange rate will be obtained from the Westpac website at the time of booking the deposit and balance (https://www.westpac.com.au/personal-banking/services/currency-converter/). If you are located outside Australia, I accept payments in USD through PayPal only.

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Important: the workshop requires a minimum of 6 participants to run, please do not book your flights until the trip has been confirmed.

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- Accept or refuse any person as a participant in the workshop
- Change the price of the workshop at any time due to adverse currency exchange fluctuations, airline schedule changes, fuel and tax price charges.
Camera equipment
• DSLR or Medium Format (check your baggage allowance with your airline/travel agent)
• Tripod with quick release plate
• Standard zoom, wide angle and telephoto lenses
• Battery and chargers
• Shutter cable release
• Polarising filter and ND filters
• Laptop computer with Photoshop and Lightroom and/or Capture One
• External backup drives and memory cards for storage.
We recommend to shrink-wrap your baggage at your departure airport. Ensure your telephoto lenses are packed in protective packs designed for such lenses. We also recommend that you pack your camera equipment as your hand luggage as much as possible so that if the checked-in baggage is lost or delayed at least you can start photographing as soon as you arrive.

Note: Please contact me if you want to discuss equipment for this trip.

What to bring, clothing and other
Our accommodation is clean and comfortable with all bedding and towels provided. In terms of clothing you’ll obviously need plenty of warm and weatherproof clothing. The following are very much recommended: A good pair of strong waterproof warm walking boots and ideally those offering some thermal lining or maybe even a pair of thermal overshirts such as those made by Neos to go over your walking boots. Keeping warm feet, hands and head should be your priorities. Good waterproof over trousers (lined ones are best as they’ll keep you warmer especially with a normal pair of trousers and some thermal leggings underneath as well) and dependent on how these 2 items fit together some gaiters can be useful as well. For the top half it is very much a question of having several layers – like a thermal type vest, t-shirt, thin jumper, fleece and then a waterproof down coat that is built for keeping out the wind chill. You’ll know your own cold thresholds but it really is a question of building it up in layers. A good hat, some fingerless mittens and then some warm waterproof gloves to go over the top (the former so that when you come to photograph your fingers can still work the camera) should round the piece off.

The temperatures we could be working in are -15 to 5 it is also a dry cold so sometimes it actually feels colder than that.

• Hiking boots (well-worn in) and good socks – Gore-Tex – mandatory
• Snow shoes (optional) – They will be beneficial to walk in the snow (I use Sorel but there are other brands)
• Micro-Spikes – mandatory
https://www.amazon.com/Snowinest-Spikes-Chansen-Pro/dp/B0060SK0S0 – they are easier and quicker than crampons
• I recommend a down jacket
• Very warm jacket – mandatory (can be Gore-Tex or use a warm jacket and put a think Gore-Tex onto it). Average mini temperatures are below zero.
• Gloves and hat – mandatory
• Snow trousers/waterproof pants, thermals (both legs and body) – mandatory
• Thin gloves to shoot – mandatory
• Sunglasses (mandatory to walk on the snow)
• Raincoat/Waterproof jacket/ wind jacket and warm jumper – mandatory
• Head torch – mandatory
• Alarm clock/smart phone.

Icebergs and snowflakes

“Svalbard is the Arctic North as you always dreamed it existed. The archipelago is a land of dramatic snow-drowned peaks and glaciers, of vast ice fields and forbidding icebergs, an elemental place where the seemingly endless Arctic night and the perpetual sunlight of summer carry a deeper kind of magic. One of Europe’s last great wildnesses, this is also the domain of more polar bears than people, a terrain rich in epic legends of polar exploration.”
– Lonely Planet
TO RESERVE YOUR PLACE FOR 2020
OR TO MAKE AN ENQUIRY, PLEASE EMAIL
IGNACIO@IPTRAVELPHOTOGRAPHY.COM.AU