

CH>RITY
CH>LLENGE



TRIP NOTES

**BELIEVE
ACHIEVE
INSPIRE**

**NORTH POLE CHALLENGE
NORTH POLE**

Tue 31 Mar - Wed 15 Apr 2020





In aid of your choice of charity

31 Mar - 15 Apr 2020

16 DAYS | NORTH POLE | EXTREME

In 1909 Robert Peary, his partner Matthew Henson and four Inuit reached the North Pole. They were recognised as the first to reach the Pole, although controversy still surrounds this claim. Following many further failed expeditions, the Pole was next witnessed in 1926, but it was 1948 before anyone actually stood there. Our challenge takes us over the dynamic polar ice cap. Skiing and sledging we will be surrounded by breath-taking scenery and will overcome an ever-changing variety of obstacles, including pressure ridges up to 5m high! This is your chance to add your name to the short list of adventurers who have made the ultimate journey to the top of the world.

- Embark on this once-in-a-lifetime opportunity to the top of the world
- Skiing and sledging over the polar ice cap
- Trek to the Geographic North Pole
- Negotiate this ever-changing ethereal landscape
- Be fully involved in all aspects of camp life

YOUR CHALLENGE DAY BY DAY

DAY 1 Tue 31 Mar

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International departure from London

There's no turning back now as we meet the rest of our team at the airport for our adventure of a lifetime. After a last minute kit check, we will jump on board our flight to Norway and will stop off in either Tromso or Oslo, depending on our flight schedule.

DAY 2 Wed 01 Apr

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Arrive at Longyearbyen

After touching down in Norway, we transfer through to Longyearbyen on the Archipelago of Svalbard, a remote, yet modern village situated well above the Arctic Circle at 78 degrees north. Our guesthouse is conveniently located just outside the town centre and adjacent to our polar training area. This afternoon we'll have time to sort all our equipment before a briefing and ski fitting ready for our challenge.

DAY 3 Thu 02 Apr

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Training, kit prep, briefings in Loneyearbyen

The next two days are spent in the wilderness for a short training trip. Here we perfect our skiing technique for the first time with pulks and kit. You will also practice setting up camp, cook and get used to the equipment, terrain and the cold. It's then back to our guesthouse before flying to camp Barneo.

DAY 4 Fri 03 Apr

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Training, kit prep, briefings in Loneyearbyen

On this second training day you will continue perfecting your skiing technique with pulks and kit. You should be getting more familiar with all your equipment, the cold temperatures and terrain. It's then back to our guesthouse before flying to camp Barneo. There will be a debrief session before dinner, ahead of the challenge tomorrow. Guesthouse overnight.

DAY 5 Sat 04 Apr

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Fly to Barneo Ice Camp

It's an exciting day as we have our exhilarating flight to Barneo Ice Camp. The essential Barneo Ice Camp is located approximately 60 nautical miles from the North Pole and is only set up for one month of the year (April) and this is when we have the very narrow window of opportunity to trek/ski to the Geographic North Pole. Despite many years of setting up and dismantling the Barneo Ice Camp, each year presents new challenges and so the camp operators absolutely reserve the right to make schedule and logistical changes at a moment's notice, even when we are airborne and en route to or from the ice. If we can't fly today, we will stay another night in Longyearbyen.

DAY 6 Sun 05 Apr

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Fly to Barneo Ice Camp or begin challenge

If we're not already there, we'll fly to Barneo Ice Camp, preparing and loading our sledges onto the helicopter before being dropped off at the start point. We'll set off north escorted by our head guide. Armed with the knowledge of the ice conditions, they will set the best route and tactics for us before we set up our first camp together in the frozen Arctic.

DAY 7 *Mon 06 Apr*

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Start sledge pulling and skiing North

Today our expedition really begins. The North Pole trek takes place in one of the last true wildernesses in the world. Temperatures can be as low as -45 degrees celsius. Each day we'll complete around eight hours of ice travel and three hours setting up camp. Overnight camp on the ice.

DAY 8 *Tue 07 Apr*

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Continue sledge pulling and skiing North

The whole challenge takes place on the frozen ice on top of the Arctic Ocean. The ocean ice pack is moving and the ice can – and does – crack, causing open leads and pressure ridges. The terrain is tricky and we'll be navigating our way around frozen and open leads, ice rubble, pressure ridges and across wonderful flat pans of Arctic ice. Overnight camp on the ice.

DAY 9 *Wed 08 Apr*

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Continue sledge pulling and skiing North

A typical day will begin with melting ice for hot drinks, porridge and thermos flasks, before preparing our sledges for the day. Overnight camp on the ice.

DAY 10 *Thu 09 Apr*

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Continue sledge pulling and skiing North

A moving ice pack has implications for journey times. If it moves in our favour (towards the North Pole), we will have to walk less distance to reach the Pole. If it moves against us, we can go to sleep and wake up to find ourselves with a few hours walk just to get back to where we were the night before. Overnight camp on the ice.

DAY 11 *Fri 10 Apr*

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Continue sledge pulling and skiing North

We typically walk for an hour, then rest to eat and drink, repeating this routine for up to eight hours a day. We will constantly check each other whenever we stop to make sure we keep warm and dry. Overnight camp on the ice.

DAY 12 *Sat 11 Apr*

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Continue sledge pulling and skiing North

Each day our guide will select a suitable place to pitch our camp, we will take control, erecting and securing our tents, melting ice off our faces and then boiling snow/water for our delicious evening meal. Overnight camp on the ice.

DAY 13 Sun 12 Apr

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Reach the North Pole!

On reaching the North Pole we will be exhausted and elated as we erect our tents and wait for the helicopter to pick us up, giving much needed time for our celebratory photos. If the weather is bad then we may need to spend the night camping at the ultimate sleepover destination – the North Pole – as we wait for the conditions to improve. Overnight camp on the ice or back at Barneo or even all the way back to Longyearbyen.

DAY 14 Mon 13 Apr

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Back to Longyearbyen and a hotel bed

With a new album full of photos stored on our cameras, we return to Barneo Ice Camp and potentially take an immediate flight back to Longyearbyen. This will be weather dependent and subject to the schedule and logistical demands of the Antenov plane that will take us. On the final evening of our trek we will enjoy a very special celebration dinner with the team and well-deserved night to thaw out at our hotel.

DAY 15 Tue 14 Apr

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Contingency day

Due to the unpredictable conditions e.g. negative drifts, late start to the programme, bad weather, etc, we may need this as an additional day on the ice. If we are in Longyearbyen there are plenty of entertaining activities on offer including dog sledding, skidoo hire, museums etc, (subject to availability and at an additional cost). We will overnight in our hotel.

DAY 16 Wed 15 Apr

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Contingency day or fly to the UK

Hopefully today we will have completed our challenge and be back in Longyearbyen where we will enjoy a final team breakfast before saying goodbye to this phenomenal landscape and flying back to the UK.

NB

The Arctic Ocean is one of the most inhospitable regions on our planet. Logistics problems are enormous; the weather ferocious and unpredictable, ice condition is unstable. Distances are immense, facilities scarce. Safety and self-sufficiency are the paramount rules. We acknowledge and respect this. It is our obligation to warn to all clients that they like us and everyone else attempting to function in this extreme environment, are at the mercy of forces more powerful than any of us. Despite the expected period of calm dry weather, windstorms and blizzards as well as changes of the

ice condition are a major threat to flights and groups en-route. Delays of days must be anticipated. Changes and amendments may apply to the programme, depending on the weather, ice or other conditions. It is important to consider possible delays or alterations, and accept them with patience. We will do our very best to keep to the general itinerary; however we cannot be held responsible for any last minute changes that might occur and we fully expect such changes to take place. In all such circumstances, your challenge leader will have the final say.

Please see this [document](#) for more information.

HOW TO FUND YOUR CHALLENGE

This page provides you details of the costs of your challenge.
The costs below are per person.

SELF FUNDER

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*Pay a registration fee of £8500.00 when you book
Then a balance of £34475.00
(17 weeks before your challenge)
Raise as much as you can for your charity.*

FLEXI

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*Registration fee of £8500.00 when you book
Then £10000.00 towards challenge costs
(17 weeks before your challenge)
Raise a minimum of £49950.00 for your charity.*

WHAT'S INCLUDED

Before you go

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- Members only benefits and discounts at a wide range of clothing and equipment suppliers including Outdoorhire, Cotswold Outdoor, Runners Needs, Snow + Rock, Water to Go, The Altitude Centre, Sporttape and Nomad & MASTA.
- Fundraising advice
- Support materials (itinerary, kit list, fact file, Q&As, health notes, travel tips, responsible travel policy and guidance)
- A-Z of fundraising ideas
- Warm up exercise routines
- Access to training weekends (optional and at additional expense)
- Public liability insurance
- Risk assessment and emergency management planning
- Access to your own password protected account including support materials and training schedules
- 16 and 20 week trek/bike training schedule

On your challenge

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- Accommodation during the challenge (usually in twin share)
- Three meals a day (unless otherwise stated in the itinerary)
- Full back-up support including first-aid qualified staff and first-aid supplies
- All challenge management before, during and post event
- An English speaking first aid trained challenge leader and full local support team (assistant, drivers, mechanic, medic)
- Technical equipment required on this challenge
- International flights to and from the UK (including all known UK air taxes, and fuel surcharges, at the time of costing)

WHAT'S NOT INCLUDED

Before you go

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- Travel to and from the UK airport of departure
- Vaccinations (please check Trip Notes for requirements)
- Travel Insurance (you can buy at time of booking or in your Account Area, or provide your own)

On your challenge

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- Tips
- Departure Tax (if applicable)
- Personal spending money
- Any other specific items listed as not included in your Trip Notes

policy details)

- Clothing and equipment listed on your Kit List

THE DETAILS

Fundraising deadlines

You will need to send your sponsorship money to the charity as you raise it. At least 80% of the minimum sponsorship required must be sent to the charity 10 weeks before departure (by 21/01/2020), and the remaining 20% within 4 weeks of completing the challenge (by 13/05/2020). If you have raised the necessary funds, the charity will then pay the balance of your challenge costs. The charity benefits by keeping the remaining sponsorship money and every pound over and above that you raise.

Prices include all known air taxes

We include ALL known air taxes (including fuel) at the time of costing. Many companies do not include air taxes at all, and clients are therefore hit with a surcharge of three or four hundreds of pounds just before departure. Our aim is to provide you with transparent pricing and clear instructions as to what is included in our prices and if applicable what isn't.

Typical group size

The typical group size is 4 - 10 participants

Optional extras

Business class upgrades*
(*subject to availability)

Luggage Allowance & Valuables

As no formal clothes are needed, luggage should be kept to the absolute minimum – details of what to pack are provided in your kit list and this is very detailed and specific to the harsh climate you will be going into. The allowance with SAS Airlines is 1 carry-on bag of 8kgs and 1 hold bag of 23kgs. You may be asked to take out extra bags for taking out group equipment and food but we will cover the costs of any extra luggage allowance. While we will do everything to provide adequate safety for the group and security for your possessions, the general rule is that if you don't need it, don't bring it. This includes jewellery, necklaces, rings and even watches. Your main luggage should not contain valuables and items not required on the challenge. These may be left in storage in Longyearbyen to be returned to you once you have returned from the Pole.

Training Weekend

Our challenge includes an induction and training weekend where you'll be sized for all thermal and polar clothing, Arctic boots, skis and sledge harnesses. You'll leave the training weekend with your personal harness and the knowledge to empower you to prepare for the challenge ahead. To simulate the motion of pulling a sledge, we'll drag a 4x4 car tyre on uneven ground using the harness.

Training

Training and a high level of fitness are definitely required. A full fitness training programme is included within the challenge cost and more will be explained during the training weekend. You will be skiing and sledge hauling for around 8 hours a day and still have lots of physical work to do in setting up and breaking down the camp. We will provide a training guide but essentially you should improve your cardio vascular ability and practice pulling a tyre with a harness to simulate the actions and work the muscles that you will be using on the challenge. You do not need to be an expert skier but some confidence on skis will of course help! In your account area you will find more comprehensive Fitness Training Notes.

Waiver

Please note that you will be asked by the team from Camp Barneo to sign a liability waiver before boarding their flight onto the ice to start your challenge. If the waiver is not signed, you will not be allowed to fly to Camp Barneo and as such not participate in the trek.

Emergencies

The event is not run as a race and there will be a discrepancy in people's speed on the ice and capabilities in camp. This is allowed for. In the unlikely event that rescue from the ice is required, this will be carried out by satellite phone call to the Barneo Ice Camp for helicopter rescue. A doctor is available in Barneo and quality medical services including hospital are available when back at Longyearbyen.

Safety

Charity Challenge considers the safety of all of our participants and staff to be a top priority, and as such we have set up Challenge Safe, one of the most advanced and thorough safety management systems in the industry. Challenge Safe formalises our ethos when it comes to safety, and brings together the procedures and risk management strategies that we use to audit all aspects of our challenges, from vehicles to accommodation to the challenge activity itself. Your welfare is absolutely paramount!

In terms of your North Pole challenge, there are a couple of important points that you should be aware of:

- The Arctic Ocean is one of the most inhospitable regions on our planet.
- Distances are immense, and facilities scarce.
- Logistics problems are enormous; the weather ferocious and unpredictable, and the ice condition is unstable. Even before the ski challenge itself begins, there can be major delays and changes to the programme.
- Once on the ice, our progress will depend on the weather conditions, the physical state of the group, whether the ice is flat or broken up, whether we encounter any leads (breaks in the ice) or encounter polar bears.
- Despite the expected period of calm dry weather, windstorms and blizzards as well as changes to the ice condition are a major threat to flights and groups en-route.
- It is important to consider possible delays or alterations, and accept them with patience.
- The challenge area is very remote and rescue can only really be implemented if helicopters can fly which is heavily dependent on the weather.
- Temperatures can go as low as -40 degrees centigrade and if you do not look after yourself, frostbite is a possible side effect.

Phone & WiFi

Most of the accommodation you are in will have limited WiFi which you will be able to use, but please do not rely upon this. You will not have any phone signal once you leave Longyearbyen. We will have a satellite phone with us for emergencies but you may wish to purchase or hire a personal satellite phone.

Clothing & Equipment

Good quality, durable kit could mean the difference between a fantastic challenge experience and an uncomfortable one. For this challenge, we will provide all expedition kit except underclothing. With significant cold weather, keeping warm and dry is paramount. We will advise you and support you to ensure you are properly kitted out. A full [kit list](#) for this challenge can be found here.

Food & Drink

Food in the Longyearbyen restaurants is good, although vegetarian options are limited. Remember that all provisions have to be flown to Spitsbergen from mainland Norway. On the ice freeze-dried food will be cooked by the challenge members and guides. Please let Charity Challenge know prior to departure if you have any specific dietary requirements or allergies.

Accommodation

The first few nights in Longyearbyen will be spent in a simple guesthouse on the edge of town, conveniently near to

your ice-training area. At the Barneo Ice Camp, should you spend a night there, there are heated 'dormitory tents' and a heated mess tent. On the main challenge you will be camping on the ice in three person tunnel tents. On your return to Longyearbyen you will stay in one of the town's top hotels. Please note that flights to and from Longyearbyen/Barneo can be changed at a moment's notice, requiring you to stay an extra night or in some cases, multiple additional nights in the town. If this were to occur we would try and book hotel accommodation, although during the month of April when most hotels are fully booked it may not be possible to find alternatives at short notice. In such cases, we may pitch the tents or as a last resort, you may have to sleep in a communal area of one of the hotels. If you are travelling with a friend or partner who you wish to share with please ensure that you note this where appropriate when booking or email challenges@charitychallenge.com.

Typical Day

Its very difficult to give a typical day as it will be heavily dependent on the weather and conditions, but a rough guide, you will wake up early, collect snow, melt snow, boil water and make breakfast and warm up. You will then organise yourself and get your kit sorted for the day. The less you need to do once you have started skiing the better so preparation is key. You will fill your water bottles and flasks and get your snack food ready. Then the task of breaking down camp begins. Once the tents are down and packed on to your sledges, you will need to start walking/skiing/sledge hauling, to keep warm and progress further north! You will stop every hour or so to have some water and a snack. You'll check on each other and then continue for another hour. This will continue for around 8-9 hours but could be more if required. Your leader will dictate the speed and distance to be covered. On some days this could be smooth going on others you could spend hours just trying to negotiate an open lead. When your leader advises you will stop and pitch tents, and start the evening routine. Collecting snow, melting snow, boiling water and making your freeze dried dinner. Keeping warm and dry is key. After a good night's rest, the whole process begins again.

Inclusions & Exclusions

This price includes: the training weekend on Dartmoor, First Aid qualified polar guide and all the expedition costs

In addition to the Expedition Costs you should consider the following costs:

- Drinks and any extra food and accommodation necessitated by flight delays, and any activities not mentioned in the itinerary.
- Personal spending money
- Travel to and from UK airports.
- Travel insurance, which is currently £1952 including cancellation cover of up to £20,000 or just medical cover for £223.
- In addition, if you need to call out a helicopter on the ice cap to take you back to Barneo for reasons unrelated to injury or illness (i.e. you are not prepared for the challenge or just want to stop), you will have to cover the costs of the helicopter which is calculated depending on flying time, the position of Barneo relative to where you are. The cost may vary from 6,000 to 25,000 Euros.

Level of Difficulty

The North Pole challenge is rated Extreme due to the harsh climate.

Conditions & the Impact on Logistics

The Arctic Ocean is one of the most inhospitable regions on our planet. Logistics problems are enormous; the weather ferocious and unpredictable, ice condition is unstable. Distances are immense, facilities scarce. Safety and self-sufficiency are the paramount rules. We acknowledge and respect this. It is our obligation to warn you that everyone attempting to function in this extreme environment, are at the mercy of forces more powerful than any of us. Despite the expected period of calm dry weather, windstorms and blizzards as well as changes of the ice condition are a major threat to flights and groups en-route. Delays of days must be anticipated. Changes and amendments may apply to the programme, depending on the weather, ice or other conditions. It is important to consider possible delays or alterations, and accept them with patience. We will do our very best to keep to the general itinerary; however we cannot be held responsible for any last minute changes that might occur and we fully expect such changes to take place. In all such circumstances, your challenge leader will have the final say.

All of the above means that even before the ski challenge itself begins, there can be major delays and changes to the programme. Once on the ice, our progress will depend on the weather conditions, the physical state of the group, whether the ice is flat or broken up, whether we encounter any leads (breaks in the ice) or encounter polar bears. There are so many variables that you absolutely must be prepared for any changes and delays that might occur. Weather can also delay our flight home, or our return from the ice cap may be delayed.

Climate

The North Pole is substantially warmer than the South Pole because it lies at sea level in the middle of an ocean (which acts as a reservoir of heat), rather than at altitude on a continental land mass. Winter temperatures at the North Pole can range from about 40 to 10 °C (40 to 50 °F), averaging around 31 °C (24 °F). The sea ice at the North Pole is typically around 2 to 3 m (6ft 7in to 9ft 10in) thick, although ice thickness, its spatial extent, and the fraction of open water within the ice pack can vary rapidly and profoundly in response to weather and climate.

Toilets

In Longyearbyen there are good washing and toilet facilities and at the Barneo Ice Camp there are porta-cabin toilets. On the main challenge there are no facilities and you should pack a 'pee bottle' for the tent at night and take plenty of toilet paper and anti-bacterial hand gel (NB: wet wipes freeze).

Leadership

Depending on the size of the group you will be accompanied by either one or two highly experienced polar guides. They will be ultimately responsible for the running of the itinerary and the safety of your group. The itinerary is there as a guide and may change due to unusual weather patterns, the strength of the group, and so on. We will do our very best to keep to the set itinerary. However, we cannot be held responsible for any last minute changes that may occur. In all such circumstances, your challenge leader will have the final say.

Group Size

The challenge requires a minimum of 5 participants in order to run and a maximum of approximately 10 participants, due to the remote nature of the challenge.

Insurance

It is a condition of booking that you have a suitable travel insurance policy whilst participating on the challenge. We have a special policy which covers among other things, medical (emergency, evacuation and repatriation) arrangements, cancellation and curtailment of the challenge, and more specifically for the adventurous activities undertaken on this challenge. If you have your own travel insurance policy, you must ensure that it provides at least the same level of cover as our recommended policy, including protecting the charity in the event of your cancellation 56 days or less prior to departure. If you choose not to purchase our recommended policy when you book we will send you a disclaimer which you should complete and return. We can provide a policy which is just for medical cover, or one that includes up to £20,000 of cancellation cover too.

For more general travel insurance questions, please refer to our main [FAQs](#) page.

Flights

We will advise of the routing and timings but typically, it will be from London Heathrow to Longyearbyen (the main settlement of Spitsbergen, Norway) via Oslo. Some flights overnight in Oslo, others connect through. You will then be flown on to the sea ice to Camp Barneo. From here you will be flown to the start of the challenge by helicopter. For more general flights questions, please refer to our main [FAQS](#) page.

Vaccinations

For up to date vaccination information please check the NHS 'Fit for Travel' website: <http://www.fitfortravel.nhs.uk/home.aspx>. Although the Charity Challenge team are travel professionals, they are not medical experts and we would encourage you to visit your GP or travel nurse to discuss vaccination requirements.

Visa

There are no visa requirements for Norway, just a valid passport with six months to run from the end of the expedition.

Money

On the ice you will not need or be able to spend money! At Barneo Ice Camp (which you could just be transitting through or could be staying overnight depending on weather and flight times), only Euros or US Dollars are accepted. For all other expenditure in Longyearbyen on Svalbard (Norway) we recommend that you take a credit card and a sufficient amount of cash in Norwegian Krone. Travellers' cheques or credit cards should be accepted in the airports. You will have access to ATMs in Longyearbyen only. You will need to bring money for meals, drinks and any unexpected delays in departing from Longyearbyen or returning early to Longyearbyen, for accommodation and meals. We recommend you bring a credit card for this purpose.

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Any more questions?

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