



CHEESEMANS' ECOLOGY SAFARIS

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Beluga Camp *Canadian Arctic Adventure* July 22 to 31, 2022



Beluga Whales
© Cheesemans' Ecology Safaris

SAFARI OVERVIEW

Immerse yourself in Canada's Arctic wilderness to experience one of the world's largest beluga whale gatherings. This exploratory trip will take you to a remote camp at the Cunningham River estuary, where you will spend six full days exploring the high Arctic's landscapes and wildlife by bike, kayak, ATV, plane, truck, and on foot, choosing your activity each day. Take an optional scenic flight, dependent on weather and permits, to Prince Leopold Island, home of Canada's largest seabird colony, searching for rare and elusive narwhals and bowhead on the way. Discover a dynamic ecosystem 500mi north of the Arctic Circle amidst this rugged scenery, with possibilities of polar bears foraging along the shorelines, ringed and bearded seals swimming amongst the pack ice, arctic fox pups playing in the grasses, and so much more!

HIGHLIGHTS

- Discover the Cunningham River estuary filled with hundreds of charismatic beluga whales which gather here every summer!
- Immerse yourself in the far reaches of the tundra, on the shores of the Northwest Passage, and encounter musk oxen, falcons, foxes, polar bears, and other charismatic wildlife.
- Choose your adventure! Decide which activities you'd like to participate in each day.
- Take optional scenic flight to Prince Leopold Island, dependent on weather and permits (costs extra).

LEADER: Ted Cheeseman.

DAYS: 10, including estimated travel time.

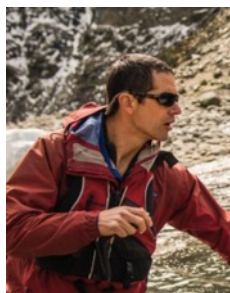
GROUP SIZE: 24.

COST: \$12,250 per person, double occupancy, not including airfare (except for round-trip flights between Yellowknife, Canada and Arctic Watch Wilderness Camp), singles extra. See the *Costs* section on page 4.

ACCOMMODATIONS: The Arctic Watch Wilderness Camp is a semi-permanent building consisting of a main complex surrounded by 16 private tented cabins, each equipped with a marine toilet and sink.

Date	Description	Accommodation	Meals
Jul 22	Arrive in Yellowknife, Canada.	Explorer Hotel, Yellowknife	—
Jul 23	Fly to the Canadian Arctic and arrive in time for a welcome dinner.	Arctic Watch Wilderness Camp, Somerset Island	B, L, D
Jul 24–29	Spend six full days exploring the Arctic wilderness by bike, kayak, ATV, plane, truck, and on foot at one of the largest beluga whale gatherings in the world.		B, L, D
Jul 30	Choose from the many activities offered for your last morning. Fly to Yellowknife in the afternoon.	Explorer Hotel, Yellowknife	B, L
Jul 31	Depart homeward from Yellowknife, Canada.		

LEADER



Ted Cheeseman

Ted grew up traveling extensively and began studying and photographing wildlife as a child. After completing a Master's degree in Tropical Conservation Biology at Duke University, Ted returned to California to lead and organize expeditions full time with Cheesemans' Ecology Safaris. Ted currently leads expeditions to Antarctica, the Arctic, and the Caribbean and obsesses over humpback whales identified around the world through the citizen science project Happywhale.com. Ted is working on a Ph.D. on humpbacks at Southern Cross University, New South Wales, Australia.

DETAILED ITINERARY

Jul 22 ~ Arrive in Yellowknife, Canada

Arrive in Yellowknife, Canada for an overnight. Meet Ted this evening for a debriefing.

Jul 23 ~ Charter flight to Cunningham River estuary

After breakfast, fly through the scenic Canadian Arctic and arrive at the Arctic Watch Wilderness Camp. Your flight time will depend on weather conditions; expect to arrive in time to enjoy a late afternoon in the high Arctic, including a tour, potential wildlife activities, and a welcome dinner.

Jul 24–29 ~ Encounter Beluga Whales, Fly Above Narwhals, and Discover the Arctic Wilderness

Located at 74° North, on the northern end of Somerset Island, the Arctic Watch Wilderness Camp is adjacent to the Cunningham River estuary, where beluga whales gather by the hundreds. You will spend six full days exploring this remote Arctic landscape and its rich and diverse wildlife, using the camp as your home base. You can tailor your time spent experiencing this remote haven by choosing your activity each day. The variety of options below include some more active and exploratory activities and others with a stronger focus on wildlife photography. The flexibility of splitting into smaller groups allows for excursions that fit your interests and maximize your time in nature. In the evenings, relax during informal lectures including the Northwest Passage and its history, Richard Weber's recount of his unassisted journey to the North Pole in 1995, and Nansen Weber talking about wildlife photography or his work in this region and his experience with the local wildlife. For those who are adventurous, spend an evening taking the polar plunge challenge, a fun event to commemorate your time in this beautiful and pristine environment.

Due to the unpredictable weather patterns of the Arctic, specific activities cannot be guaranteed, so flexibility is paramount. We strive to achieve all the noted activities and to stay in nature as long as possible.

Cunningham River Estuary and Triple Waterfall

In the morning, get a quick introduction to the lodge's ATV's, and then go on a short walk to the Cunningham River estuary. Marvel as hundreds of beluga whales take shelter in the river mouth, only a few yards from shore. Observe these unique mammals socializing and hear their unique sounds they use to communicate. After lunch, you may hike to the five-story Triple Waterfall with opportunities to see nesting peregrine falcons, loons, snow buntings, sandpipers, and rough-legged hawks. On your way back to the lodge, you'll cross a picturesque canyon with opportunities to see musk oxen wandering amongst beautiful Arctic flowers.



Beluga Whale Congregation
© Cheesemans' Ecology Safaris

Musk Ox Ridge Trail and Inukshuk Lake

Travel by ATV across the river delta and up the Musk Ox Ridge Trail to get spectacular views of the entire area. Along the way, expect to see musk oxen as well as arctic fox with pups. Picnic at Inukshuk Lake, where we'll provide fishing gear if you would like to try your hand catching and releasing arctic char. Return to the lodge via the River Trail and stop to explore the unique Arctic Hoodoos (giant sandstone formations).

Optional Scenic Flight to Prince Leopold Island (costs extra)

Depending on permits and weather conditions, board a charter flight to get an aerial view of the surrounding region. Search for rare and elusive narwhals and bowhead whales as you make your way to Prince Leopold Island. Located in Lancaster Sound, this island is home to Canada's largest seabird colony, one of the most important in the Arctic. It is a Migratory Bird Sanctuary, and thanks to special permits, you will land on the island and explore the multi-species colonies. See thick-billed murre, northern fulmar, black-legged kittiwake, and black guillemot roosting in the tens of thousands! The plankton-rich waters surrounding the island also attract many mammal species such as beluga, bowhead whale, narwhal, walrus, ringed seal, bearded seal, and polar bear.

Sea Kayak and Kayak Falls

Spend the morning sea kayaking or stand-up paddle boarding in the Cunningham Inlet, where belugas are known to gather and interact with each other, offering a great spectacle to visitors. Make your way through pack ice, ringed seals, bearded seals, and the charismatic beluga whales. After lunch along the shoreline, hike to Kayak Falls, a small canyon with stunning views of the Northwest Passage and look for polar bears wandering the tundra.

Flatrock Falls and Gull Canyon

Travel to Flatrock Falls and either hike or truck to the mesmerizing unnamed canyons of Somerset Island. As you wander along these canyons that span up thousands of feet, look down in search of fossils that offer a glimpse into this unique region's past. You will also have many opportunities to observe the nesting sites of terns, plovers, and snow geese. After lunch, travel to Gull Canyon to witness the contrast between the desolate landscape that surrounds you and hidden corners rich with wildlife gems.



Arctic Fox with Pup
© Cheesemans' Ecology Safaris

Cape Anne and Red Valley

Take the ATVs to Cape Anne to visit 1,000-year-old Thule archaeological sites. The journey is very scenic, taking you past ancient Inuit campsites, and with the possibility of a polar bear foraging along the shoreline. After exploring, return to the lodge via the Red Valley, where you will feel humbled by the sheer magnitude of these remote Arctic landscapes.

Cunningham River Rafting Excursion

Board one of the Lodge's Mercedes Unimog trucks and make your way to the launch site, roughly 13mi up the Cunningham River. You will hike the last three miles to the launch site, crossing the Badlands, where two 8,000-year-old bowhead whale skeletal remains are found, as well as musk oxen, snow geese, arctic fox, and much more! Once at the launch site, enjoy lunch as the gear is prepared for your journey back to the lodge. You can make your way down the river on a kayak, raft, or stand-up paddle board, or mountain bike along the river.

Jul 30 ~ Morning exploration before flight to Yellowknife

Spend your last morning choosing from the many activities this region offers. In the afternoon, fly back to Yellowknife.

Jul 31 ~ Depart homeward

COSTS (ALL COSTS ARE IN US DOLLARS)

Cost

Type	Cost per Person
Trip Cost, double occupancy	\$12,250
Single Supplement	\$1,800

Costs are per person, double occupancy, not including airfare (except for round-trip flights between Yellowknife, Canada and Arctic Watch Wilderness Camp), singles extra. See *Included* and *Not Included* sections for more details.

If you are a single traveler, we will find a roommate for you, but if we cannot find you a roommate, we may charge you a single supplement. Single rooms cost extra and are subject to availability.

Payment Schedule

Payment	Due Date	Amount per Person
Deposit	Due now to reserve your space	\$2,500
Second	July 15, 2021	\$2,500
Final	December 15, 2021	Remaining balance

Payments are due based on the schedule above. All reservations require a deposit to confirm reservation of your space.

Cancellations

Until the Final Payment due date, deposits are refundable except for a cancellation fee of \$150 per person, which can be applied toward another trip if reserved within six months of the cancelled trip's departure date. Cancellations are non-transferrable. No refunds are given after the Final Payment due date.

Included

- All leaders, transport, park entry fees, and permits for all activities unless described as optional.
- Round-trip flights between Yellowknife, Canada and Arctic Watch Wilderness Camp.
- Accommodations for the nights of July 22 through July 30.
- Meals from breakfast on July 23 through lunch on July 30.
- Transfers on July 22 and July 31 via hotel shuttle between the Explorer Hotel and the Yellowknife Airport (YZF) and transfers on July 23 and July 30 between the Explorer Hotel and charter flights.
- Non-alcoholic beverages and snacks at the camp and during activities.
- Kayaks, stand-up paddle boards, river rafts, bikes, all-terrain vehicles (ATV), ATV helmets, fishing gear, paddling dry jackets and pants, life jackets, and more.
- Trip Materials - information about flights, packing, entry and departure requirements, airport transfers, gratuities, etc.

Not Included

- All airfare (except flights listed as included), airport and departure taxes, and excess baggage fees. Round-trip airfare is approximately \$800 to \$1,200 between the US and Yellowknife, Canada, depending on origin.
- Scenic charter flight to Prince Leopold Island, depending on permits and weather conditions (about \$1,000 per person).
- Passport and visa fees.
- We can arrange divergent airport transfers and extra hotel nights for an extra cost.
- Gratuities - tipping is always discretionary. However, we suggest budgeting about \$500 to \$600 total per participant.
- Mandatory emergency medical and evacuation insurance. For more information see www.cheesemans.com/travel-insurance.
- Optional trip cancellation insurance. For more information see www.cheesemans.com/travel-

[insurance](#).

- Items of a personal nature such as laundry, telephone calls, medical costs or hospitalization, room service, alcoholic and other beverages, items not on the regular menu, etc. If you have special dietary needs, please indicate them on your Reservation Form.

SIGN UP

Please contact us first to check availability, reserve your space, and obtain a Reservation Form. To confirm your reservation, we require a deposit and signed form from each participant.

Cheesemans' Ecology Safaris

Email: info@cheesemans.com

Website: www.cheesemans.com

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Phone: (800) 527-5330 or (408) 741-5330

OTHER DETAILS

Climate

At this time of the year, the weather is usually nice and sunny. Of course, in the high Arctic you can always expect some cloudy, rainy, or cold weather. Average temperatures range from the low 40s°F (~4°C) at night to the mid 50s°F (~13°C) in the daytime, with warmer days reaching as high as 70°F (~21°C).

In Yellowknife during late July, average temperatures range from the mid 50s°F (~13°C) at night to the lower 70s°F (~22°C) during the day.

Fitness Level

Most wildlife viewing is done from ATVs, Unimog trucks, kayaks, stand-up paddle boards, bikes, and on foot. Walks to search for wildlife are generally less than an hour long and over relatively flat trails. You can opt out of any activity. Please contact us if you have any health concerns that may make this trip challenging.

Accommodations

The Arctic Watch Wilderness Camp is made up of semi-permanent buildings consisting of a main complex surrounded by 16 private tented cabins, each equipped with a marine toilet and sink. Due to the extremely sensitive nature of this environment, the showers are located in the main complex. Because of our group size, you will share the camp with other travelers. If you are concerned about the accommodations, please discuss with us before booking.

Flights

Unless listed as included, airfare is not included in trip costs. Detailed logistical information and the contact information for our recommended flight-ticketing agent are included in the Trip Materials we will send you. Please let us know if you are arriving earlier or staying later as we are happy to assist you with any extra overnights that you might want to arrange.

Flights you (or a travel agent) book: Arrive in Yellowknife, Canada (YZF) no later than July 22. Depart from Yellowknife, Canada (YZF) on July 31.

Flights we book for you: The round-trip flights between Yellowknife, Canada and Arctic Watch Wilderness Camp are included in the trip cost.

Terms and Conditions

Read our current Terms and Conditions at <https://cheesemans.com/terms-and-conditions>.

Conservation

Cheesemans' Ecology Safaris is passionate about conserving the precious regions that we travel to and supports many conservation efforts. By visiting these areas, we contribute to sustainable conservation of these valuable wildlife habitats. We urge you to support conservation organizations that protect and restore natural habitats and write letters to tourism and government agencies to promote work in preserving wildlife.

We aim to make all our trips carbon neutral by splitting the cost of carbon offsetting with our participants. For your convenience, the optional donation amount for your half of the carbon offset will be indicated on your invoice. We source high quality offsets through CarbonTree Conservation Fund, a non-profit we helped found, supporting pioneering forest conservation in the Rio Bravo Reserve in Belize, a Nature Conservancy project (www.nature.org/en-us/about-us/where-we-work/latin-america/belize/rio-bravo-conservation-area/).