

SIBERIA'S FORGOTTEN COAST

PETROPAVLOVSK-KAMCHATSKIY,
RUSSIA TO NOME, ALASKA, USA

EXPEDITION DOSSIER
28 JUNE – 10 JULY 2022



Heritage Expeditions

Antarctica • Western and South Pacific
Subantarctic Islands • Russian Far East





Koryakskiy Nature Reserve © J Ross



Commander Island Reserve © M Kelly



© D Brown



Siberia's eastern coastline is undoubtedly one of the most remote and least visited regions of the globe. It is home to several groups of indigenous people, including the Itelmen, Koryak, Even and Chukchi. Fur trappers and sealers plundered the region's natural resources in the name of the Tsar in the early 17th Century. Stalin and subsequent leaders encouraged economic development in this part of the Soviet Union.

As the iron curtain was drawn and the Cold War escalated, this region became forbidden territory. Travel to and within the area was strictly controlled, the number of military installations increased, early radar

warning stations proliferated and Russia's Pacific fleet patrolled the coastline. This all changed in the early 1990s with Perestroika and the collapse of the Soviet Union. Military installations were abandoned, there were mass migrations of workers back west and towns and industries were simply abandoned. As the heavily subsidised economy collapsed, the indigenous people were forced back to traditional ways of life.

Even now, travel through this region is still heavily regulated and virtually impossible for the independent traveller. There is little or no infrastructure, only a few kilometres of road, and no hotels apart from in the main towns of Petropavlovsk-Kamchatskiy and Anadyr. These towns have scheduled air services, but access to the rest of the region either by air or sea, even for locals, is at best 'unpredictable'.

Throughout its chequered human history its rich natural history has largely gone unnoticed and unknown to the rest of the world. It is an amazing coastline dominated by the volcanoes of Kamchatka in the south, the fiords of what was formally the Koryak region, and the rich estuarine areas and tundra of Chukotka.

This coastline has one of the most diverse assemblages of wildlife and habitats of anywhere of a similar latitude on the globe, and virtually no people or visitors to disturb them. One of the most iconic species is the critically endangered Spoon-billed Sandpiper that is endemic to the region.

Since 2011 we have supported BirdLife International and Birds Russia research teams working on this species. This support now includes other seabirds and waders as researchers monitor potential changes in their populations and distribution due to a variety of reasons.



ITINERARY

Day 1: Petropavlovsk-Kamchatskiy, Russia

Arrive into Petropavlovsk-Kamchatskiy, the capital and administrative centre of the Kamchatka Region and transfer to the port to board your ship. We suggest you arrive at least a couple days earlier and spend some time exploring the area. We can help you with accommodation and tour options including the world famous Valley of the Geysers. It is an historic town and there are a number of museums and monuments worth visiting. Please enquire about your pre-voyage packages.

Day 2: Zhupanova River

We plan to spend the morning Zodiac cruising on the Zhupanova River. Our main target here is the Steller's Sea Eagle and there are usually some occupied nests close to the river. Good numbers of Larga Seals are also often hauled out on sandbars in the river and we should see a good variety of waterfowl and waders. The river is an important salmon fishery and we hope to have the opportunity to visit a nearby fishing camp. By late afternoon we should be

over deep water heading for the Commander Islands and new species to look for include Laysan Albatross, Mottled Petrel and the Fork-tailed Storm-petrel. The Kamchatka Trench can also be excellent for cetaceans and we have previously seen Blue Whales on this crossing.

Days 3 to 4: Commander Islands

The wildlife-rich Commander Islands were first discovered by the Commander Vitus Bering when his ship was wrecked here in 1741. We intend to explore the islands through a combination of landings and Zodiac cruises. Our first stop will be the village of Nikolskoye, where we will visit one of the only museums in the world to display a

skeleton of the famed (but now extinct) Steller's Sea Cow. Zodiac cruising is often spectacular and we hope to encounter Red-faced Cormorant, Red-legged Kittiwake, Pigeon Guillemot, Horned Puffin, as well as Parakeet, Crested and Whiskered Auklets, and Sea Otters.

Our plans also include searching for cetaceans with Humpback, Sperm, Northern Minke, Orcas and Baird's Beaked Whales all regularly encountered. Weather will determine where and when we can land, but there are a number of very interesting sites nearby including Medny Island and Commander Bay where Vitus Bering died when his ship was wrecked in 1741.

Day 5: Karaginskiy Island

This large uninhabited island on the east coast of the Kamchatka Peninsula offers a wide variety of habitats. Our proposed landing site is a patchwork of boggy tundra, ponds and shingle spits where an interesting range of waders can be found including Pacific Golden Plover, Red-necked Stint and Red-necked Phalarope. We also hope to see Bluethroat and Pallas' Reed Bunting.

Day 6: Verkhoturova Island and Goven Peninsula

Verkhoturova Island has some large seabird colonies which we can get





close to by following a short, but steep trail to the cliff top. We should be able to enjoy some fantastic views of Tufted Puffins, Brunnich's Guillemots, Pelagic Cormorants and Black-legged Kittiwakes. Both Steller's Eider and Harlequin Duck occur here too, and we may also see some Steller Sea Lions, as they are often hauled out on offshore rocks.

In the late afternoon we will Zodiac cruise the Goven Peninsula in the Koryaksky Reserve in search of the Kamchatka Brown Bear. There is a high population of bears here and they are often seen patrolling the beaches.

Days 7 to 9: Koryak and Chukotka Coast

During these days of the expedition we will explore this remote and seldom part of the coast making multiple landings to observe and photograph the wildlife. The coastline comprises deep forested fiords where we should see brown bears, Red Fox and, with luck, mountain sheep and Kamchatka Marmots. In the many lagoons and shallow bays there is a vast array of birdlife including Tundra Bean Goose, Steller's Eider, Great Knot, Long-tailed Stint, Gyrfalcon, Siberian Accentor and Asian Rosy-finch. This area is also a stronghold of the Kittlitz's Murrelet and we should see several during our journey.

In our previous expeditions we have explored much of this coastline, documenting the distribution and abundance of many species. In 2011 we recorded a previously unknown breeding population of Spoon-billed Sandpiper. Researchers from BirdLife International and Birds Russia will be travelling with us to monitor changes and search for new breeding colonies. Their programme will provide unique opportunities for photography, hiking and 'birding' in a country with a rich diversity of species, and where literally only a few 'westerners' have ever been before.



Day 10: Meinypil'gyno

The village of Meinypil'gyno, located on the inside of a 40 kilometre long shingle spit, is the most important site in the world for breeding Spoon-billed Sandpiper. Members of the Spoon-billed Sandpiper Task Force monitor about 15 breeding pairs here. We will be guests of the Task Force and if it is possible we will be guided to one of their monitored nests. The area is

extremely rich in other wildlife, so we may also find Emperor Goose, Pacific Diver, White-billed Diver and Sandhill Crane. The lagoon entrance often has Largha Seal, Gray and Beluga Whales, and a spectacular number of gulls.

Day 11: Preobrazheniya Bay

At Preobrazheniya Bay we look to Zodiac cruise its spectacular towering granite cliffs home to thousands of nesting birds including Black-legged Kittiwakes, Horned and Tufted Puffins, Common, Brünnich's and Pigeon Guillemonts, Glaucous and Vega Gulls, Parakeet and Crested Auklets, Northern Fulmars, White Wagtails, Short-tailed Shearwaters and Red-throated Pipit. We will also be looking for Resident Killer Whales/ Orca, known to frequent the coastline.

Day 12: Yttygran Island & Bukhta Penkingney

Yttygran Island is home to the monumental ancient aboriginal site known as Whale Bone Alley, where whale bones stretch

along the beach for nearly half a kilometre. There are many meat pits used for storage and other remains of a busy whaling camp that united several aboriginal villages at a time. In one location, immense Bowhead Whale jawbones and ribs are placed together in a stunning arch formation. Gray and Humpback Whales are frequently seen around the island. This afternoon we plan to visit Bukhta Penkingney. This long fiord, cut into the coastline by glaciers, is a popular spot for whale watching. Exploring this scenic location we will be looking for wildlife including brown bear.

Day 13: Provideniya

Today there will be an opportunity to explore this fascinating former Soviet military port and administrative centre. After clearing Russian Customs and Immigration in Provideniya we will set sail for Nome across the Bering Strait. One of the world's most nutrient-rich stretches of water, each spring the Bering Strait is the scene of

one of the planet's largest wildlife migrations. Beluga, Bowhead and Gray Whales, walrus, Ringed Seals and numerous seabirds are all known to frequent the strait so there is plenty of opportunity for wildlife encounters. Join the expedition team for a recap and disembarkation briefing before enjoying a farewell dinner to celebrate our journey as we sail back across the International Date Line.

Day 14: Nome, Alaska, USA

After breakfast and clearing US Immigration and Customs formalities it will be time to say our farewells. There will be a complimentary transfer to take you to the airport or a designated central location.

Note: During our voyage, circumstances may make it necessary or desirable to deviate from the proposed itinerary. This can include poor weather and/or opportunities for making unplanned excursions. Your Expedition Leader will keep you fully informed.



© D Brown



HERITAGE ADVENTURER

Heritage Adventurer is a true pioneering expedition vessel of exceptional pedigree often referred to as the 'Grande Dame of Polar Exploration'.

Purpose built for adventure in 1991 at Finland's Rauma shipyard and specifically designed for Polar exploration, *Heritage Adventurer* (formerly known as *MS Hanseatic*) is 124-metres long, boasts the highest passenger-ship ice-class rating (1A Super) and an impressive history of Polar and remote region exploration making her perfect for Heritage Expeditions signature experiential expedition travel.

Originally designed to accommodate 184 guests, we now welcome just 140 expeditioners to create a spacious, comfortable on board experience and continuation of the exceptional, personalised expedition experience synonymous with the company. While a fleet of 14 Zodiacs ensures

all guests are able to maximise their expedition experience. On board, enjoy stylish, sophisticated accommodations spanning 4 decks, visit the captain and crew in the Bridge with our Open Bridge Policy and dine on gourmet fare from leading Australasian chefs.

Watch your adventure unfold from numerous spectacular indoor and outdoor viewing locations including *Heritage Adventurer's* famed Observation Lounge resplendent with 270-degree views and join our world-renowned team of naturalists, botanists, historians and experts as they interpret the natural and human history discovered during each voyage, as well as hosting regular lectures.

And should you require a little R&R, unwind in the library, pool, gym, hot tub, sauna and steam room, indulge in some retail therapy or find a quiet place to enjoy a coffee or cocktail from the café and bar.

DATES

Voyage #HA220628
Petropavlovsk-Kamchatskiy to Nome
28 June – 10 July 2022

PRICES

Heritage Suite **\$21,950 pp***

Located on Deck 6, Heritage Suites are an expansive 44m² and feature large double panoramic windows, king bed, large living area with a sofa, coffee table and chairs and grand marble bathroom with a double basin, bathtub and shower, large writing desk, floor to ceiling cabinetry for storage and a flat screen entertainment system.

Worsley Suite **\$15,950 pp***

Located on Deck 6, Worsley Suites are a spacious 22m² and feature large panoramic windows, king or two single beds, comfortable chaise-style lounge suite, writing desk, private en-suite with shower, ample storage and a flat screen entertainment system.

Superior Single **\$15,540 pp***

Superior Single Cabins on Deck 5 are a spacious 22m² and feature large panoramic windows, king bed, comfortable lounge, writing desk, private en-suite with shower, ample storage and a flat screen entertainment system.

Superior Triple **\$10,450 pp***

Superior Triple Cabins on Deck 5 are a spacious 22m² and feature large panoramic windows, two single beds and one Pullman bed which folds down from the wall, comfortable lounge, writing desk, private en-suite with shower, ample storage and a flat screen entertainment system.

Superior Deck 5 **\$12,950 pp***

Superior Cabins on Deck 5 are a spacious 22m² and feature large panoramic windows, king or two single beds, comfortable lounge, writing desk, private en-suite with shower, ample storage and a flat screen entertainment system.

Superior Deck 4 **\$12,450 pp***

Superior Cabins on Deck 4 are a spacious 22m² and feature large panoramic windows, king or two single beds, comfortable lounge, writing desk, private en-suite with shower, ample storage and a flat screen entertainment system.

Main Deck Single **\$14,940 pp***

Main Deck Single Cabins on Deck 3 are a spacious 22m² and feature two porthole windows, king bed, comfortable lounge, writing desk, private en-suite with shower, ample storage and a flat screen entertainment system.

Main Deck Triple **\$9,950 pp***

Main Deck Triple Cabins on Deck 3 are a spacious 22m² and feature two porthole windows, two single beds and one Pullman bed which folds down from the wall, comfortable lounge, writing desk, private en-suite with shower, ample storage and a flat screen entertainment system.

* The price listed includes the additional local landing fees of \$500. (All prices are per person in US\$).

PRICE INCLUDES

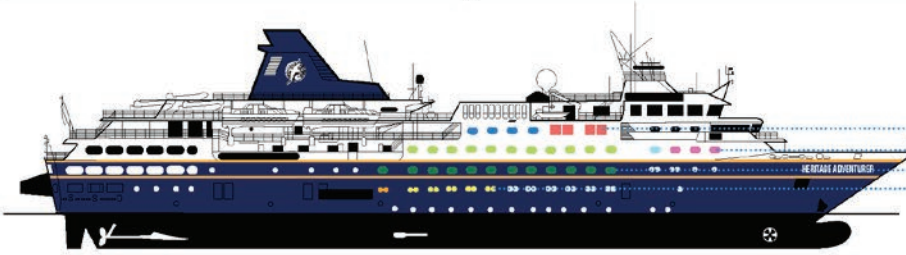
Pre/post cruise transfers, all on board ship accommodation with meals and all expedition shore excursions.

PRICE EXCLUDES

All items of a personal nature, laundry, drinks, gratuities. International/domestic/charter flights, visas and travel insurance.

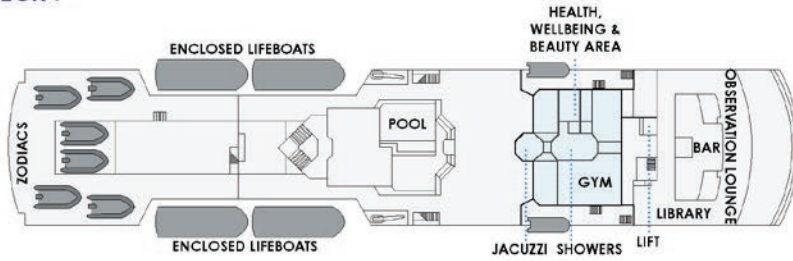
09/08/2021

Heritage Adventurer Deck Plan

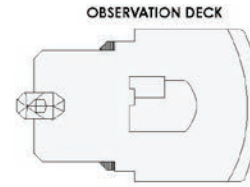


DECK 6: SUITES ● WORSLEY ● HERITAGE
 DECK 5: ● SUPERIOR ● SUPERIOR TRIPLE ● SUPERIOR SINGLE
 DECK 4: ● SUPERIOR
 DECK 3: ● MAIN DECK TRIPLE ● MAIN DECK SINGLE

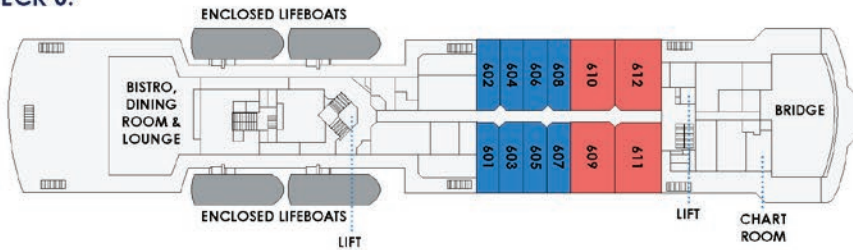
DECK 7



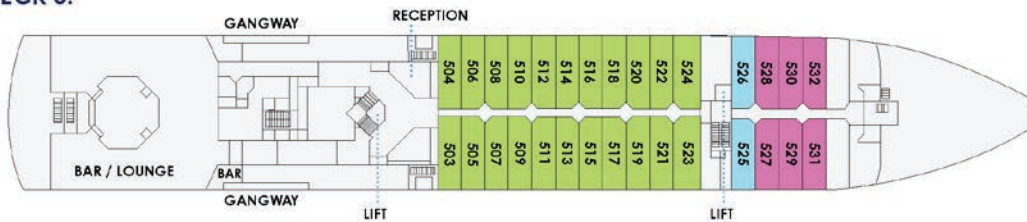
DECK 8



DECK 6:



DECK 5:



DECK 4:



DECK 3:



DECK 2



SUITE CATEGORIES

- HERITAGE SUITE
- SUPERIOR SINGLE
- DECK 4 SUPERIOR
- MAIN DECK SINGLE
- WORSLEY SUITE
- DECK 5 SUPERIOR
- SUPERIOR TRIPLE
- MAIN DECK TRIPLE



Heritage Expeditions

Antarctica • Western and South Pacific
 Subantarctic Islands • Russian Far East

Freephone: 0800 262 8873 (within NZ) 1800 143 585 (within Australia) 1866 285 7884 (within USA/Canada)
 Antarctic House, 53B Montreal Street, P.O. Box 7218, Christchurch 8240, New Zealand.
 Tel +64 3 365 3500 info@heritage-expeditions.com www.heritage-expeditions.com