

# CHUKOTKA – WHERE RUSSIA'S DAY BEGINS

A SPECIAL 15-DAY EXPEDITION  
INCLUDING WRANGEL ISLAND

EXPEDITION DOSSIER  
10 – 24 JULY 2022



**Heritage Expeditions**

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





© H. Ahern



Wrangel Island Reserve © G. Riehle



Wrangel Island Reserve © M. Carwadine



From rambling Polar Bears to pods of feeding whales, massive walrus populations, towering bird cliffs and sweeping tundra landscapes, Chukotka's coastline and Wrangel Island are a treasure trove of biodiversity. Also rich in history and culture, Chukotka is one of 83 regions which make up the Russian Federation and covers a vast area of North East Russia the size of England and France combined, and slightly larger than the state of Texas, yet is home to less than 50,000 people, the majority of which live in the towns. The indigenous people include Chukchi, Inuit, Even, Koryak, Chuvan and Yukaghir, while its non-native inhabitants are predominately Russian.

During this voyage we plan to fuse this history and culture with unforgettable Polar Bear and marine mammal encounters as we explore the pack ice from our ship and fleet of Zodiacs. This is a rare opportunity to experience, in depth, one of the last great undiscovered wilderness areas in the world which spends up to 10 months a year protected by ice. North of Chukotka, where the Chukchi Sea meets the Arctic Ocean, is nature reserve and World Heritage site Wrangel Island, which has outstanding wildlife values. Sometimes referred to as 'The World's Polar Bear

Maternity Ward', because of the high density of denning Polar Bears, it is an island that never disappoints those keen on natural and Arctic history. As the ice retreats each summer (further and faster than ever before) Polar Bears come ashore and we see good numbers of these, likewise walrus find refuge here each summer normally in large numbers. Birds like Snow Geese and Snowy Owls also breed here in good numbers. And of course, Wrangel Island is central to the story of the wreck of the *Karluik* and other Arctic exploration stories.

The 'mammoth steppe' vegetation complex, a rich and diverse relic from the Pleistocene epoch nurtures over 400 plant species and never fails to astound visitors with its sublime beauty. The number and type of endemic plant species, the diversity within plant communities, the presence of relatively recent mammoth tusks and skulls, a range of terrain types and geological formations in the small geographical space are all visible evidence of Wrangel's rich natural history and its unique evolutionary status within the Arctic.

On this special Chukotka expedition we will meet the locals, hear their stories and discover the region's rich Arctic history. We may also have the opportunity to experience thrilling cultural exchanges at their spirited annual Beringia Regatta and Festival.

We will spend our time looking for, and observing, Chukotka and Wrangel Island's abundant wildlife – specifically Polar Bears, walrus, seals, whales and birds. On land we will explore the expansive tundra with its wild flowers and dwarf tree species and we will watch for brown bears, reindeer, Arctic Foxes, ground squirrels and, if we are lucky, we may also see a Wolverine during this authentic, high Arctic expedition adventure.

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## ITINERARY

### Day 1: Nome, Alaska, USA

Our expedition begins and ends in Nome, Alaska's most famous gold rush town. Make your way to the designated meeting point for your transfer to *Heritage Adventurer* (times and meeting point will be confirmed with your voyage documents) where the captain and expedition team will be waiting to welcome you aboard.

You will have the opportunity to settle into your accommodation and familiarise yourself on board before joining your fellow expeditioners on deck as we set sail across the Bering Strait and International Date Line for Provideniya, Russia.

### Day 2: Provideniya, Russia

After clearing Russian Customs and Immigration there may be an opportunity to explore this fascinating former Soviet military port and administrative centre followed by an afternoon expedition.

### Day 3: Presbrazhenya Bay

We aim to be cruising along the south coast of Chukotka today and plan to stop at Presbrazhenya Bay. This is an excellent opportunity to Zodiac cruise some spectacular bird cliffs, as long as sea conditions permit we will get in close for



© A Terauds



Beringia National Park © E. Bell

some great photographic opportunities. We also plan to spend some time exploring the rich tundra landscape for wildlife and interesting flora.

### Day 4: Whale Bone Alley and Gil'mimyl Hot Springs

Our first landing of the day we expect to be at one of the most significant and intriguing archaeological sites in the Arctic – Yttygran Island's Whale Bone Alley. This ancient Inuit site is decorated with Bowhead Whale skulls and bones dating back to the 14<sup>th</sup> Century, but was only discovered in 1976. Thought to be either a ceremonial site or hunting camp, a UNESCO World Heritage Site application has been submitted highlighting its cultural importance.

This afternoon we intend to make a landing at the Gil'mimyl Hot Springs. They are a short walk from the coastline, but well worth the effort. There will be a chance to explore the tundra for birds, plants and animals as we walk to and fro. After a soak in the springs we will re-join the ship for a relaxing evening.

### Day 5: Lavrentiya and Cape Dezhnev

Dropping anchor in beautiful Lavrentiya Bay, we expect to

spend the morning exploring the historically and culturally rich village of Lavrentiya. A former indigenous settlement, this Soviet-planned community was established in the 1920s as an administrative centre where local Chukchi and Siberian Yupik were encouraged to move to. Visit the museum, meet local elders and enjoy an authentic taste and slice of village life in the main square.

This afternoon we will be at Cape Dezhnev, the north-eastern most point of the Eurasian continent. This cape commemorates the accomplishment of the Cossack Semyon Dezhnev who was the first European to sail through the strait in 1648 (80 years before Bering did). On the cape is a lighthouse, a monument and the remains of a Border Guard base. If the weather and sea conditions are suitable we plan to land here and give you the opportunity to explore the area. A short distance south of the cape is the former Inuit settlement of Naukan. It is still possible to sense the melancholy in the air because the people never wanted to leave. As the relocation was fairly recent, there is a wealth of historic data and photographs that make a visit to this site even more poignant.

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© Wrangel Island Reserve © T Menyshina

## Day 6: Kolyuchin Island and Kolyuchin Inlet

Today is an expedition day where we plan to visit Kolyuchin Island and Inlet. Once the location of an important Russian Polar Research Station, this small island has since been abandoned following the collapse of the USSR. While the buildings are now derelict, the abundant wildlife the men studied is still there. Near the old station at the north-western end of the island are some of the most amazing bird cliffs in the Arctic, where puffins, guillemots,

gulls and cormorants can be observed and photographed just metres away. A prominent walrus haul out often congregates at the south-eastern end and, if the animals are present, you can expect some excellent photographic opportunities from the Zodiacs.

We also plan to visit Belaka Spit near the mouth of the Kolyuchin Inlet. So huge that it is visible from satellite photos, it contains vast numbers of waterfowl and migratory waders. This wild and desolate landscape is also

a strangely beautiful birding hotspot. Joined by Beringia National Park rangers, we plan to search the dunes and tidal areas for Emperor Geese. If we are lucky, the Gray Whales which frequent the area will be feeding just metres offshore.

## Day 7: At Sea

Take the opportunity to spend time up in the bridge or out on deck looking for the first Polar Bears of our voyage with our expert expedition team as we cruise along the sea ice, or download photos as we navigate towards Wrangel Island.

## Days 8 to 10: Wrangel Island

Ice and weather conditions permitting, we plan to spend this time exploring Wrangel Island. Known as the world's Polar Bear denning capital due to the large numbers of cubs born here, Polar Bears will be high on our list and, with a little patience, we should be rewarded with a number of encounters and opportunities to photograph them. The island is



Wrangel Island Reserve © S Blanc

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also the last landfall for migratory species flying north and each summer thousands of birds migrate here to breed including Snow Geese, Snowy Owls, skuas and Arctic Terns. Other animals we will be looking for include Musk Oxen, Ringed and Bearded Seals, Arctic Fox and lemming.

## Day 11: At Sea

We will be steaming south from Wrangel Island and, again, sea and ice conditions will dictate our course and speed. We suggest expeditioners will be richly rewarded by being on deck, because if we are in ice there could be Polar Bears, walrus, and Ringed and Bearded Seals to be seen. As we make our way closer to the Chukotka coast we will keep an eye out for Humpback and Gray Whales, which are frequently seen. Increasingly we are also seeing a number of Bowhead Whales in this area. We will also use this time for lectures and recaps.

## Day 12: Bukhta Pultin and Unnamed Bay

This morning we plan to enjoy a Zodiac safari of Bukhta Pultin. Beyond its narrow entrance this sheltered and rarely-visited bay opens revealing a new world. Explore the coastline, fields of

wildflowers, look for wildlife or hike up the ridgeline and take in the impressive helicopter view.

Nearby, picturesque Unnamed Bay is our planned destination for this afternoon where we will Zodiac cruise to shore. Welcomed by an expansive stretch of beach, backed by a lagoon and surrounded by rugged hills, there's much to discover. Enjoy a walk along the beach and tundra looking for wildlife, or scale one of the nearby peaks and take in the stunning vistas.

## Day 13: Bukhta Penkingney and Arakamchechen Island

This morning we will be launching our Zodiacs with a landing planned at Bukhta Penkingney,



a long fiord cut into the coastline by glaciers and a popular spot for whale watching. Here a small braided river, its gravel bed studded with Willow bushes, winds its way down to the sea where we land. Exploring this scenic location we will be looking for Arctic Ground Squirrels and Pikas, Willow Ptarmigan, Sandhill Cranes and brown bears attracted by the berries and salmon-filled river.

This afternoon we plan to cruise over to Arakamchechen Island just north of Cape Chaplino and separated from the Chukotka mainland by the 8-kilometre wide Senyavina Strait. Having watched Gray Whales feeding here previously, we recommend being out on deck as we slowly cruise through the strait. On Arakamchechen Island we will explore the lush tundra.

## Day 14: Provideniya

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

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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 15: 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.**



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## 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 #HA220710  
Nome to Nome: 10 – 24 July 2022

## PRICES

**Heritage Suite \$23,895 pp\***  
Located on Deck 6, Heritage Suites are an expansive 44m<sup>2</sup> 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 \$16,950 pp\***  
Located on Deck 6, Worsley Suites are a spacious 22m<sup>2</sup> 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 \$16,450 pp\***  
Superior Single Cabins on Deck 5 are a spacious 22m<sup>2</sup> 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 \$11,275 pp\***  
Superior Triple Cabins on Deck 5 are a spacious 22m<sup>2</sup> 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 \$13,575 pp\***  
Superior Cabins on Deck 5 are a spacious 22m<sup>2</sup> 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 \$12,950 pp\***  
Superior Cabins on Deck 4 are a spacious 22m<sup>2</sup> 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 \$15,540 pp\***  
Main Deck Single Cabins on Deck 3 are a spacious 22m<sup>2</sup> 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 \$10,750 pp\***  
Main Deck Triple Cabins on Deck 3 are a spacious 22m<sup>2</sup> 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 local landing fees of \$500. (All prices are per person in US\$).

## PRICE INCLUDES

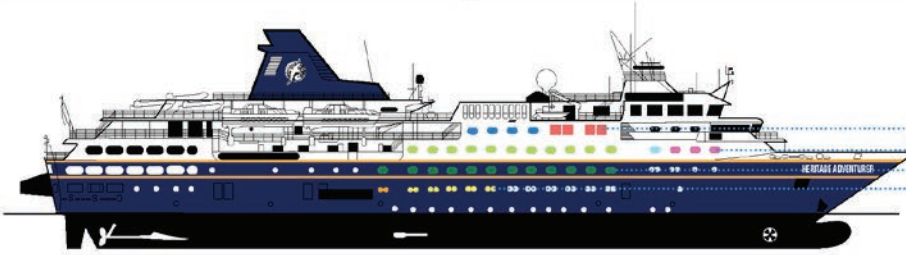
Pre/post cruise transfers, all on board ship accommodation with meals and all expedition shore excursions.

## PRICE EXCLUDES

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

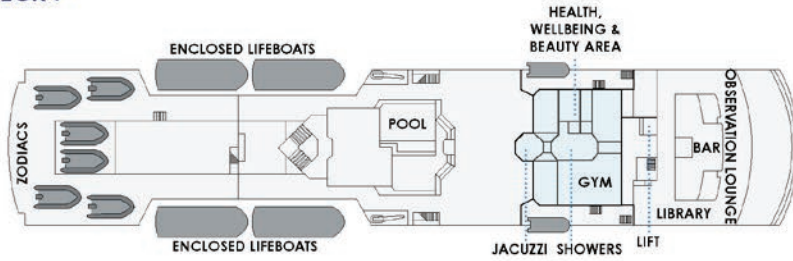
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# Heritage Adventurer Deck Plan

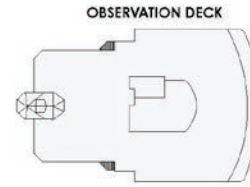


DECK 6: SUITES ● WORSLEY ● HERITAGE  
 DECK 5: ● SUPERIOR ● SUPERIOR TRIPLE ● SUPERIOR SINGLE  
 DECK 4: ● SUPERIOR  
 DECK 3: ● MAIN DECK TRIPLE ● MAIN DECK SINGLE

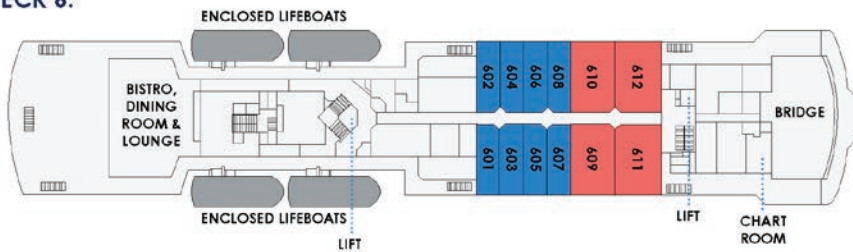
## DECK 7



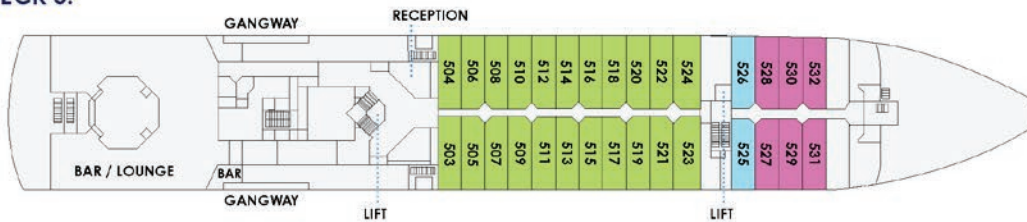
## DECK 8



## DECK 6:



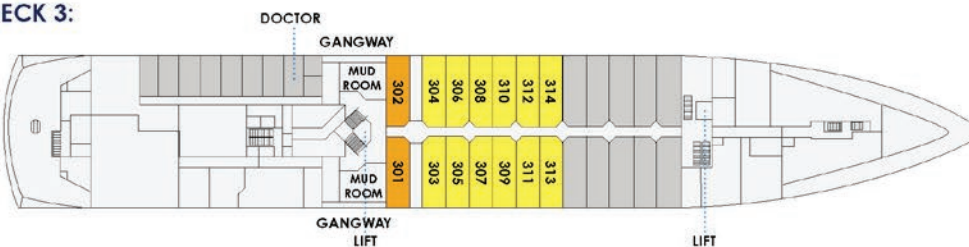
## DECK 5:



## 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  
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