

Walking Manitoba and the Polar Bears of Churchill**

October 23 – November 1, 2010 • 10 Days • Approx \$4600 per person

In late fall, polar bears in the Hudson Bay region of central Canada congregate along the western shore of Hudson Bay where winter's ice first appears. Once the ice forms, the bears can stalk seals, their favorite prey. The isolated village of Churchill is located on the bear's migration route. For town residents, this is the time of the "Polar Bear Alert", a unique community effort to ensure the peaceful coexistence of man and bear. For visitors, late fall provides a special opportunity to view this magnificent animal in its natural environment, an experience of a lifetime.

Day 1: Arrive Winnipeg, Manitoba

Today is devoted primarily to travel. We'll rendezvous at our hotel in Winnipeg this evening for an Orientation Meeting.

Day 2: Activities in Winnipeg

Winnipeg Forks Walk – 10 km

Our first walk explores the city of Winnipeg and the beautiful river and gardens area in Assiniboine Park. This afternoon, we'll explore the city on a sightseeing tour.

Day 3: Winnipeg – Train en route to Churchill

Oak Hammock Marsh Walk – 5 km

Oak Hammock Marsh Waterfowl Conservation Area provides the setting for this morning's walk. In late October, large numbers of migrating geese make this a bird watcher's paradise. After lunch, we'll learn the story of the Mennonite emigration to Canada on a tour of the Mennonite Heritage Museum. Later this evening, we are welcomed by the Gerbrandt family into their home in Grunthal for dinner to share a traditional Mennonite Manitoba welcome. Tonight we board the train for the 1000-mile journey north to Churchill. In clear weather, the Aurora (Northern Lights) should be visible in the north sky!

Day 4: Train en route to Churchill

Pisew Falls & Thompson Walk – 10 km

Since the train is the only way to reach Churchill by land, it stops at any point along the route to drop off passengers and supplies. This nostalgic mode of transport takes us comfortably through the remote wilderness with sleeping cars,

a vista-dome observation lounge, and a dining car with meals prepared on board. Later in the day, we'll disembark to stretch our legs on a walk at Pisew Falls and the town of Thompson, a small Manitoba wilderness town that will give us a taste of life in the Canadian north.

Day 5: Arrive Churchill

We arrive in Churchill late this morning and will spend the afternoon exploring this town on the edge of the Arctic in the company of a local guide. An optional sled dog ride will be available for those seeking an additional slice of Adventure will be led by our local guide.

Day 6: Activities in Churchill

The experience we've all been waiting for begins today on a full-day safari to prime polar bear viewing areas aboard the "Tundra Buggy." While bears are our main interest, we'll also be looking for arctic fox, arctic hares, great snowy owls, and ptarmigan. This evening we have another opportunity to connect with the locals during a discussion with a young lady who will share an entertaining first-person account about growing up as a Métis trapper's daughter.

Day 7: Activities in Churchill

Today offers an encore safari aboard the Tundra Buggy. The bears show no fear of the buggy. Many are clearly curious, and will wander over to the buggy to "check us out." After time for some dinner and some last-minute shopping in Churchill, this evening we reboard the train for our return to Winnipeg.

Day 8: Train en route to Winnipeg

Our train takes us through the world's largest intact boreal forest, crossing the mighty Nelson River twice. The journey offers plenty of time to read, play games, and compare notes about our tundra experiences with fellow travelers.

Day 9: Train en route to Winnipeg

Our second day on the train returns us to Winnipeg late this afternoon. After several days in the far North, returning to "civilization" may generate a bit of culture shock. After hotel check-in, we'll rendezvous to reminisce about this one-of-a-kind Adventure at this evening's Farewell Dinner.

Day 10: Depart for Home

More culture shock is in store for us today as we board planes and head our various ways. We won't soon forget this rare opportunity to see the planet's largest land carnivore in its natural state, up close and personal! Thanks for sharing our first Polar Bear Adventure!

**This document is a draft. Changes may occur prior to publishing the final itinerary, which will include confirmed dates and pricing.