CANADA'S ARCTIC
Nunavut
UNTAMED ✦ UNSPOILED ✦ UNDISCOVERED

JOURNEY TO NUNAVUT

SUSTAINABLE TOURISM

Inuit have long been stewards of the fragile arctic environment, and the practice of development in balance with environmental protection is enshrined in the new territory's government and land claim agreement. In Nunavut, sustainable tourism is a natural.

Canoeing
With no forests to obscure the shoreline view, canoeists have front-row views of muskoxen, arctic wolves, caribou and other wildlife while navigating such stellar waterways as the Thelon, Kazan and Soper Canadian Heritage Rivers, or the Coppermine and Back rivers.

Kayaking
Nunavut has almost half of Canada's ocean coastline, making the territory a kayaker's dream. Modeled after traditional Inuit travel, kayaking is a terrific way to explore arctic seas, especially the deeply incised fjords of Baffin Island near Clyde River and Pond Inlet, for example, or the waters of Pelly Bay near Kugaaruk. Even further off the beaten path are kayaking trips on Ellesmere Island in the High Arctic.

Floe-edge trips
At the floe-edge – where landfast ice meets open water – visitors stumble upon a virtual wildlife convention, including bowhead whales, walruses, seals, polar bears and more. Lancaster Sound, close to Pond Inlet, Arctic Bay and Resolute, is a special magnet for wildlife because of early ice-free conditions fuelled by winds and upwelling ocean currents.

Whale watching
The snow-white beluga, the behemoth bowhead, and the narwhal with its unicorn-like tusk: all unique in appearance, all inspirational to witness firsthand. It's easiest to spy them in the inlets, fjords and bays of the Baffin Region, such as the bowhead near Clyde River at Isabella Bay, or the beluga off the coast of Somerset Island.

Bird watching
The skies are alive with peregrine falcons, gyrfalcons, phlaropes, snowy owls, sandhill cranes, arctic loons, jaegers, golden eagles, terns, rough-legged hawks, and many more species. Some, such as the snow goose and king eider, migrate north in the summer to nest. Birders will marvel at the cliff-face colonies of the thick-billed murre, and the great waterfowl nurseries of the Hudson Bay lowlands.

Photography
With the spectacular wildlife and humbling scale of the land, photo buffs will be in heaven – especially given the ethereal quality of light with spring and summer's perpetual daylight. The sunlit nights between 8 p.m. and 3 a.m. are the best time for shooting. Shadows are long, and colors and textures are vividly defined.

For more information:
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