



2023  
*Arctic Watch*

# Pre-trip Manual

# About the Lodge



Welcome to Arctic Watch!

We are so glad you chose Weber Arctic and look forward to hosting you at the lodge. This guide will provide detailed information about traveling to the lodge, preparing for your trip and what to expect when visiting the Arctic.

Arctic Watch is situated on Cunningham Inlet, on Somerset Island. Fifteen hundred kilometers from Yellowknife, Arctic Watch is along the Northwest Passage in Canada's High Arctic, home to a number of iconic arctic mammals and beautiful vast landscapes. We are excited to share with you the wonders of this incredible and unique wilderness.

As the season changes, each week offers exciting opportunities. Biking on the frozen Arctic Ocean is possible early in the season while the pack ice is still thick. In July, we begin to see the beluga whales enter Cunningham Inlet where they congregate in the shallow and warmer water. Further inland, muskoxen forage on the barren landscape and often begin their rut in August.

At 74° North, Arctic Watch is well above the tree line and the midnight sun provides 24 hour daylight. The sun begins to set mid-august, rising just thirty minutes later. The sky displays outstanding shades of red and orange as the sun slowly sinks to the horizon.

Each day is unique and our guiding team takes into account weather patterns, wildlife movement and guest ability, interests and desires when planning the day's events. If there is a particular activity you are interested in, please do let us know! Your input allows us to ensure that you have the trip of a lifetime.

The Weber family has spent three generations in the Arctic. A family of polar explorers, our expertise and hospitality ensures you have not only a memorable but comfortable stay in the Arctic. We look forward to sharing our passion with you!

Warm regards,  
The Webers

## Traveling to Arctic Watch

The first leg of your journey is traveling from your home to Yellowknife, NWT. Unlike travel between major city centres in the south, airlines may have delays in their schedules to Yellowknife. The first day of your adventure includes one-night at the Explorer Hotel and the flight to the lodge is the following day. Flights to Arctic Watch 2023 are scheduled on June 30<sup>th</sup>, July 7<sup>th</sup>, 14, 21, 28, and August 4<sup>th</sup> and 11, 18. Flight departures are at 9:00am. Our charter flight departs Yellowknife once per week, flying the 1500km distance to Arctic Watch. It is your responsibility to arrange travel to Yellowknife. One pre and post hotel night in Yellowknife is included as part of your stay. You will receive confirmations for this shortly.



Summit Air operates our charter flight using a 70 passenger, ATR72 turboprop aircraft. The baggage allowance for the charter flight from Yellowknife to Arctic Watch is 50 lbs per person including your carry-on. Please carry your warm jacket and wear your Dryshod boots as this flight travels through remote regions and good clothing is required to be close at hand. Let us know if you have additional gear, such as heavy camera lenses. Please be at the Summit Air hangar at 8am, the flight is scheduled to depart Yellowknife at 9am local time, weather depending. A shuttle bus leaving from the Explorer Hotel to the charter office at 8am is provided. This same service is provided upon your return to Yellowknife after your visit with us at Arctic Watch. The non-stop flight to Arctic Watch takes roughly three hours. Upon arrival at Arctic Watch, there is a one hour time change (+1hr). Feel free to bring snacks and refreshments for the flight. Sandwiches and light snack will be provided on the flight.

## Traveling from Arctic Watch

On your final day at Arctic Watch (Day 9 of the itinerary), enjoy a full day of activity, stretch your legs and take those last minute photos before the flight back to civilization. The plane leaves Arctic Watch mid-afternoon. After an overnight at the Explorer Hotel board a return flight the following day for your journey home. Please see page 6 and 7 of this manual for activities and dining options in Yellowknife.

Unpredictable weather can cause travel delays and is a reality for those living or traveling to isolated locations in Canada's far North. We strongly recommend that all visitors to Arctic Watch purchase travel insurance to ensure a stress free vacation. We recommend trip interruption, cancellation and health insurance that includes air ambulance. If an air ambulance is required to Yellowknife, Iqaluit, Edmonton or Ottawa, all non-Nunavut residents are responsible for the cost. Please read and understand the details of your insurance coverage package.



## Arctic Watch Helicopter

We station a helicopter at Arctic Watch as an optional add-on for guests to use. The helicopter is used as a day-excursion and must be pre-booked prior to arrival. The helicopter allows us to access areas further afield and is often used to heli-hike different regions on Somerset. It is a great tool to adapt to changing conditions. The cost is \$2900 per person for the day and includes up to three hours flight time with unlimited stops based on weather and wildlife patterns as well as safety considerations on the given day. It is very popular - we recommend booking at the time of receiving this manual to ensure space. Only four guests per day onboard. While it is rare for weather to completely impede our ability to fly on a given day, helicopter seats are not refunded due to weather - it takes an enormous amount of effort to station a helicopter in the Arctic. We consider it a privilege to be able to offer our guests the option to sign up for it.



**\*Please note that preference of use is based on a first come first serve basis, meaning guests who book first are given the first chance to use it. On average, all pre-booked guests will have at least one opportunity to use it during the course of the week.**

# Weber Arctic Contact Information

From April-September, the Weber family is in the Arctic during our operational season. While our office remains open, we operate at a reduced capacity.

During this time, if you need to contact the lodge directly please send an email to:  
mail@weberarctic.com

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## Summit Air Information

The Summit Air hangar is located a two-minute taxi ride from the main airport terminal in Yellowknife or a five-minute ride from the Explorer Hotel. The hotel offers a complimentary shuttle.

This is a charter flight. Luggage is restricted to 50lbs per person including your carry-on.

Please ensure you arrive at 8am for a scheduled 9am departure. Please be aware that weather delays can occur. In such an event, we will keep you updated with information as it becomes available.

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Weber Arctic Office  
Tel: +1-819-923-0932  
mail@weberarctic.com

Mailing Address  
8755 Forsberg Rd.  
Vernon,  
British Columbia  
V1B3M6

Summit Air contact  
Tel: +1-867-765-0914

Hangar Address  
100 Dickins Street  
Yellowknife, NWT  
X1A 3T2

# Packing List

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In the heart of unspoiled wilderness, we are exposed to the elements and weather can change quickly. Proper preparation and gear for an adventure in the Arctic is key to your enjoyment, comfort and safety. Normal daytime temperatures range from 4°C to 12°C. We have experienced snow as well as temperatures up to 25°C. The clothing for an adventure at Arctic Watch needs to be efficient and ready for the tundra! Our packing list will ensure you are adequately prepared. If you have any questions or concerns, contact us.

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- Winter hat or toque
- Warm mitts
- Necktube or neck warmer
- Goretex or waterproof shell jacket
- Warm down or synthetic jacket
- Two or more mid-layers
- Two or more base-layers top & bottom (no silk or cotton, merino wool is best)
- Quick dry hiking pants
- Wind and waterproof pants
- Dyrshod rubber boots (Recommended model: Haymaker HI)
- Light wool socks
- Small backpack for carrying layers and camera
- Waterbottle for hiking
- Sunglasses
- Comfortable clothing to wear in the evening
- Running shoes for around the lodge
- Bathing suit for the polar plunge
- Padded biking shorts/pants for those interested in biking at the lodge

For more information on how to best prepare for an adventure at Arctic Watch, watch our [video!](#)



# Guide to Yellowknife

*Where to eat, sleep and play in Yellowknife*

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## About Yellowknife

Yellowknife is the capital of the Northwest Territories and is Canada's northern-most city. This eclectic community is located on the north shore of Great Slave Lake and is the launching point for your trip to Arctic Watch. It is a major gateway to the expansive and pristine world of the North, and most people fly through Yellowknife to reach other destinations in the NWT and Nunavut.

Some guests will opt to spend a few additional nights exploring the region around the capital of the Northwest Territories. We recommend doing so after your visit to Arctic Watch. Consider renting a car and driving down the Ingraham Trail (Highway 4). There are numerous opportunities to hike along the Ingraham Trail: Cameron Falls and Prelude Lake Territorial Park are both popular destinations.

## Accommodation Details

Explorer Hotel  
4825 49th Avenue  
Yellowknife, NT  
Toll Free Number: 1-800-  
661-0892  
[www.explorerhotel.ca](http://www.explorerhotel.ca)

The Explorer offers a free  
airport shuttle service.  
Inquire at the front desk.

# Guide to Yellowknife

*Where to eat, sleep and play in Yellowknife*

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## Attractions

**Yellowknife Outdoor Adventures**  
Carlos Gonzales is a local Yellowknife outfitter who offers guided boat trips; bird watching tours; photography trips; sightseeing and dinner cruises on Great Slave Lake. To make a booking call 867-444-8320

**Gallery of the Midnight Sun**  
This gallery sells a wide range of northern and indigenous arts and crafts, with a focus on Inuit soapstone carvings.

**Prince of Whales Northern Heritage Centre**  
This cozy and informative museum has some incredible artifacts on display. The exhibits tell the stories of the land, people and history of the Northwest Territories. Entrance is free.

## Restaurants

**Bullocks Bistro**  
Serving fresh fish from the North, this fish and chip restaurant is a Yellowknife tradition. Located in the old part of Yellowknife, it has been voted one of the best fish and chip restaurants in Canada.

**The Woodyard Brewhouse and Eatery**  
A more recent addition to Yellowknife, the Woodyard serves great food and locally brewed beer. The NWT Brewing Company is the northernmost brewery in Canada and is the eatery.





# The Weber Family

*Your hosts in Arctic Adventure*



## Richard Weber

One of the world's pre-eminent polar explorers with more than 60 completed Arctic, North and South Pole expeditions, Richard is the Founder of Weber Arctic. His long and diverse list of polar firsts and record-making accomplishments include: The first surface crossing of the Arctic Ocean from Russia to Canada; the first snowshoe trek; and in 1995 the first (and only) unsupported return trip to the North Pole. Richard began working in Arctic tourism in 1993 when he guided the world's first commercial trek to the North Pole, and conducted hiking and kayaking trips on Baffin Island. To date, Richard has the distinction of having the most treks to the North Pole of anyone in history.



## Josee Auclair

While not chasing polar bears out of the kitchen, Josee is out on the tundra and constantly improving the guest experience. Josee has adventure in her soul: she is a polar guide who has traversed the Arctic since 1987, pioneered women-only expeditions to the North and South Poles, sea kayaked and hiked Baffin Island; spent two summers with a nomadic Inuit family in an outpost camp on Baffin Island; and assisted her husband, Richard on many of his expeditions. As a botanist and teacher, Josee has a passion for youth education and food. She is the driving force behind the Arctic Change Program.

# The Weber Family

*Your hosts in Arctic Adventure*



## Tessum Weber

When not found in the Arctic, on the trails or skiing a glacier, Tessum can be found on the stage promoting and fighting for the north. Tessum is the youngest person to ski to the North Pole. He made his first Journey to the Arctic at six weeks of age. His passion for introducing more people to the magnificence of the North has helped expand the offering from Arctic Watch and Arctic Haven include Arctic heli-skiing. He and his brother have launched the most northern heli-skiing in the world from the Baffin Island community of Clyde River. A polar guide and avid traveller, he's spent nearly 30 years across the Canadian Arctic.



## Nansen Weber

Nansen grew up spending summers traversing the Arctic. Now a professional wildlife & Arctic photographer and polar guide for over a decade, Nansen's expertise spans logistic work with top wildlife film production crews to technical expeditions such as alpine touring in the Arctic Cordillera range. Along with his brother Tessum, he has pioneered a polar first - the world's northern most heli-skiing. When not guiding international guests for Weber Arctic, Nansen travels the world on photographic projects with organizations like National Geographic & Netflix. Most of the photos on our site and in the blogs are courtesy of Nansen.



# Frequently Asked Questions

## **Do I really need rubber boots?**

*Yes, you do. All of our guides wear Dryshods when out on the land. When hiking on the tundra, there are often small streams and wet areas to cross. Ensure your boots are knee-high and comfortable for walking. We recommend the model Dyshod Haymaker Hi*

## **What is the average temperature?**

*The average daytime temperature is 8°C to +12°C. But temperatures can vary at that time of year from 0°C to +20°C. Pack for four seasons in a day!*

## **Are there mosquitoes or other bugs?**

*Only in recent years have we begun to see biting insects at Arctic Watch. They are often few in number, however, if you are sensitive to mosquitoes, you are most welcome to bring a small amount of repellent.*

## **Does it ever snow?**

*In the High Arctic, it can snow at any time of the year! Expect four seasons in one day.*

## **Who do I contact if I have more questions?**

*Arctic Watch is owned and operated by Weber Arctic. Although you may have booked your trip through one of our resellers, please direct any operational questions to the Weber Arctic team and we will be more than happy to assist.*

# Frequently Asked Questions

## **Is there running water and electricity in my room?**

*Each cabin has 110-volt electricity, cold running water and a washroom. To reduce our environmental impact, private showers are located in the main lodge. Please avoid bringing items such as hairdryers which can easily overload our circuit.*

## **Is there heat in the rooms?**

*Each cabin is equipped with an electric heater which automatically turns on in the morning and evenings. Warm duvets and fleece sheets provide additional warmth. Extra blankets and hot water bottles are always available.*

## **Are bedding and towels provided in my room?**

*Yes, bedding and towels are provided. Please note that in order to minimize our impact on the fragile High Arctic environment, we do not offer laundry service.*

## **Are single rooms available?**

*We have sixteen private cabins. Rates are based on double occupancy, guests can book single occupancy cabins at an additional cost.*

## **Is there wifi at the lodge?**

*We do have wifi at the lodge, however, it is very slow. Websites containing data heavy files such as images and video are unlikely to load. Text based messaging such as email and WhatsApp is your best means of communication.*

# Frequently Asked Questions

## What kind of plane will I fly on?

*We are fortunate to work with a number of charter providers. We typically fly direct from Yellowknife to Arctic Watch on an ATR72 operated by Summit Air. It is a 70 passenger turboprop aircraft.*

## Is there a security check with the charter aircraft?

*No, there is no security check when boarding a charter flight and therefore no restrictions on liquids etc.*

## Is there alcohol at Arctic Watch?

*Yes, we have a great selection of Okanagan wines available for purchase by the bottle and offer a rotating beer on tap.*

## Do I need any special vaccinations?

*No.*

## Gratuities?

*If you wish to leave a gratuity for staff at Arctic Watch, it is greatly appreciated. Credit Card or cash is welcome. All gratuities are split evenly amongst our staff as we believe every job is important and contributes to the success of an incredible experience. We do not have a set tipping policy as each culture has their own perspective. As an average, guest will usually leave about 10% of the value of their trip.*

## Do I need experience to sea kayak?

*Our sea kayaks are doubles (for two people) and are very stable. While you do not need experience to participate, kayaking is inherently physical. Weather can change at anytime and we ask that you feel confident expending sustained effort for several hours. Our trips are weather permitting and if conditions are windy or expected to become windy we will not go out.*

# Suggested Arctic Reading

## The Arctic Grail- Pierre Berton, Viking 1988

*This book briefly touches on all major expeditions up to 1909. It provides a great introduction to Arctic history, especially expeditions for the Northwest Passage.*

## Ancient People of the Arctic- Robert McGhee, UBC Press 1996

*Traces the lives and movement of the Palaeo-Eskimos up to the Dorset culture. Showcases the bold first explorers of the Arctic who made a life on the tundra.*

## Polar Attack- Weber Malakhov, McClland & Stewart 1996

*An account of the unrepeated Weber Malakhov expedition that took them on foot to the North Pole and return, without aircraft resupply or support teams.*

## A Naturalist's Guide to the Arctic- E.C. Pielou, 1994

*An in-depth field guide to plants, birds, mammals, fish of the Arctic. Provides informative explanations of the unique Arctic landscape that amazes Arctic travellers.*

## Iceblink- Scott Cookman, John Wiley & Sons 2000

*An unforgettable account of the ill-fated expedition, led by explorer Sir John Franklin. This book provides a vivid reconstruction of the lives and events in the search for the Northwest Passage.*





# Wildlife

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*The Arctic remains wild and unpredictable, and wildlife sightings will always depend on Mother Nature. In the heart of the High Arctic, our location offers an incredible opportunity to witness wildlife in their natural habitat. Arctic Watch offers one of the best locations on the planet to observe such a variety of Arctic wildlife. No two wildlife encounters are the same, and for our visitors, that is what draws them from around the world to witness the spectacle for themselves.*

*Please follow your guide's direction when viewing wildlife.*



# Environmental Statement

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*The Arctic climate is rapidly changing and something our family has experienced over the thirty years we have been in the Arctic. Operating off-the-grid, we strive to have as little impact on the fragile landscape as possible. Each cabin is equipped with an electric heater, which turns on automatically in the morning and evenings. Hot water is available in the main building where private shower facilities are located. These systems are in place to keep our energy consumption low and minimize our impact on the delicate ecosystem.*

# Beluga Foundation

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*The Arctic Watch Beluga Foundation is a registered Canadian charity. Its mission is to support science and education around Cunningham Inlet and Sommerset Island. The Beluga Foundation currently supports important research on climate change induced diseases in muskox. Additionally another ongoing project is to accurately count the beluga whale population in Cunningham Inlet. You have the option to contribute \$500 of your Arctic Watch Lodge fee to the foundation . All contributors receive a Canadian tax receipt . Please feel free to visit our website for more information on the foundation <https://weberarctic.com/arctic-watch-beluga-foundation>*



**“Time seems to pass slower in the Arctic... I felt somehow more connected with the world”**

*-Katie Palmer on Arctic Watch Wilderness Lodge*

# Important Next Steps

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We will be using WhatsApp, a direct messenger application to communicate with the group in the days leading up to your trip and the flight to Arctic Watch. Please download the app to your phone so we are able to keep you updated and send important information.

Step 1: Navigate to the app store on your device

Step 2: Search for WhatsApp Messenger

Step 3: Download to your device

Step 4: Open and register

Once you have the app up and running on your phone, please send an email to [mail@weberarctic.com](mailto:mail@weberarctic.com) with your phone number. This will allow us to communicate directly with you and keep the group updated with important flight information while in Yellowknife.

If you have any questions regarding the app, please don't hesitate to be in touch.

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# Important Next Steps

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Before your departure to Arctic Watch, please email [mail@weberarctic.com](mailto:mail@weberarctic.com) the following:

**Read Waiver and Assumption of Risk. Sign and return waiver.**

If you wish to extend your stay in Yellowknife

Dietary restrictions and known allergies?

Your WhatsApp information.

Any medical condition we should be aware of?

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We can accommodate most dietary restrictions with the exception of vegan diets. Due to our remote location, we ask that special requirements are specified in advance of your trip to ensure we have adequate supplies. If you have anaphylaxis please inform Weber Arctic with the details of your allergy and ensure you carry two EpiPens with you.

Please don't hesitate to be in touch with any questions or concerns you may have for your upcoming trip. We strive to ensure your visit to the Arctic is a trip of a lifetime and look forward to welcoming you to Arctic Watch Wilderness Lodge!

Welcome to the Weber Arctic Family  
-Richard, Josee, Tessum and Nansen

