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# Arctic & Antarctic

**Daylight and big-sky vistas are the rule in these geological playgrounds—places where ice and ocean and rock collide—while obnoxious tourists are as rare as bikinis. You can scale a peak, paddle along white sand beaches, and be the first to descend a glacier-fed river. You might even do all three in one day.**

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**Norway**

## It's Like Jamaica, but Colder

This eight-day, 75-mile fjordland sea-kayaking trip begins near Narvik, Norway, and heads south along the Salten Coast to Skutvik. White beaches and clear water cast a Caribbean feel, and high-pressure air pushed out of Siberia sometimes makes for balmy weather; air temperatures can reach into the eighties, but 50 to 70 degrees Fahrenheit with rain is the norm, and inlets provide protection when storms swoop in. (Water temperatures hover in the low 50s.) You'll split your nights between tents and inns such as the Tranøy lighthouse, where you'll feast on local fare (reindeer and whale). Off your plate, puffins, seals, and porpoises play,



Lena Conlan/Crossing Latitudes

It can be balmy above the Circle: cruising the Salten Coast in Arctic Norway

and you'll find 8,000-year-old petroglyphs carved into granite cliffs and the occasional school of stark-naked kindergartners swimming at town beaches. **Outfitter:** Crossing Latitudes Sea Kayaking Adventures, 800-572-8747, [www.crossinglatitudes.com](http://www.crossinglatitudes.com) **When to Go:** August **Price:** \$1,675 **Difficulty:** Moderate—**Mary Catherine O'Connor**

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## Catch a Chill

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### **Antarctica: Climbing Vinson Massif**

Spend 20 days traversing an enormous ice flat interrupted only by the jagged peaks of the Ellsworth Mountains as you make your way up Antarctica's tallest peak, 16,066-foot Vinson Massif. The weather is as fierce as you'd expect, sometimes dropping to minus 40 degrees (think of a shorter, colder McKinley climb), the moderately steep slopes require crampons, and the base-camp-style sleeping arrangements are, well, extreme. **Outfitter:** International Mountain Guides, 425-822-5662, [www.mountainguides.net](http://www.mountainguides.net) **When to Go:** November–December **Price:** \$26,000 **Difficulty:** Strenuous

### **Alaska: Kutuk River First Descent**

A first-ever descent for whitewater canoeists who are long on pioneering spirit but short on technical boating skills. Aerial scouting of the Kutuk, in the Brooks Range of northern Alaska, reveals Class II-III rapids cutting through 200-foot-deep limestone canyons. Start the ten-day, 27-mile float by hiking five miles to the Arctic divide and the headwaters of the Kutuk, a tributary of the wide, waterfall-fed Alatna. Then find your airdropped Grabner inflatable canoes and push off to ply the unknown, which is likely to include boreal-forest views of the 3,500-foot Arrigetch Peaks. **Outfitter:** Arctic Divide Expeditions, 906-524-5962, [www.arcticdivide.com](http://www.arcticdivide.com) **When to Go:** August **Price:** \$2,950 **Difficulty:** Moderate


### **Canada: Walking and Kayaking Newfoundland's Labrador Coast Rivers**

This is the African safari's cold stepsister. Arm yourself with down and a telephoto lens to explore the Torngat Mountains along the northern border of Quebec and Newfoundland, a mere five degrees south of the Arctic Circle. The eight-day trip consists of excursions from a base camp (heated tents that sleep three to four people), including kayaking the highest concentration of ocean fjords in North America, hiking 1,200-year-old glaciers, and climbing 5,418-foot Mont D'Iberville to see land's end, polar bears, and caribou. **Outfitter:** Rapid Lake Lodge, 819-337-5214, [www.rapidlake.com/adventu/](http://www.rapidlake.com/adventu/) **When to Go:** July–August **Price:** \$2,200 **Difficulty:** Moderate

**Greenland: Tundra Trekking**

Hike across 93 miles of southwest Greenland's tundra toward the Greenland Ice Sheet, a polar ice cap, from Sisimiut, a former whaling town, to Kangerlussuaq, an abandoned army base. By August, the 20 or so other human visitors who walk this popular (by Arctic standards) route each year should be gone, as should the mosquitoes and no-see-ums. You'll need to be able to carry two weeks' worth of gear and food (about 40 pounds) across trail-less, rocky terrain and over 400-foot fjord walls for an average of 12 miles per day. **Outfitter:** Northwinds Arctic Adventure, 800-549-0551, [www.northwinds-arctic.com](http://www.northwinds-arctic.com) **When to Go:** August **Price:** \$2,360 **Difficulty:** Strenuous

[And five more...](#)

<b>COUNTDOWN</b>	<b>TRAVEL NECESSITIES</b>	
#3	<p><b>Pocket Flashlight</b>                  For finding your toothbrush and the way back to the bungalow, Mag's Mini MagLite (\$10; 800-289-6241) is just right.</p>	

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