

# EXPEDITION TEAM PREVIEW:

## Iceland to Greenland 2023

Meet some of our experienced expedition team members below. Please keep in mind that this is just a small glimpse of our team. You will have the opportunity to be accompanied by numerous other guides and experts as well.

---



## Margaret Atwood

Author

*Author of more than fifty books of fiction, poetry, critical essays, and graphic novels*

Margaret Atwood, whose work has been published in more than forty-five countries, is the author of more than fifty books of fiction, poetry, critical essays, and graphic novels. Her latest novel, *The Testaments*, was published in September 2019. It is the long-awaited sequel to *The Handmaid's Tale*, now an award-winning TV series.

Her other works of fiction include *Cat's Eye*, finalist for the 1989 Booker Prize; *Alias Grace*, which won the Giller Prize in Canada and the Premio Mondello in Italy; *The Blind Assassin*, winner of the 2000 Booker Prize; *The MaddAddam Trilogy*; and *Hag-Seed*. Margaret even penned a short story, *The Stone Mattress*, aboard an Adventure Canada expedition.

She is the recipient of numerous awards, including the Peace Prize of the German Book Trade, the Franz Kafka International Literary Prize, the PEN Center USA Lifetime Achievement Award, and the *Los Angeles Times* Innovator's Award. She lives in Toronto.

As a special guest, Margaret Atwood delivers onboard presentations while enjoying the wonders of expedition travel with Adventure Canada.



## Svanur Thorkelsson

Storyteller

*Svanur is a storyteller whose passions include the myths, legends, and sagas of Iceland.*

Svanur (Swan) Thorkelsson is an Icelandic storyteller, poet, and bard. For the past twenty years, he has mostly worked in the travel industry in Iceland, but his work as a guide and a storyteller has also taken him to Greenland, Ireland, England, Israel, and South Africa.

Svanur has varied experiences in the performing arts. He has written and directed plays performed in Iceland and England. His first book of poetry was published in 1988 and his articles and writings have appeared in Icelandic newspapers and magazines. He has also hosted radio shows and been involved in the production of special events for television.

Just recently he completed recording the audiobook reading of Beowulf for Audible in the original old Anglo-Saxon language.

Svanur's passion has always been the rich legacy of Icelandic lore, legends, and the sagas. He has specialized in bringing them to life as he takes his fellow travellers exploring the magical landscape of his homeland.



## Lynn Moorman

Geologist

*Lynn shares her passion for learning about landscapes as an avid geographer, Earth Sciences professor, and a Governor of the Royal Canadian Geographical Society.*

In the Department of Earth and Environmental Sciences at Mount Royal University in Calgary, Alberta, Lynn teaches digital mapping and geomorphology (landforms and processes) particularly of glaciated terrain. Her research focusses on geographical technologies (Digital Earth, GIS) and how people can learn, and use, these technologies most effectively to better understand the environment. Her current work includes supporting Inuit communities in connecting local knowledge to satellite imagery and providing technology support and training to sea-ice mapping initiatives.

Lynn is an enthusiastic, award-winning educator who enjoys connecting people to the land and environment. Her participatory approach welcomes everyone to learn about and share their experiences of the exceptionally beautiful landscapes we are fortunate to travel through. When not on board or in the classroom, Lynn can often be found travelling the world in pursuit of more geographic knowledge or trying to catch up to her three sons!



## Deanna Leonard-Spitzer

Marine Biologist

*Deanna is a marine biologist with Norway's Institute of Marine Research. She loves to spot- and spout about- whales, seals, and walruses.*

Deanna grew up on the shores of Great Slave Lake in Canada's Arctic; her love of science and the environment came naturally. With a zoology degree under her belt, she moved to Boston to study whales, rehabilitate injured seals, and teach about ocean conservation. She pursued her graduate studies at the University of Alaska and spent a decade as a senior biologist with Fisheries and Oceans Canada (DFO) in Yellowknife, making a difference in the lives of creatures great and small.

Deanna's research on whales and their habitats has taken her all over our big blue planet. Off Vancouver Island she's explored the social lives of sea lions. In Nantucket, she's catalogued the lineages of humpback-whale calves, and in Norway she's tracked the distribution of orcas and blue whales. In the Arctic, she's satellite-tagged bowhead whales and surveyed the Beaufort Sea by small plane to study their feeding patterns.

Currently "on loan" from DFO, Deanna is working for Norway's Institute for Marine Research where she studies North Atlantic whale populations ranging from the North Sea to the Faroe Islands to Svalbard. She estimates the abundance of North Atlantic whales, monitors their interactions fisheries, and studies effects of climate change on whale populations in the remote Barents Sea.

Deanna has a splash studying whales and spending time on the ocean, but what she loves most about her career in the Arctic is the access to pristine wilderness and visits to remote places, where the pace of life falls in step with the rhythm of nature. In her spare time, Deanna can be found hiking, kayaking, and travelling with her husband, Aaron Spitzer (Adventure Canada historian) and son, Mark "the Shark" (aspiring Adventure Canada staffer).



## Aka Simonsen

Inuit Cultural Educator

*Aka's love for the Arctic manifests in her passions for communicating Arctic history, archaeology, culture, and nature.*

Aka spends the winter months studying in front of her computer and books as a Ph.D. candidate in Culture and Social History at Ilisimatusarfik, University of Greenland. She is currently writing her thesis about stone chamber wolf, fox, and polar bear traps. Her research methods entangle traditional local knowledge with science, including ecology, biology, history, culture, and archaeology.

Her summers are spent at sea working on expedition ships, camping on the tundra as a tour leader, or doing archaeology field work research. When time allows, she loves reading expedition books with a critical eye, but also loves visiting places where historical expeditions have taken place.

Aka received the Society for American Archaeology's Native American undergraduate student scholarship. She has also worked as a project assistant for a National Science Foundation project that engaged collaboration between locals and researchers on the history of changes in Inuit food habits, as a reflection of new technologies, imported foods, and the colonization of Greenland. This research was conducted primarily at the former Moravian mission station of Alluitsoq (Lichtenau), South Greenland. For Aka, it is important to take part in decolonizing science and changing the methods of doing research.

Aka holds a professional degree in tourism management and is Certified Arctic Guide from the business school at Qaqortoq, South Greenland. She also teaches

tourism education and works as research assistant and guide at the National Museum and Archives.

Her upbringing in South Greenland's outer fjords and her experience as a farmer on a subarctic island naturally taught her how to respect nature and live as sustainably as possible in the Arctic.

She is a descendent of hunters and farmers, as well as explorers—including the Danish lieutenant, explorer, and archaeologist Daniel Bruun and the catechist Hanseeraq, who went on Holms' expedition to East Greenland from 1883-85.