PHOTO STORY

The Top Ten Splendours of Greenland & Wild Labrador

By **Adventure Canada** | November 29, 2020

Related expedition: Greenland & Wild Labrador

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Each Adventure Canada expedition holds its own unique highlights. Beautiful and welcoming Inuit culture, rich archaeological sites, jaw-dropping scenery, and aurora viewing opportunities leave us lost for words in this special region. Join this trip of a lifetime for a chance to witness these ten splendours on Greenland & Wild Labrador.

Experience three distinct worlds all woven together by history, tradition, dazzling icebergs, and the dancing Northern Lights. First there's Greenland, a realm legendary for its mixed Danish and Inuit lifeways, its glaciers, and its boundless marine life. Next is Labrador, Canada's most mysterious coastline, home to the dynamic Inuit culture of Nunatsiavut and the fabulous Torngat mountains. Finally: Newfoundland, famous for colourful outports and a maritime culture rich in hospitality and song.

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1. Hike to your heart's content in Torngat Mountains National Park

Every landing site in the Torngats is a fan favourite. At Eclipse Channel, marvel at the spectacular rushing water, vibrant tundra, and playful seals. In Saglek Fjord, explore Thule tent rings, meat caches, and graves; see (and hear legends about) the Giant's Footprints that gouge the fjord walls; and check out the bird life, including harlequin ducks and lesser black-backed gulls. Or at Kangidluasuk (St. John's Harbour), the base camp of Torngat Mountains National Park, meet Inuit rangers and join them on epic hikes across the alpine tundra.

© Rob Poulton

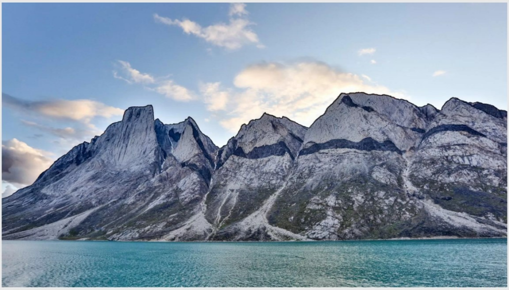
2. Get dramatic at L'Anse aux Meadows, the only authenticated Norse site in North America

One thousand years ago, at the tip of Newfoundland's Great Northern Peninsula, Leif Erikson and his crew of Vikings became the first Europeans to visit North America. The settlement they established, L'Anse aux Meadows, was unearthed in 1960 and today is a UNESCO World Heritage Site. Tour the intriguing interpretive centre and then visit the reconstructed Scandinavian-style sod buildings, where staff in period costume re-enact and explain what life here was like for those pioneering Norsemen.

© Dennis Minty

3. Ogle stupendous peaks in Nachvak Fjord and abundant critters in Ramah Bay

There's nothing so stunning as steaming up Labrador's Nachvak Fjord, twenty kilometres into Torngat Mountains National Park. The tallest peak in eastern Canada is here, plus bears, Thule archeological sites, berry patches, fox dens, and riotous autumnal colours. In placid Ramah Bay are the ruins of an old Moravian mission, plus geese, minke whales, a delightful waterfall, and a famous deposit of stone—the Ramah chert—that was so prized for tool-making that Indigenous peoples traded it as far away as the Great Lakes in Ontario.



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4. Experience the west Greenland coast, where the Arctic is sublime

Sailing down the legendary Kangerlussuaq Fjord (Søndre Strømfjord) is a true polar pleasure. A whopping 190 kilometres long but just two kilometres wide, this intimate seaway is flanked by countless frosted peaks and glaciers. The rest of Greenland's west coast is no less majestic—think icebergs, jagged isles, and misty summits. Explore this glittering land- and sea-scape by ship, Zodiac, or on shore. Make sure your camera has a spare memory card, because you might just fill it up!

© Jen Derbach

5. Go wandering in welcoming Nain, the metropolis of Labrador's Inuit region

Nestled in tamarack forests between the Torngats and the brooding Labrador Sea, stunning Nain is the most northerly town in Labrador and the administrative capital of Nunatsiavut, the Labrador Inuit government region. Visit Illusuak, the impressive new cultural centre, as well as the beautiful Moravian Church. Expect a warm cultural welcome, with residents pouring from their homes to say hello, plus Inuit foods, handicrafts, and rousing brass-band music—an old tradition in northern Labrador.

© Dennis Minty

6. Pay homage to poignant history at the abandoned village of Hebron

Eerie Hebron has a checkered history. For centuries it was a gathering place of Inuit, then in the 1830s it became a busy Moravian mission. In 1959 it was closed by government officials to compel residents to move to modern communities. The relocation broke up families and caused enduring trauma. Nowadays, Inuit are rehabilitating the settlement. Pay your respects and tour the teetering cabins, silent graveyard, archeological sites, and the old mission, where the provincial government has posted a plaque apologizing for its role in the relocation.

© Jen Derbach

7. Shop (and sup) 'til you drop in Greenland's cosmopolitan capital, Nuuk

Greenland's capital, Nuuk, bridges old and new. The charming harbour pays homage to colonial Denmark (note the 170-year-old Our Savour's Church and the towering statue of missionary Hans Egede) as well as to modern Greenland (catch the seaside Inuit sculptures and the amazing national museum). Downtown are chic boutiques and coffeeshops, but also the distinctively Indigenous parliament house and a market where hunters sell sea mammal meat. Shop, eat, stroll the streets, and enjoy big-city living on the world's coolest island.

© Dennis Minty

8. Ride the waves of the history-haunted, iceberg-bedazzled, whale-spangled Labrador coast

From forbidding Killiniq Island in the far north to the (relatively) busy Strait of Belle Isle, Labrador’s coast is wild and wonderful. History lives here: of generations of Inuit hunters, of Basque fishermen, of Norsemen seeking trade and timber, and of English mariners questing for the Northwest Passage. Also here are islands and skerries and golden beaches, icebergs twenty storeys tall, marine mammals—especially humpbacks, minkes, and harp seals—and, come summer’s end, the mysterious aurora, dancing madly in the sky.

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9. Savour the colourful cityscape of St. John’s, Newfoundland

Clinging to Canada’s easternmost tip, Newfoundland’s historic and vibrant capital, St. John’s, is a city brimming with character, and it's worth planning to spend a few extra days here. Sailing through the famous narrows, keep your eyes out for its photogenic attractions—including Signal Hill, the Basilica of St. John the Baptist, The Rooms (the city’s cultural centre), and the bright houses of The Battery. Beyond, the wild North Atlantic takes over—be sure to watch for whales and seabirds!

© Mark Edward Harris

10. Sail historic Davis Strait, a crossroads of whalers, Inuit, and explorers

For at least a millennium, this shivering sea has united Europe and Arctic North America. Inuit travel here, as did Vikings, Scottish whalers, explorers like Franklin and Amundsen, and more. On the outer decks keep your eyes peeled for pilot and sperm whales, sea birds, and fantastical icebergs.