

# SVALBARD

Land of the  
Polar Bears



9 days of  
adventures  
with experts



**Sisse Brimberg  
and Christian  
Nørgaard**

better  moments



# Better Moments means



Thanks for choosing Better Moments for your next adventure workshop.

Better Moments was founded in 2011 by Philip Boissevain and me, two experienced veterans of the international professional photography industry. We met when working at Hasselblad, Philip as the Global Marketing manager and me as the Global Photographer Relations manager.

Today Better Moments has become the leading photo workshop platform organizing high-end workshops for photo enthusiasts worldwide.

You will learn from the world's most experienced photographers within their fields to refine your personal style and sharpen your technical skills. Additionally, we want you to share your excitement for photography and enjoy great moments in life. And we want you to explore your passion and expand your photographic skills and vision.

Better Moments mission is to deliver exclusive workshops in landscape, wildlife and travel photography at unique locations around the world. I want you to explore your passion for photography and work and earn from the world's most renowned photographers who all have excellent teaching skills, local knowledge and experience.

Photography with passion,  
Christian Nørgaard



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Photo above by David Trud

Cover photo by Christian Nørgaard



# Photography with passion

## Our passionate experts

Steve McCurry - National Geographic, World Press Photo first place

Sisse Brimberg - National Geographic photographer

Peter Eastway - AIPP Grand Master of Photography, Publisher Better Photography Magazine

Steve Bloom - National Geographic photographer

Arne Hodalič - National Geographic photographer & photo editor

Hamid Sardar-Afkhami - writer, photographer, award-winning filmmaker

Lars van de Goor - Hasselblad Master Landscape photographer

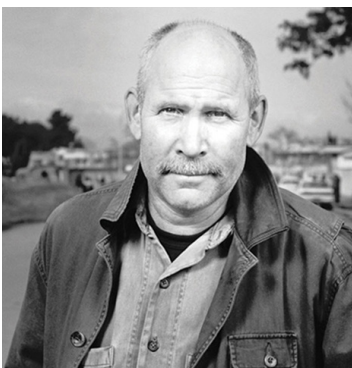
Tom D. Jones - Hasselblad Master & European Fine Art photographer

Michael Nichols - wildlife journalist, National Geographic editor

Orsolya Haarberg - Natural History Museum Wildlife Photographer Of The Year

Marco Di Lauro - World Press Photo Award

Christian Nørgaard - CEO Better Moments



**"My life is shaped by the urgent need to wander and observe, and my camera is my passport."**

Steve McCurry

























PHOTO BY CHRISTIAN NØRGAARD

# Land of the polar bears

Svalbard is a place of deep fjords, snow-capped mountains, massive sheets of ice, and magnificent polar bears. It is a Norwegian archipelago situated in the Arctic Ocean between the North Pole and Norway. Travel under the midnight sun on board M/S Malmö and experience nature in its purest form.

Polar bears thrive here. Roughly half the estimated 3,000 bears in the Barents Sea population raise their young on the archipelago's isolated islands. Humans are warned not to venture beyond town without a rifle as protection against *ursus maritimus*.

Seabirds migrate to Svalbard in the millions. Five species of seals and 12 kinds of whales feed in the waters off the coast. Atlantic walrus prosper on the rich clam beds along the shallow shelf of the Barents Sea.

On the open tundra of Svalbard's plateaus and valleys, reindeer forage and arctic fox hunt free from predators.













# Svalbard Highlights

Better Moments' mission is to deliver exclusive workshops and we want you to explore your passion for photography and work with one of the best photographers, Sisse Brimberg, during your Svalbard expedition.

## ■ HIGHLIGHTS

- Explore the arctic landscape of Svalbard.
- Shoot amazing wildlife photos of whales, seals, birds and polar bears.
- Excursions onto the pack ice in hunt of polar bears or unique ice landscapes.
- Discover the old whaling islands of Danskøya, Amsterdamøya Ytre Norskøy.

## ■ WHAT YOU WILL LEARN

- You will learn how to approach the unique challenges of wildlife photography at the best place in the world for polar bear and wildlife photography. With private "one to one" workshops and lectures, this expedition will optimize your

photographic skills and take them to the next level.

## ■ ON LOCATION

- Teaching and training in the best techniques with personal hints and advice.
- Composition and focus on lines, golden section, perspective, foreground.
- Learning about the lenses that optimize your wildlife photography.
- How to handle equipment with care on location.
- Private hands-on lessons that can help to take your photography skills to the next level.

## ■ IN CLASSROOM

- Expert review and constructive criticism of the images taken during the day.
- Private portfolio Review.
- A Better Moments Certified Photo Instructor is available during the entire workshop to offer assistance with camera settings, the basics of composition, guide and help in general.

PRICE & BOOKING



PHOTO BY SISSE BRIMBERG

















# Explore Svalbard together with Sisse Brimberg and Christian Nørgaard



PHOTO BY PRIVATE

"I was born very prematurely, two months to be precise. The nurses who took care of me gave me the nickname "Sisse". Later on I was baptized Marie-Louise, but it never stuck, I have always gone by Sisse"

Sisse Brimberg is a highly experienced photographer who has photographed over fifty stories for National Geographic Magazine and National Geographic Traveler ranging from the far corners of Japan's paper industry to northern Europe's Viking culture. Her work is exhibited around the world. Her particular passion is for historical and cultural stories that require a great deal of research and even more imagination.

You can't photograph history, of course, so you have to find ways to make the past visible. Together with Cotton Coulson, her deceased husband and colleague, Sisse has been awarded prizes by Pictures of the Year International, the National Press Photographers Association, White House Press Photographers Association, and Communication Arts.













## A life with passion for the sea

"I was raised near the sea and spent my youth sailing with my friends in Øresund," says Sisse. It has therefore been perfect with the opportunity to travel aboard the National Geographic Explorer ship to the Polar Regions and gain access to some of the most amazing photographic destinations imaginable. The frozen landscapes are spectacular with its unique light and surroundings. And with that comes the arctic species, many of them endangered, making it important to document their lifestyle and environment.

## Back to the roots

Sisse Brimberg has been a National Geographic Contributing Photographer since she was in her twenties, when she met and married Cotton Coulson in Washington DC. At that time, they often traveled in opposite directions spanning the globe on photo assignments for the magazine. Sisse focused her energies on cultural and historical subjects that had interested her since childhood and while growing up north of Copenhagen. Some of her favorite feature stories took her back to Scandinavia, "The Vikings", "Denmark", "Hans Christian Andersen", "Hanseatic League", just to name a few.



## Working together with Better Moments

For the past 15 years Sisse Brimberg has spent part of the year travelling to remote and exotic locations shooting for National Geographic Traveler and teaching photography.

She has also worked closely with Better Moments on our exclusive photo workshop program to Bhutan, Tibet and Nepal, one of the most desirable regions to visit today for photographers and film makers. The culture is rich, colourful and deeply spiritual. The landscapes are unique and beautiful, and the people are open and genuinely welcome you with a smile.

PHOTO BY SISSE BRIMBERG









# Christian Nørgaard: Catch the moments with passion



PHOTO BY DAVID TRUD

**"To me, photography is an art of observation that contains patience, respect, lots of curiosity and to catch and freeze a moments that will stay forever"**

Christian Nørgaard

The first time he held a camera was as a child, and ever since it has been a part of Christian Nørgaard - not a day goes by without a push of the button.

"The most important thing for me is to be inspired - if a natural and spontaneous curiosity and desire to capture subjects with my lens doesn't arise - well, then I simply don't do it." Christian Nørgaard started his career at the Danish newspaper Berlingske Tidende in Copenhagen. Afterwards he travelled around the world and sold his photographs to Danish and foreign newspapers and magazines.

When Christian returned from his travels and settled down in Copenhagen, he started a publishing house focused on travel magazines. In the course of the next few years it grew to be become one of the most important publishing houses in Scandinavia.

Today Christian Nørgaard shares his passion for photography with many of Better Moment's guests. Together they have travelled to destinations across the globe including Burma, India, Bhutan, Greenland, Iceland, just to mention a few, and fortunately there are even more destinations planned.







# Itinerary

## DAY 1

### ■ ARRIVE LONGYEARBYEN

Arrive Longyearbyen and meets for a an easy walk through the town down to the fjord. Here we will shoot some unique landscape pictures of the surrounding mountains.

Longyearbyen is the largest settlement in Svalbard with a population of about 2000, named after its founder, American industrialist John Munro Longyear. Upon arrival, a transfer to the hotel will be waiting for you.

In the evening, we meet for a drink and dinner at our hotel to get to know each other.

## DAY 2

### ■ FANTASTIC FJORDS AND POLAR BEARS

In the afternoon, we embark our expedition ship.

We sail out through the beautiful fjord, between snow-capped mountains – heading towards some of the most remote landscapes in the world.

Throughout the journey, we will attempt to make daily stops on the coast using our zodiac boats, bringing you as close as possible to wildlife and points of interest.

Our primary mission is to photograph polar bears as they make their way across the drifting ice. Polar bears are quite plentiful in Svalbard and together with our two local guides, we will set the course to where they are most likely to be.

After dinner, National Geographic Photographer Sisse Brimberg will give an introduction to the workshop and brief you on what to expect in the coming days.

## DAY 3 – 6

### ■ FOOTSTEPS OF GREAT ADVENTURERS AND UNIQUE PHOTOGRAPHER

We are now in a part of the world where we are totally dependent on the ice and weather conditions. Our exact itinerary depends on these factors and on the wildlife we encounter. Our ambition is to make landings or cruises with our zodiacs every day. Here are some examples of places we may visit:

#### Northwest Spitsbergen

The scientific village of Ny-Ålesund is situated in Kongsfjorden. It was from here that Amundsen and Nobile started their heroic expeditions to the North Pole. Two other courageous attempts to reach the North Pole started on the island of Danskøya. Swedish explorer Andrée made an attempt with a hydrogen balloon and American journalist Wellman started with an airship. There are still interesting remnants from these expeditions left on this site.

#### Magnificent fjords

Svalbard offers visitors countless spectacular fjords. During our journey we will explore a few of them such as Liefdefjorden, meaning “The fjord of love”, which is lined with snow-covered mountain peaks. Here, we hope to cruise along the face of the spectacular Monaco Glacier. Many common eiders and pinkfooted geese nest in the area. In Krossfjorden we revel in the beautifully sculptured front of the 14th of July Glacier to the raucous greeting of the large number of kittiwakes and Brünnich's guillemots nesting on the nearby cliffs. Raudfjorden is an area of immense natural beauty – dominated by beautiful glaciers. It is also a favourite spot for seals and the bird cliffs are bursting with activity.

#### Hinlopen Strait and Alkefjellet

If the ice allows, we enter Hinlopen Strait. Here is Alkefjellet, an impressive, basaltic cliff, which is the home to an estimated 200 000 Brünnich's guillemots. We may also continue into the beautiful bay Palanderbukta on Nordaustlandet.

#### Eastern Svalbard

The island of Nordaustlandet is covered by an enormous ice cap and fascinates naturalists as well as historians. There are huge glacier fronts here, intersected by hundreds of waterfalls. Barentsøya and Edgeøya offer magnificent landscapes and vast tundra. Chances to encounter walruses, Arctic fox and Svalbard reindeer are good here.

#### Southwest Spitsbergen

The grand fjords of Hornsund offer spectacular glaciers and a breathtaking landscape of towering mountain peaks, often reaching above the clouds. On a clear day we can see the summit of the highest mountain Hornsundtind, measuring 1431 meters. Hornsund is a favourite haunt for some of Svalbard's polar bears and bearded seals are often seen resting on the fjord ice.

Workshops and hands-on workshops during the day and evening by Sisse Brimberg.

In the evenings, Sisse Brimberg will conduct workshops and share some fascinating knowledge about Svalbard, accumulated over the years of photographing landscapes and wildlife for National Geographic.



DAY 6–8

### ■ POLAR BEARS AND SVALBARD REINDEER

Cruising down the Hindloppen Strait we pass spectacular basalt cliffs, home to an estimated 200,000 Brünnich's guillemots, also known as the thick-billed murre. Making our way along the island of Nordaustlandet, we will witness a magnificent landscape covered with hundreds of waterfalls, an incredible sight to behold!

This is also where we have the best chances of encountering some of Svalbard's most photogenic wildlife, including walruses, the much-admired Svalbard reindeer and the elusive Arctic fox. Hugging the coast, and using our Zodiac boats, we will have excellent opportunities for landscape photography and chances are good that we will also encounter polar bears along this stretch.

Sisse Brimberg will offer individual feedback on the photos taken so far, with one-on-ones as well as group sessions.

DAY 6–8

### ■ LONGYEARBYEN

Arriving back in Longyearbyen, we will enjoy a farewell breakfast before leaving the ship to prepare for the journey home.

PRICE & BOOKING



PHOTO BY CHRISTIAN NØRGAARD















# Quick guide

We wish you to travel with the greatest possible comfort and to know that you have received as much information as possible.

## ■ GETTING THERE

Svalbard's only international airport, Longyear Airport in Longyearbyen, is served by SAS with almost daily flights from Oslo and Tromsø in Norway. Flight times are 4 hours from Oslo and less than 2 hours from Tromsø. The airport is located about 5 km (3 miles) from the town of Longyearbyen.

## ■ VISA

Norway is a member of the Schengen Agreement. Nationals of EU and EFTA (Iceland, Liechtenstein, Norway, Switzerland) countries only need a valid national identity card or passport for entry. All other visitors are required to have a passport valid for at least three months beyond the intended stay, and some will need a visa. Please check with the local embassy.

## ■ WEATHER

Svalbard has an Arctic climate tempered by the warm North Atlantic Current. Due to the convergence of cold air from the north and mild, humid air from the south, weather conditions can change quickly and often, with occasional strong winds and wind chills. Average daily temperatures in Longyearbyen varies from -17.5°C in January to 5.0°C in July.

## ■ LANGUAGE

The official language is Norwegian, but almost all Norwegians speak English.

## ■ CURRENCY

The Norwegian monetary unit is the Krone (NOK).

## ■ QUICK GUIDE

The Svalbard Museum in Longyearbyen is an impressive, recently inaugurated exhibition space. Themes include the life on the edge formerly led by whalers, trappers, seal and walrus hunters and, more recently, miners. At the gallery in Longyearbyen you can see the Svalbard collection of old maps and books, a slide show from the photographer and composer Thomas Widerberg, and an exhibition of Kåre Tveter's paintings. From time to time there are also sales exhibitions. The Longyearbyen Church is open for visitors every day and there is a service nearly every Sunday. Every Tuesday evening, the church sells coffee and Norwegian waffles. Here you get to know Longyearbyen and the people better. The cable trestles are cultural monuments over the manual driven coal mining in Longyearbyen. At that time, the coal was transported in "kibs" (carriers) on the cable way

to the cleaning plant. The Svalbard Islands are home to seven Norwegian national parks: Forlandet, Indre Wijdefjorden, Nordenskiöld Land, Nordre Isfjorden, Nordvest-Spitsbergen, Sassen- Bünsow Land, and Sør-Spitsbergen. Little known but amazing natural attractions of Svalbard are the diverse springs. Fløtspingo and other Reindalen pingos are the highest pingos in Svalbard and some of the highest open system pingos of the world, up to 42 m high. Hot and thermal springs, for example Jotun Springs, Troll Springs and Tempelfjorden thermal submerged spring. One day trip by boat to the Esmark glacier and Oscar II Land and the Russian mining settlement looms on the side of the mountain above Grønfjorden. During the cruise, the guide will provide useful information about Svalbard.

## ■ EMERGENCY

Emergency phone number: 112. Svalbard is among the safest places on Earth, with virtually no crime.

PRICE & BOOKING









# Equipment

Whether this is your first trip or your "hundredth" workshop with us, it's always helpful to have a run-down of what items you may want to pack so you have a travel checklist. Bookmark this packing list, because you'll want to refer back to it to make sure you've thought of everything you might want to pack.

## ■ CLOTHING

- ☐ A good plan is to dress "layer-by-layer". You then are well prepared for whatever weather arrives.
- ☐ Wind and waterproof jacket
- ☐ Wind and waterproof pants
- ☐ Rubber boots - with room for extra (wool) socks
- ☐ Hiking boots
- ☐ Wool underwear
- ☐ Fleece/sweater
- ☐ Cap
- ☐ Gloves
- ☐ Waterproof outdoor cushions - nice to sit on when we sail in the arctics or when we sit and enjoy the scenery on land.
- ☐ A small backpack
- ☐ Binoculars

## ■ NICE TO HAVE

Sunscreen  
Sunglasses  
A swimsuit (for hot springs in Iceland only)

## ■ CAMERA

The camera list is for inspiration, since you know better than anyone what equipment you prefer.

- ☐ Bring your own laptop computer and storage medium
- ☐ Camera bodie(s)
- ☐ Lenses, 24-70mm zoom and 70-200mm zoom or similar lenses are very good
- ☐ Bag for all camera gear
- ☐ Light bag for easy hiking with camera bodies and accessories
- ☐ Cleaning kit for cameras and lenses
- ☐ Rain/dust covers for cameras and lenses
- ☐ Charger for batteries
- ☐ Spare batteries
- ☐ Standard power converter
- ☐ Raw processing software
- ☐ Memory cards and card wallets
- ☐ Memory card reader
- ☐ USB key to exchange images

## ■ NICE TO HAVE

- ☐ Tripod
- ☐ Lens extenders
- ☐ Camera straps for ease of changing from one camera to another
- ☐ Graduated filter set
- ☐ Filter holder
- ☐ High quality polarizing filter
- ☐ Lens belt

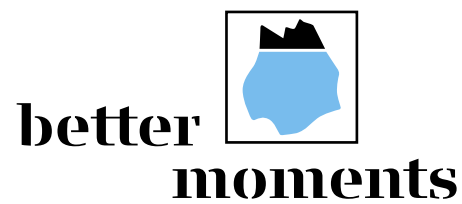












BETTER MOMENTS APS

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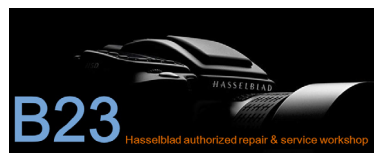
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