

Amsterdam Island (Amsterdamøya), Svalbard, Norway

Off the northwest tip of Spitsbergen, Amsterdamøya is a high-Arctic expedition stop best known for Smeerenburg — "Blubber Town" — the ruins of a 17th-century Dutch whaling station, with walrus haul-outs and stark polar scenery.

 Zodiac/tender landing only  Typical call: 2-4 hrs  Norwegian krone (no shops)  Norwegian (no settlement)  Historic whaling site

MY DAY IN PORT

Ship/Date: _____	Arrive: _____	All aboard: _____
Excursion: _____	Notes: _____	

GETTING ASHORE

Docking: Zodiac expedition landing — no pier; ships anchor off and tender ashore, conditions permitting

Don't Miss: The circular blubber-oven foundations of Smeerenburg and the walrus haul-out on the beach

Best For: Expedition cruisers interested in Arctic history and wildlife; the Smeerenburg whaling ruins and walrus haul-outs are the highlights

Infrastructure: No shops, no services, no permanent population — an uninhabited protected site in Nordvest-Spitsbergen National Park

 Getting around:  Rideshare  not available

TOP THINGS TO DO

- **Smeerenburg Whaling Station Walk** — Smeerenburg — "Blubber Town" — was a Dutch whaling station founded around 1619 on the south shore of Amsterdamøya.
- **Walrus Haul-Out Viewing** — The beaches around Amsterdamøya and neighbouring Smeerenburgfjorden are popular walrus haul-out sites.
- **Smeerenburgfjorden Zodiac Cruise** — Weather and ice permitting, Zodiac cruises explore the waters around Amsterdamøya and into Smeerenburgfjorden, with views of glaciers, seabird...
- **Arctic Birdlife and Reindeer** — Amsterdamøya and the surrounding shores host nesting seabirds such as common eider and Arctic terns, while Svalbard reindeer and Arctic foxes range...
- **Northwest Spitsbergen Scenic Cruising** — Amsterdamøya sits at the dramatic northwest corner of Spitsbergen, within Nordvest-Spitsbergen National Park.

BEST WALKS

- **Smeerenburg Ruins Loop** 1.5 km · 1.5 hrs · Easy — From the landing beach, follow your expedition guide on a gentle loop past the foundations of the blubber ovens and around the historic whaling site, keeping clear of...
- **Walrus Beach Walk** 1 km · 45 min · Easy — A short guided walk along the shoreline to a safe viewing distance from any walrus haul-out.

WEATHER · DAYLIGHT · MONEY

CLIMATE (AVG °F · RAINY DAYS)				DAYLIGHT & MONEY	
Mon	High	Low	Rain	Sep 5:49AM–8:04PM · Oct 9:24AM–4:12PM	
Apr	21°	9°	11d		
Jun	38°	31°	9d		
Aug	43°	35°	12d		
Sep	36°	28°	14d		
Oct	28°	18°	16d		

KNOW BEFORE YOU GO

- Landings depend on conditions. Swell, sea ice, walrus on the beach, or polar bear presence can all cancel a landing. Stay flexible and enjoy the scenic Zodiac cruise if going ashore isn't possible.
- Layer up for the high Arctic. Even in the summer expedition season (June–August), wind off the ice is cold. A waterproof outer shell, warm mid-layers, hat, and gloves are essential — not optional.
- Do not touch the ruins. The Smeerenburg blubber-oven remains and artifacts are strictly protected cultural heritage. Don't step on or remove bricks, timber, blubber-cement, or any object — follow AECO rules and your guide's instructions.
- Polar bear country. Polar bears can be anywhere in Svalbard. Armed guides set up a perimeter for every landing — stay within it and follow their directions at all times.
- No services on the island. Amsterdamøya is uninhabited, with no shops, ATMs, Wi-Fi, or mobile signal. Bring everything you need from the ship.
- Bring a telephoto lens. A 300 mm+ lens helps you photograph walrus, seabirds, and reindeer from the regulation buffer distances. This is a wildlife-and-history stop — not a beach day.

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Port Map

cruiseports.org

Red = walkable sights · Amber = excursions farther out · P = cruise terminal. Numbers match the order you'd typically visit.



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| 1 Smeerenburg Blubber Oven Ruins | Circular stone foundations of 17th-century Dutch whale-oil rendering ovens from Europe's northernmost whaling settlement, active from 1614 to the 1660s. | 2 Smeerenburg Whalers' Graves | A cluster of roughly 100 shallow graves marking whalers who died wintering over at Smeerenburg in the 1630s, preserved by permafrost. |
| 3 Amsterdamøya Walrus Haul-Out | A beach on Amsterdamøya where Atlantic walrus regularly haul out near the old whaling ruins, a reliable sighting spot for expedition landings. | P Cruise port / terminal | |