

Icebergs the Size of Buildings, 500-Year-Old Mummies — A 6-Day Greenland Itinerary

Greenland's two most accessible towns are a study in contrasts: Ilulissat, a fishing settlement of 4,600 people perched beside a UNESCO icefjord that calves icebergs the size of city blocks, and Nuuk, the world's smallest capital, where a national museum keeps 500-year-old mummified bodies found frozen on a cliffside. Since new runways opened at both towns' airports in 2024, both now connect directly to Copenhagen, cutting out the long-standing layover in Kangerlussuaq. This 6-day route spends three nights chasing icebergs by boat out of Ilulissat and two more in Nuuk's harbor and museums — real hotels, real Greenlandic guides, and genuinely steep Arctic prices.

DURATION

6 Days

BEST TIME TO GO

June – August

the only months the Icefjord and Eqi Glacier boat tours run, with near-24-hour daylight and the mildest Arctic temperatures (40–50°F)

FROM

\$2,199 USD / person

for 2 people sharing hotels, meals, glacier & fjord boat excursions and the Ilulissat–Nuuk flight; excludes international flights to Copenhagen

Day 1

Arrival — Ilulissat, Edge of the Icefjord

Fly direct from Copenhagen into Ilulissat's new international runway and spend the afternoon walking out to the edge of the icefjord itself, no tour required.

Self-Transfer: Copenhagen to Ilulissat

~4.5 hours, direct via Air Greenland

Since Ilulissat's runway extension opened to wide-body jets in 2024, Air Greenland flies this route nonstop, replacing what used to require a layover and a connecting flight through Kangerlussuaq.

Air Greenland · airgreenland.com

Sermermiut & the Blue Trail

~1.5 hours · free

A boardwalk trail from town leads past the abandoned Sermermiut settlement site to the first open view of the Ilulissat Icefjord — a wall of stranded icebergs, some over 300 feet tall, backed up at the mouth of the fjord.

Dinner at Hotel Icefjord

~1.5 hours · dinner ~\$45–\$70 USD / person

The hotel's own restaurant looks straight out over the icefjord, with a menu built around Greenlandic halibut, musk ox and reindeer — a practical choice on arrival night with little else within walking distance after dark.

Check-In: Hotel Icefjord

From \$219 USD / night, for 2 people

A modern hotel built into the hillside directly above the icefjord, where most rooms and the restaurant face a wall of glass looking out over the ice — the closest lodging in town to the UNESCO site itself.

Hotel Icefjord · +299 94 44 80 · hotelicefjord.com

Day 2

The Ilulissat Icefjord by Boat

A full day on the water among the icebergs that give Ilulissat its name — Greenlandic for "icebergs" — followed by a visit to the sled dogs that outnumber people in town.

World of Greenland: Icefjord Boat Tour

~3 hours · from \$125 USD / adult

A small boat weaves between icebergs calved from the Sermeq Kujalleq glacier, one of the fastest-moving and most productive in the Northern Hemisphere — the same ice stream believed to have calved the iceberg that sank the Titanic.

World of Greenland · +299 94 43 00 · worldofgreenland.com

Ilulissat Sled Dog Visit

~1 hour · from \$40 USD / adult

Ilulissat keeps more sled dogs than people, chained on the outskirts of town in summer while they rest between winter seasons — a local guide walks visitors through the kennels and explains how Greenlandic sled dogs, a distinct and protected breed, are still worked commercially.

Dinner on Your Own in Ilulissat

~1.5 hours · dinner ~\$35–\$55 USD / person

A handful of restaurants cluster near the harbor and the old colonial buildings, most serving some version of the same Greenlandic staples — fish soup, musk ox burgers and the catch brought in that morning.

Check-In: Hotel Icefiord

From \$219 USD / night, for 2 people

Second night at the same hillside hotel — worth requesting an icefjord-facing room again, since at this latitude in summer the ice is still lit well past 10pm.

Day 3

Eqi Glacier Full-Day Excursion

A full-day boat trip north across Disko Bay to a glacier that calves directly into the sea, with the chance to watch and hear house-sized chunks of ice break away in real time.

World of Greenland: Eqi Glacier Day Tour

~9 hours · from \$250 USD / adult

The boat crosses Disko Bay to the Eqi Glacier, a 200-foot ice wall that calves into the sea often enough that guides cut the engine and wait nearby, and stops partway for a packed lunch on a rocky shoreline before the return crossing.

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Dinner on Your Own in Ilulissat

~1 hour · dinner ~\$35–\$55 USD / person

Greenland National Museum & Archives

~1.5 hours · from \$10 USD / adult

Home to the Qilakitsoq mummies — eight remarkably preserved 15th-century Inuit bodies found on a remote cliffside in 1972, still wearing their original sealskin and caribou-hide clothing — alongside kayaks, dog sleds and everyday Inuit and Norse artifacts spanning 4,500 years of Greenlandic history.

Dinner: Sarfalik

~2 hours · dinner ~\$70–\$110 USD / person

The fine-dining room atop the Hotel Hans Egede building, built around seasonal Greenlandic ingredients — snow crab, musk ox, reindeer and whatever the day boats brought in — plated with French and Italian technique.

Sarfalik · +299 34 80 00 · hhe.gl/restaurant-sarfalik

Check-In: Hotel Hans Egede

From \$379 USD / night, for 2 people

Nuuk's largest hotel, in the city center a short walk from the Colonial Harbour, with the rooftop Skyline Bar looking out over the surrounding fjords — the default base for most visitors to the capital.

Hotel Hans Egede · +299 34 80 00 · hhe.gl

Day 5

Colonial Harbour & the Nuup Kangerlua Fjord

A morning on foot through Nuuk's 18th-century colonial quarter, then an afternoon boat trip out onto the fjord system the city sits on the edge of.

Colonial Harbour & Katuaq Cultural Centre

~2 hours · free

The turf-roofed timber buildings of Hans Egede's 1728 mission settlement still stand around the old harbor, a short walk from Katuaq, Nuuk's birchwood-clad cultural center for film, concerts and exhibitions of Greenlandic and Inuit art.

Nuup Kangerlua Fjord Boat Trip

~4 hours · from \$150 USD / adult

Nuuk sits at the mouth of a fjord system longer than many countries, and a guided boat trip runs out past scattered islands and abandoned settlements with a chance at seals, whales and, on a clear day, a view back to the ice sheet inland.

Dinner on Your Own in Nuuk

~1.5 hours · dinner ~\$40–\$65 USD / person

Nuuk has the widest restaurant choice in Greenland by far, from harborside cafes to a handful of newer spots serving New Nordic takes on local seafood — easy to pick on the spot in the compact downtown.

Check-In: Hotel Hans Egede

From \$379 USD / night, for 2 people

Second night in the city center, within walking distance of everything left on the itinerary for the following morning.

Day 6

Nuuk Center & Departure

A last morning for Greenlandic crafts in Nuuk's compact downtown before the direct flight back to Copenhagen.

Nuuk Center & the Kittat Market

~1.5 hours · free (purchases extra)

A last stop for tupilaks (carved Greenlandic spirit figures), sealskin goods and local artwork before the flight home — the covered Kittat market by the harbor is the most reliable spot for handmade pieces sold directly by local artisans.

Self-Transfer: Nuuk to Copenhagen

~4.5 hours, direct via Air Greenland

Nuuk's own runway extension, completed in 2024, now sends this flight straight to Copenhagen as well — closing out a loop that, as recently as a few years ago, would have required routing back through Kangerlussuaq.

Air Greenland · airgreenland.com