



Tuktut Nogait
National Park

Arctic Base Camp Trips

Tuktut Nogait National Park



Photo: C. Jones/Parks Canada



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Head to Inuvik. You're in for an Arctic adventure of a lifetime. At Shell Lake's floatplane dock, load your gear onto the Twin Otter aircraft and buckle up. This venerable workhorse of the Canadian Arctic will take you east over a vast and strikingly beautiful tundra landscape to One Island Lake. After the floatplane disappears over the low ridges of Tuklut Nogait, it takes only a moment to be struck by the profound quiet. Set up your tent and settle in! There is no need to rush in this ancient landscape. With tea brewed and cup in hand, there will be ample time to drink in the view that only a lucky few visitors have seen before. Listen to the stories of Inuvialuit people whose connections to this landscape go back generations. Learn how to identify the ancient signs of those who came before, and to see the landscape through the lens of a living culture with deep roots.

Join Parks Canada staff on some unforgettable hikes. Bring and prepare your own meals in the base camp kitchen tent, in the company of newfound friends. Looking for some solitude? There are more than 18,000 square kilometres for your small group. Plenty of space for you to experience the Arctic in your own intimate way.

WHAT ARE THE HIKES LIKE?

Parks Canada staff will lead day hikes of varying lengths and difficulty. There are no marked trails and good hiking boots with strong ankle support are recommended for your comfort and safety. Hikes are long and travel over uneven terrain. You will be accompanied by a guide and a wildlife monitor. Therefore, it's not necessary to have backcountry experience in the Arctic. However, it's essential to be physically able to walk on uneven terrain for 6 to 8 hours a day. You are encouraged to pack and plan for self-sufficiency on all hikes.

HOW DO I SIGN UP FOR A TRIP?

Registration will be confirmed upon full payment of the trip. Bookings are made on a first-come, first-served basis. Parks Canada reserves the right to cancel a trip if minimum participant numbers are not met. The cancellation and refund policy is detailed below. For more information and to register, please e-mail Inuvik.info@pc.gc.ca or call 867-777-8800.

WHAT DOES THE PRICE INCLUDE?

All trips include:

- Transportation to and from the Parks Canada office in Inuvik and the floatplane dock
- Charter flights between Inuvik and Tuklut Nogait National Park
- Use of Parks Canada base camp facilities
- Guided hikes
- Inuvialuit cultural host
- Northern backcountry use fee

HOW DO I GET TO INUVIK?

Inuvik lies about 200 km north of the Arctic Circle. Canadian North and First Air fly here from Edmonton and Yellowknife. Air North offers departures from Vancouver, Calgary, Edmonton and Whitehorse. Or drive the iconic Dempster Highway up to Inuvik, and stop to take your picture as you cross the Arctic Circle. All visitors to Tuklut Nogait National Park are required to attend a pre-trip safety orientation session the day prior to the flight into the park. This session includes a safety briefing and background information that will enhance your experience in the park. We recommend that you arrive in Inuvik by mid-afternoon the day before your trip into the park.

Due to variable weather, flights in and out of the park can be delayed. Parks Canada recommends that travellers allow for two or more days between the end of your Arctic base camp trip and your flight out of Inuvik. If your trip returns as planned, you'll be glad to have some extra time to explore Inuvik.

WHAT DO I BRING?

The allowable payload on the charter aircraft limits the maximum number of participants per trip. Each person can bring a maximum of 60 lbs/27 kg of luggage. Self-catered trips include use of First Aid, water filtration systems, base camp cooking tents, electric fence for wildlife protection (bears etc), food storage containers for each individual/couple, toilet facilities and hand wash system, dish washing system, tables, chairs/stools. Expedition arctic tents, sleeping pads and -20 Celsius-rated sleeping bags are available to rent upon request. Please let us know at the time of booking your trip if you wish to rent any equipment. If you wish, Parks Canada can put you in contact with other members of your self-catered trip for coordinating shared meals. Parks Canada provides bear safe storage at the base camp.

Bringing layers of clothing will allow you to add or shed layers to adjust for different temperatures and activity levels. At night, many people prefer a sleeping bag rated to at least -10 Celsius with a light sheet liner. In hot weather the liner is pleasant by itself, and if it cools off the bag can be zipped closed. Combining the sleeping bag, liner and long underwear should ensure that you'll be comfortable even in extreme weather. Please see the attached gear list for further information.

WHAT'S THE WEATHER LIKE?

Summer temperatures in Tuktut Nogait average 14°C and usually range between 5 and 25°C. Extreme weather can bring snowfall and temperatures as low as -5°C or lower even in summer, though this is rare. The area is susceptible to high winds and offers little natural shelter or protection. A good quality three or four-season tent, in good condition, is essential. Your tent must be able to withstand high winds, rainfall and possibly snowfall. Extra tent pegs/guy lines are recommended. If you are not able to bring your own tent, ask when you book your trip and we can provide a MEC Lightfield tent for your use. Pitched properly, these tents have proven adequate for the range of conditions in Tuktut Nogait.

Insects are only active during the brief arctic summer, so they pack a lot of activity into their short lives. The numbers of mosquitos and blackflies seems to increase gradually during June, and decrease sharply with cooler nights in August. July is reliably buggy. Many people use insect repellent, bug jackets, or a combination of both. Even at the height of bug season, breezes on the ridges make hiking pleasant, and the base camp includes a kitchen shelter for cooking and relaxing without swatting.

HOW CAN I BUY A FISHING LICENCE?

Visitors wishing to fish in Tuktut Nogait must have a Parks Canada fishing licence. They can be purchased from the Parks Canada office in Inuvik. An annual permit costs \$34.30 or a daily permit is \$9.80. Fishers with the appropriate license may fish for Arctic char, lake trout, whitefish or arctic grayling. Details about fishing regulations are provided with your licence. The conservation limits set for Tuktut Nogait allow a catch and possession limit of 1 of any species of fish. Your catch should then be cleaned on the lakeshore or riverbank and an appropriate location for entrails will be determined onsite.

HOW CAN I STAY SAFE IN A BACKCOUNTRY SETTING?

Tuktut Nogait is grizzly bear country and it is possible but unlikely that polar bears could travel this far inland. You are an important participant in the bear safety program: beginning with your mandatory visitor orientation, where we discuss bear safety through prevention and appropriate responses to encounters. Your role continues in the park, where staff and visitors work together to manage bear attractants. Parks Canada staff and visitors may carry bear deterrents including pepper spray and bear bangers. Designated Parks Canada staff are trained to use firearms for wildlife conflict management, should it ever become necessary. It must be noted that a more frequently encountered wildlife hazard is the arctic ground squirrel or "sik-sik." These deceptively cute animals have been known to snatch unattended items, and leave tiny "presents" inside unzipped tents!

- Weather conditions can change quickly. Always bring extra warm clothing and food. (Gear list is available).
- We strongly recommend hiking and travelling with the group. If you decide to undertake activities outside of the program during your stay, please communicate your plans to a Parks Canada staff on site before leaving the base camp. They are experienced wilderness travellers and can provide advice to help you prepare for your excursion. Make sure you are well prepared to hike and travel in the wilderness; and be self sufficient during any medical or weather emergency.
- Navigation and route finding is generally easy, but orientation in the vast landscape can be difficult. If you plan to hike on your own, carry satellite communication equipment, pack a map, compass and GPS unit and make sure you know how to use them.
- Be bear aware. Consult with Parks Canada staff and refer to the Parks Canada brochure "Safety in Grizzly and Black Bear Country" for minimizing risk while visiting the park. Always travel in groups and follow best practices for staying safe in bear habitat.
- Although there have not been any reported human cases of giardiasis in Tuktut Nogait, Giardia microbes are present in the park – visitors are advised to filter, treat or boil all drinking water. There will be a limited amount of boiled water made available, however you should ensure that you are able to provide sufficient drinking water for yourself, especially during hikes. Pack water containers totaling at least two litres for hiking.
- Small creek crossings are a common part of any hiking trip and should be done with caution and appropriate footwear.
- The Brock and Hornaday rivers have significant rapids and very low water temperature. Exercise caution near the riverbank. Do not attempt to cross these rivers.
- Tuktut Nogait features deep river canyons where cliffs, slopes, unstable terrain and highly variable weather and surface water conditions can present significant hazards in some areas.

WHAT IF I NEED TO CANCEL MY TRIP?

The following cancellation policies apply when booking a backcountry trip. Please ensure that you have read and understand the conditions of these trips. Don't hesitate to contact us if you have any questions or concerns.

TRAVELLER CANCELLATIONS

If a reservation is cancelled by the traveller, the following policy and guidelines apply:

More than 90 days prior to departure date = Full refund

From 90 to 14 days prior to departure date = 50% refund

Fewer than 14 days prior to departure date = No refund

PARKS CANADA CANCELLATIONS

Weather delays and flight cancellations are possible when travelling in the Arctic. Although every effort will be made to reschedule should these situations arise, the following policy applies:

If a flight is delayed due to weather or other circumstances, the trip will be placed on standby, travellers notified, and the next available flight will be used. Trips will not be extended if days are missed, however the backcountry use fee will be reduced accordingly.

Trips will be cancelled and refunds issued if the group has not been able to enter the park by 36 hours prior to noon of the trip's end date.

When a group is prevented from leaving Tuktut Nogait because of flight delays, they will not be charged additional backcountry use fees for additional days in the park. If the Tuktut Nogait-to-Inuvik flight is delayed to within 36 hours of noon on the planned start date of the next scheduled trip, the group in Tuktut Nogait may be required to wait for the flight associated with the next scheduled trip to depart.

This "36 hour policy" is intended to manage some of the difficulty of weather delays by ensuring all participants experience a minimum of one full day in the park between travel days, while avoiding empty charter flight legs that would increase costs to all participants. Multiple-day weather delays are very rare in June and July, but we need to ensure appropriate expectations for all visitors in order to share charter flights and manage trip costs.

When flights are delayed, Parks Canada staff will keep visitors informed about the trip status. When flight delays prevent visitors from leaving the park as planned, Parks Canada staff will provide assistance, including access to communication equipment when possible, to enable visitors to contact airlines and modify their flight bookings as needed. However, Parks Canada assumes no responsibility or liability for any fees or losses associated with flight delays.

I HAVE A QUESTION THAT YOU HAVEN'T ANSWERED

We want to make sure we've answered all your questions. Please e-mail us at Inuvik.info@pc.gc.ca or phone 867-777-8800 if there's any other information you need.