

# North Pole Marathon: World's Coolest Marathon

Welcome to the running experience of a lifetime. On 7th April 2012 athletes like you will have the opportunity to make history as a continuing new breed of Arctic adventurer.

By competing in the world's coolest marathon, the North Pole Marathon, you will become one of a truly select few to race at the top of the world - at the Geographic North Pole. And you will feel on top of the world when you manage to overcome the extreme sub-zero temperatures to finish 26.2 miles in one of the remotest parts of the planet.



But first you must ask yourself if you have got the nerve and drive to travel to the North Pole and run on Arctic ice floes, with 6 to 12 feet separating you from 12,000 feet of Arctic Ocean? Can you handle the extreme cold? Are you fit enough? Do you want to push yourself to the edge? If the answer is yes, then you are ready for the North Pole Marathon. Join race director Richard Donovan, the first marathoner at both the North and South Poles, in a trip of a lifetime. Remember, this marathon is not run on land - it is run 'on' water, frozen water, in the high Arctic Ocean. You will never have a greater adventure marathon story.



The North Pole Marathon will also feature an exciting team challenge, with the title decided by the cumulative time of a team's first three finishers. Whether comprised from an army division, company, athletics club or charity, your team can enter this contest. This amazing race will additionally offer athletes who have completed a marathon on all seven

continents the opportunity of joining the exclusive North Pole Marathon Grand Slam Club by also completing this marathon on the Arctic Ocean. Check out the Grand Slam section of this site for recommended associated races on each of the seven continents, and for current members of the club.



Don't let this experience of a lifetime pass you by. For the entry fee of €11,900, Polar Running Adventures will provide athletes with accommodation in Spitsbergen on April 5th; return flights from Spitsbergen to the North Pole camp; accommodation while at the Pole from April 6th to 8th; entry to the official North Pole Marathon; helicopter flights in the polar region; t-shirts, medals and souvenirs; professional photos of each competitor in action; a DVD of the race; and hotel accommodation on April 9th on return from the Pole. After registration you will have access to the entrants' section of this website, which contains marathon training tips; sponsorship advice; links to specific, recommended racing gear; a powerpoint slide show; advice on flights; and a competitors' forum.



*"I've been at the Pole before but this was pleasantly different in that I didn't have to haul a sled there! The race is a unique combination of two things I enjoy: polar challenges and marathon running. It's a great test of fitness and stamina. Well done."*

**Sir Ranulph Fiennes, UK** (Polar Explorer)

*"The whole experience of arriving at the top of the world and competing in the marathon was absolutely amazing. Fantastic fellow competitors and tough conditions gave the PizzaExpress team a truly unique adventure at the Pole and the genuine challenge we were looking for."*

**Harvey Smyth, UK** (CEO PizzaExpress)

*"The North Pole Marathon is the most amazing extreme marathon I have ever run. It brought runners to the limits of their endurance and lived up to its billing in every respect, affording athletes a chance to run and feel on top of the world."*

**Michael Collins, Ireland** (Novelist)



### **Unique Attributes of the Race**

Certified 26.2 mile marathon distance (Association of International Marathons and Distance Races)

Only certified marathon that is run entirely 'on' water, the frozen water of the Arctic Ocean

Recognised by Guinness World Records as the Northernmost Marathon on Earth

Participants are eligible to join the exclusive North Pole Marathon Grand Slam Club by finishing a marathon on each of the seven continents and this race on the Arctic Ocean.

### **PROVISIONAL SCHEDULE FOR 2012**



#### **April 5**

Arrive at Spitsbergen (Norway)

#### **April 6**

Fly to North Pole Camp & 90N

#### **April 7**

**North Pole Marathon**

#### **April 8**

Return to Spitsbergen (Norway)

#### **April 9**

Return to Homeland

# Frequently Asked Questions

## How many North Pole Marathon races have occurred?



The first North Pole Marathon occurred in 2002 when the current race director covered the distance alone. In 2003, the first exploratory competitive race was advertised and attracted ten competitors. There were further races in 2004, 2006, 2007, 2008, 2009, 2010 and 2011 making eight competitive events to date. The race is now an annual fixture on the international marathon calendar and 215 people from 34 nations have successfully completed the event.

## I have no prior extreme weather experience. Is it ok for me to run at the North Pole?



Yes. Proper clothing should ensure the cold is not an overwhelming problem when running or walking this race. A large heated tent is also available every few miles. Most participants will never have encountered extremely cold conditions before travelling to the Pole.

## With little or no marathon experience, should I be able to finish the North Pole Marathon?

Yes. If you train properly and can run or walk a distance of 26.2 miles comfortably, then you should be able to complete the North Pole Marathon successfully. Some of the previous participants had never completed a marathon before: determination is the key ingredients to finishing. However, it is important to keep warm and maintain a minimum body temperature. One of the priorities of the organiser is to have everybody finish the race and there is generally no cut-off time of major significance.

## How will I get to the North Pole?



You will arrange round trip flights from your homeland to a town called Longyearbyen, which is situated on Spitsbergen (Svalbard) off the coast of Norway. There are daily flights from Oslo to Spitsbergen. From there, you will be flown to the North Pole.

#### **Where is Spitsbergen, Svalbard?**

Spitsbergen is the largest of a set of Norwegian islands called Svalbard, which is situated between 74N10E and 81N35E latitudes.

#### **How do I get to Spitsbergen, Svalbard?**

You will book your international flight to arrive in Oslo. From there, some flights go directly to Longyearbyen while others have a short stop at Tromsø en route. The flying time between Oslo and Tromsø is approximately 1½ hours, while the flying time from Tromsø to Longyearbyen Airport (Spitsbergen) is also about 1½ hours.

#### **Where will I stay at Spitsbergen?**

North Pole Marathon participants will be accommodated in Longyearbyen on specific dates during the North Pole Marathon week. Longyearbyen is a small settlement only a few minutes from the airport.

#### **By what means am I transported to and from the North Pole?**

An AN-74TK-100 (Antonov) jet will fly you to an international North Pole Camp called Barneo situated between 89N and 90N, drifting in the high Arctic Ocean. The Antonov will return to collect you approximately 36 - 48 hours later. The flight duration is 2½ hours each way. The AN-74TK-100 is a converted cargo plane that is purposefully built for such conditions. By design, the front of the plane is used for seating and the rear is utilised for cargo storage.

#### **Is it safe to fly to the North Pole?**

There have never been any accidents involving flights to the North Pole camp and the pilots are experts in polar environments. The Antonovs receive appropriate certification from the Russian Ministry of Transport and are additionally authorised by the Norwegian Civil Aviation Authority. Great Britain's Prince Harry used the same plane as the North Pole Marathon to fly to the Pole 2011.

#### **Is there any land at the North Pole?**

No. The North Pole is not situated on land, but on the Arctic Ocean. Athletes will therefore be running 'on' water...frozen water! You will be running on an ice sheet some 6 - 12 feet thick above 12,000 feet of Arctic Ocean on the top of the world.

### What date will the race take place?

The next marathon is provisionally scheduled to take place on 7th April 2011. Competitors will leave Spitsbergen on 6th April and return to Spitsbergen by 8th April, therefore spending about 30-48 hours in the polar region.

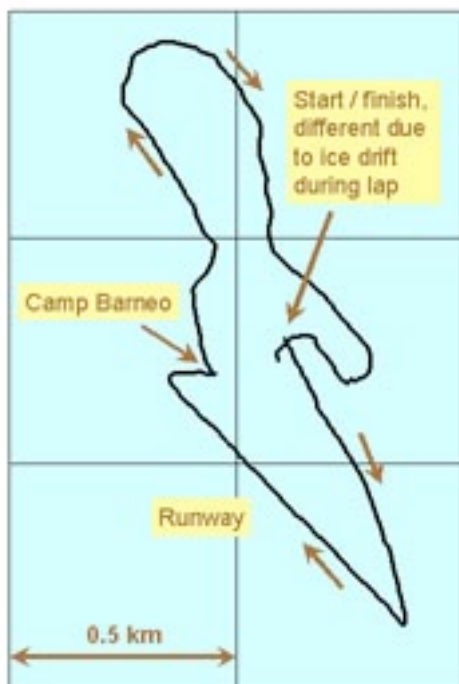
### Where exactly will the race take place?



The race will be run from a drifting North Pole camp, which floats about the North Pole between 89N and 90N. There will be a circular route of 4.2 km, if possible, which must be repeated ten times. Leads (breaks in the ice) and safety criteria will ultimately determine the maximum length of the circuit. The finish will occur at the ceremonial Pole where all the lines of longitude symbolically meet.

### Will it be safe to run?

The race is a contained one in that it is run on a circuit. Flags will guide athletes around the course and participants should be visible at all times. Moreover, there should not be



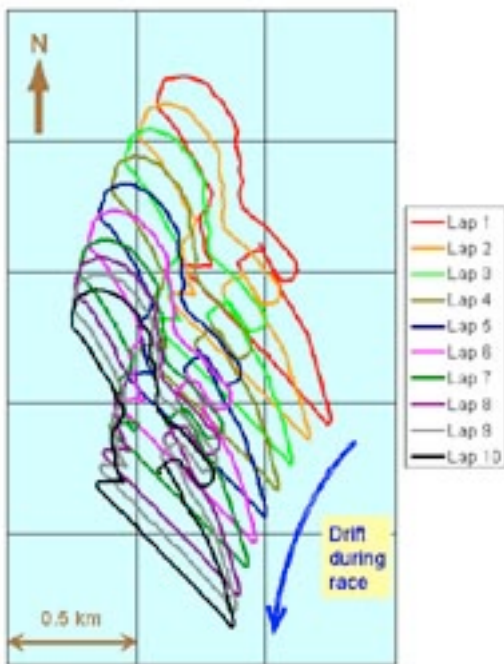
a discernibly greater risk from the activity of running vis-a-vis doing any other activities at the Pole or being in the general location.

### Will the circuit be a perfect circle?

No. The circuit will meander among hillocks of ice and incorporate part of the aircraft landing runway. The map opposite depicts the shape of the 2007 North Pole Marathon course, which was a loop of 4.2km. Competitors repeated this loop ten times to finish the marathon distance.

### Will the course be moving during the race?

Yes. The whole course will move with the direction of the Ocean current during the race. Competitors will not feel this movement happening, but it does! Athletes should simply feel like they are running on land at the exact same longitude and latitude coordinates where they began. The diagram below depicts the map readings of a competitor's GPS watch for each of the ten laps of the 2007



race. One can see that the entire course was moving as a block during the 5+ hours it took him to complete the race distance.

### Will I get to stand at the exact Geographic North Pole?

Yes. Assuming we are not by some remote chance floating over 90N when all have finished the race, we will travel by Mi-8 chopper to the exact Geographic North Pole (90N). Remember that we are floating on the Arctic Ocean and within minutes we will have moved away from the exact North Pole!

### Will there be a threat from polar bears?

It would be highly unusual for a polar bear to travel that far north, though the camp operators keep weapons for such an eventuality. To date, no marathoner has seen a polar bear on the trip!

### What is the weather usually like?

It is possible that the wind chill temperature could be very cold at  $-30^{\circ}\text{C}$  or even below this. In 2003 and 2004, the wind chill temperatures averaged  $-29^{\circ}\text{C}$  and  $-25^{\circ}\text{C}$ , respectively. However, the 2006 North Pole Marathon proved to be very mild with temperatures averaging only  $-10^{\circ}\text{C}$  throughout the event, though dipping to  $-23^{\circ}\text{C}$  for a very short period. The 2007 race had temperatures averaging  $-25^{\circ}\text{C}$  throughout, while in 2008 and 2009 the temperature was  $-29^{\circ}\text{C}$  and  $-37^{\circ}\text{C}$ , respectively. However, the temperature in 2010 was

not much below freezing, although high winds brought the wind chill down to -20C on occasion. In 2011 the temperature was -32C.

### **What are the underfoot conditions at the Pole?**

The terrain can be uneven, dotted with small hillocks of reasonably solid ice. In this case, athletes will have to be careful not to twist their ankles when running. However, it can also be comprised of soft and loose snow, and both features may be evident on the circuit. The 2006 terrain was quite trying, comprising deep snow in patches and a very uneven and unpredictable surface, making it difficult to get a rhythm going. Some snowdrifts were evident on the course in 2010 due to strong winds.

### **What shoes should I wear when running?**

A pair of trail running shoes might work out best, but it depends on the snow profile. In 2002 and 2003, the underfoot conditions were reasonably solid, while in 2004 and 2006 the conditions principally comprised soft snow where snowshoes were necessary. In 2007 and 2009, many competitors began with snowshoes and later discarded them finding it easier to run without them. In 2008, 2010 and 2011 almost everybody chose to wear trail runners for the entire duration of the event. Moreover, it is advisable for a serious contender to bring snowshoes along with trail running shoes and to experiment with both types on the course prior to the race. However, if you are an inexperienced snowshoe user, be aware that they cause pain due to changed leg motion. There will obviously be no divisions based on the type of shoes worn in the race and competitors are free to avail of both options during the marathon - as occurred in 2007 and 2009.

### **What clothes should I wear when running?**



A layering system is best, which should incorporate the following:

Upper body – thermal layer, fleece layer and outer windproof shell

Legs – thermal layer and windproof pants (middle fleece layer optional)

Hands – pair of gloves and mittens

Feet – two pairs of woollen socks and neoprene to cover toes

Head – balaclava, facemask, hat, neck gaiter, goggles

It is extremely important to keep the peripherals warm (hands, feet, face) as these are the most vulnerable to cold-related conditions such as frost nip. Specific clothing advice is given to registered athletes.

### **Will medical personnel be present?**

Yes. A medical doctor with expertise in cold weather injuries is always present at the Camp.

**Will there be media coverage of the race?**

Yes. Press releases will be issued to a worldwide database and the event always generates substantial global media coverage. The race is also contained as a record in the Guinness Book of World Records.

**What is the North Pole Marathon Grand Slam Club?**

The North Pole Marathon Grand Slam Club is an informal 'club' of athletes who have completed a marathon on each of the seven continents AND on the Arctic Ocean in the North Pole Marathon. Many athletes are members of the Seven Continents Club, but this is an opportunity to go one step further and add the Arctic Ocean to your running CV. Certificates and t-shirts are issued to accepted Grand Slam members.

**Does the North Pole Marathon have a carbon offsetting policy?**

.....  
**CarbonNeutral® flights**

Yes. The North Pole Marathon pays the relevant amount of money to the [CarbonNeutral Company](#) for carbon offsetting projects. Polar Running Adventures has been pioneering in this regard, becoming the first business to completely neutralise the CO2 effects of all its flights to the North Pole in 2007. First, the CO2 impacts of the 2½ hour flights to the North Pole camp - and any related helicopter flights in the polar region - are scientifically calculated on the basis of the type of aircraft used, fuel burn rate, fuel type and flight duration. Second, this calculated impact is offset by an investment in a mix of approved global projects such as tree-planting / forestry development. Competitors can travel to the North Pole with the knowledge that their polar flights have official Carbon Neutral status.

**Does the North Pole Marathon have a positive environmental ethos?**

Yes. The North Pole Marathon likes to use its race location on the polar ice cap in a positive environmental way. Indeed, many of the participants utilise the event



protecting our climate

[www.carbonneutral.com](http://www.carbonneutral.com)

to spread climate change messages to a large global audience. The event is a foot race and naturally promotes fitness and exercise as a substitute to car and vehicle use. Furthermore, there is a carbon offsetting policy employed for the polar flights. It should be highlighted that the emissions resulting from a 2½ hour return flight to the Pole are identical to those of a similar flight elsewhere in the world. Moreover, there could be a misconception that those flying to the North Pole are the ones leading to a shrin

## ORIGINAL-KATALOG-ANFORDERUNG

Sehr geehrte Reise-Interessenten. Vielen Dank für Ihr Interesse und den Download eines digitalen Kataloges im pdf-Format aus unserem Programm.

Gerne senden wir Ihnen zusätzlich bei weitergehendem Interesse den entsprechenden vollständigen Original-Katalog als gedruckte Version auf dem Postweg.

Bitte nennen Sie unten den gewünschten Katalog und senden Sie dieses Formular per Post oder Fax an uns zurück.

Bitte senden Sie mir den aktuellen Original-Katalog für folgendes Programm/Schiff:

Bitte senden Sie den ausgewählten Katalog an folgende Adresse:

**Vorname + Name:**

**Telefonnummer**

**Strasse + Nr.**

**Faxnummer**

**PLZ + Wohnort**

**e-mail-Adresse**

Bitte per Post (in Fenster-Umschlag) an:

oder per Fax an 04131-54255

An  
POLARADVENTURES  
c/o Agentur für Erlebnis-Reisen  
Heinrich-Böll-Str. 40  
  
D-21335 Lüneburg

**Individuelle Buchungsanfrage per Fax an 04131-54255 oder per Post an  
Polaradventures, Heinrich-Böll-Str. 40, D-21335 Lüneburg, Germany**

Bitte unterbreiten Sie mir ein unverbindliches Angebot für folgende Leistungen:

- Angebot mit Insolvenzversicherung nach deutschem Reiseveranstalterrecht + Preis in EUR  
 Direkt-Angebot der ausländischen Reedereien (ausländ. Reiserecht + Preis in USD zum Tageskurs in EUR)

Schiffsname

Reisename/ -Route

Abfahrt von - bis (tt/mm - tt/mm/jj)

Alternative Abfahrt (tt/mm - tt/mm/jj) (falls ausgebucht)

Kabinenkategorie

Alternative Kabinenkategorie (falls ausgebucht)

- Doppelkabine  Doppelkabine zur Einzelnutzung  Halbe Doppelkabine zur Mitbenutzung

Zubringerflüge:

Abflughafen

Hinflugdatum (tt/mm/jj)

Rückflugdatum (tt/mm/jj)

bevorzugte Airline

- Economy-Class  Business-Class

Zusätzliche Hotelübernachtungen:

Hotelname/Übernachtungsort

Aufenthalt von - bis (tt/mm - tt/mm/jj)

Hotelname/Übernachtungsort

Aufenthalt von - bis (tt/mm - tt/mm/jj)

Reiseversicherungen:

- keine  
 Reiserücktrittskostenversicherung  
 Komplettschutz (Reiserücktritts-, Kranken-, Unfall-, Gepäck- und Notfallversicherung)

Persönliche Angaben:

1. Reiseteilnehmer  
 Vorname, Name / Geburtsdatum

2. Reiseteilnehmer  
 Vorname, Name / Geburtsdatum

Angebot bitte:

per Email an (Emailadresse)

per Fax an (Nummer)

per Post an (Vorname & Name)  
 (Straße & Nr.)

(PLZ & Wohnort)