

GREENLAND

Also called Kalaallit Nunaat by the Inuit – Greenland or The Land of the People – was first inhabited by the Arctic forbearers from what is now Canada. Then in the 10th century, Norse settlers came and gave the country the name Greenland sometime in the beginning of the 10th century, supposedly in the hope that its pleasant name would attract settlers. It was only in the 13th century when the Inuit people, who now make up 81% of Greenland's population, arrived and settled.

Today, Greenland is a sovereign country within the Kingdom of Denmark. Though geographically a part of North America, Greenland has been politically and culturally associated with Scandinavia (specifically Norway and Denmark) for over a millennium. This cultural blend of Inuit and Danish blood, and an unquestioning belief in myths and legends, which were regarded as true and necessary for the maintenance of life and community, has produced a unique Greenlandic society. Here, you find a jarring mix of ancient and modern combining hunting and dog sledding with Carlsberg beer and instant coffee.

Travelers planning to visit Greenland will quickly see that getting around is trickier than it seems, as no two communities are interconnected by roads or rail lines. So unless you're raring to join a local on a snowmobile or a dog sled, the best way to get around and see Greenland is by helicopter, small planes and ferries. And though seemingly inconvenient, the journey is well worth the little extra effort, as you fly past dozens of small, photogenic villages with colorfully painted wooden houses scattered along Greenland's ice-free coastline. You can even witness up-close icebergs the size of the Empire State Building calving – Greenland is the iceberg capital of the world, after all!

Here, the raw power of nature is evident and travelers in search for adventure will find it abound – from kayaking alongside frosty icebergs to dog-sledding in a barren white landscape. And those looking to experience the country's culture need only step through the doors of a Greenlander's home. Greenlanders are known for welcoming visitors into their homes. Over a cup of coffee and a piece of cake, they eagerly share stories about their family's history, the latest gossip, and a life so very isolated from the rest of the world. In Greenland, travelers can truly find themselves fully immersed in the country's rustic way of living.

Did You Know?

- ❖ If you love golf, travel to Uummannaq, Greenland in mid-March, and there you can join or watch the Ice Golf World Championships, which is a 2-day golfing event, where the course is cut right on the ice, between icebergs and out in the snowy white fields.
- ❖ The indigenous people of Greenland are not Eskimos. They are the Kalaallit, which means Greenlander in the native Inuit language.

Did You Know? (CONTINUED)

- ❖ The most popular form of transportation owned by Greenlanders is the boat, as there are very limited connecting roadways in the country. Some 2,500+ Greenlanders, however, own cars, and most of these are located in the capital of Nuuk.
- ❖ July is the only month when Greenland's temperatures goes above 32F/0C!
- ❖ In 1946, the United States raised an offer to purchase Greenland from Denmark. This offer was, however, refused.

