



**THALASSA**  
JOURNEYS

Beyond the ordinary

Join **PROFESSOR BART D. EHRMAN** on



**NORWAY'S MAJESTIC  
FJORDS & SVALBARD, THE  
POLAR BEAR ISLANDS**

**Aboard the Expedition Cruise Ship *DIANA***

**June 1 - 14, 2026**

Seven Sisters waterfall in Geirangerfjord, Norway

Dear Friends,

In June 2026, I'm lecturing on a cruise traveling up the western coast of Norway to the incredible Svalbard archipelago. Think: polar bears and the Arctic Midnight Sun. As you probably know, Norway has a breathtaking coastline with picturesque towns vibrant with distinctive culture, and Svalbard is a place of dreams. Wanna join me?

Our journey begins in Bergen, the "City of Seven Mountains," and brings us high above the Arctic Circle. We'll marvel at magnificent fjords, rugged islands, and vast glaciers, and enjoy cultural delights including the Ringve Museum for music and musical instruments, the Arctic Cathedral, and the Tromsø Polar Museum.

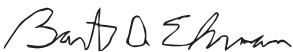
Even further north, we navigate Bear Island and the southern tip of Svalbard, just 600 miles south of the North Pole. Svalbard is the realm of a rich diversity of animal and plant life, but its undisputed king is the polar bear. Polar bears outnumber Svalbard's human population, making it one of the best places on Earth to observe them in their natural habitat. The ship's schedule will remain flexible in the Svalbard region to take advantage of the best opportunities that arise for wildlife viewing excursions in the company of expert shipboard naturalists. I'm thinkin': See all this while you can.

Our expedition vessel will be the 192-guest Swan Hellenic *Diana*; I've been on it before, and it's terrific, especially suited to exploring the polar region with an ice-strengthened hull, eco-friendly technology, and easy maneuverability that enable her to safely and sustainably traverse Norway's winding waterways. The ship has beautifully appointed accommodations and public areas, and expansive decks for viewing the wonders of nature. Throughout the trip we'll have lots of time for deep thoughts, interesting conversations, and amazing food and drink.

The topic of my talks will be: "Who Chose the Gospels?" We'll be looking at why we have Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John instead of, say, Peter, James, Thomas, and Philip? Who decided? When? On what grounds? Were they right? This is the topic of my next book, and you'll be the first to hear what I'm thinking about it all.

This is going to be an extraordinary voyage, with a rare combination of breathtaking scenery, Scandinavian culture and folklore, fascinating wildlife viewing, interesting fellow travelers, plenty of time to converse, and blissful comfort. I hope you can come!

Sincerely,



Prof. Bart D. Ehrman  
James A. Gray Distinguished Professor of Religious Studies,  
University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill

## HOST AND LECTURER

### PROFESSOR BART D. EHRMAN



**Bart D. Ehrman** is the James A. Gray Distinguished Professor of Religious Studies at the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, where he has taught since 1988. Professor Ehrman has published extensively in the fields of New Testament and Early Christianity, having written or edited thirty-three books, including six New York Times Bestsellers:

*Misquoting Jesus*; *God's Problem*; *Jesus Interrupted*; *How Jesus Became God*; and *The Triumph of Christianity*.

His Introduction to the New Testament has been the most widely used textbook in colleges and universities for over twenty years and he has recorded ten lecture courses for The Great Courses (The Teaching Company). More than two million copies of his books and courses have been sold, and his books have been translated into twenty-seven languages.

Ehrman's work has been featured in the *New Yorker*, *Time*, *Newsweek*, the *New York Times*, the *Washington Post* and other print media. He has appeared on NBC's *Dateline*, CNN, The History Channel, National Geographic, the Discovery Channel, the BBC, *Fresh Air*, other major NPR shows, *The Daily Show with Jon Stewart*, the *Colbert Report*, and other top media outlets.

A widely sought after lecturer, and winner of numerous university awards and grants, Professor Ehrman also has a weekly podcast, *Misquoting Jesus*, runs a daily blog the New Testament and early Christianity (The Bart Ehrman Blog), and produces online courses connected with the historical study of the Bible and Christian antiquity ([www.bartehрман.com](http://www.bartehрман.com)).

## ABOUT THALASSA JOURNEYS

**Thalassa Journeys** is a tour company founded by the men and women who, working as Travel Dynamics International, pioneered educational and cultural travel in the 1970s in partnership with the leading educational, research, cultural and performing arts institutions in the United States. For more than 45 years our mission was to provide robust, intellectually stimulating experiences to lifelong learners who see travel as an opportunity to expand their understanding of the world and their place in it. This same mission guides us today. We believe that the most rewarding travel experiences happen when small groups of like-minded individuals share an enthusiasm for engaging with the richly varied environments of the world, and with the history, culture, ideas and ideals of the people who inhabit them.



# THE NEW 192-GUEST EXPEDITION CRUISE SHIP *DIANA*



*Oceanview Stateroom*



*Balcony Suite*



*Swan Restaurant*



*Swimming Pool*



*Observation Lounge*

Built in Finland, and launched in April 2023, Swan Hellenic's *Diana* is a new generation expedition cruise ship. Although at 12,100 tons the ship is large enough to accommodate more than 350 passengers, *Diana* will accommodate a maximum of 192 guests in 96 spacious staterooms and balcony suites. The low guest density results in one of the most generous indoor and outdoor space-to-guest ratios among cruise ships.

Featuring the latest advances in technology and engineering, *Diana* is among the world's first environmentally responsible ships. Equipped with hybrid engines and a unique water filtration system, *Diana* leaves a minimal footprint. For cruising in Polar regions, the ship meets the stringent requirements of the new Polar Code with its high PC5 Category A ice strengthened hull and other advanced features. A computer-controlled Dynamic Positioning System allows the ship to maintain position without anchoring. Operated by a complement of 135 experienced European officers and international crew members, *Diana* will

carry a fleet of Zodiacs, versatile landing boats, and kayaks. Powerful stabilizers provide a smooth ride.

*Diana's* interior spaces exude sophisticated elegance, with most rooms opening to panoramic views of the sea. All staterooms and suites face outside and are equipped with private facilities, climate control, TV, Wi-Fi and USB connections and other amenities. Of the ship's 96 staterooms, 76 have balconies. Public areas include a spacious observation lounge equipped with state-of-the-art facilities for lectures and presentations; a club lounge; a restaurant that accommodates all guests at one seating; an outdoor café/bar that surrounds the heated swimming pool; a wellness area with gym, spa, and sauna with an adjoining outdoor jacuzzi; library; beauty salon; and an infirmary that is attended by a full-time doctor and nurse. The ship also features expansive open-deck areas. Two elevators connect all decks. Attentive service is provided on a 24-hour basis. The outstanding cuisine is complemented by fine wines at lunch and dinner.

For Reservations and Information, Please Call **Thalassa Journeys** at **866-633-3611** or Email **reservations@thalassajourneys.com**

# ITINERARY



Monday, June 1, 2026

## DEPART THE US

Outbound flights to Bergen International Airport, Norway.



Tuesday, June 2

## BERGEN, Norway

Arrive at Bergen International Airport and transfer to the *Hotel Norge by Scandic* (or similar) for one night. Meet your fellow travelers over a welcome dinner.

Wednesday, June 3

## BERGEN/EMBARK

Founded in 1070, the mountain-ringed town of Bergen presents a magnificent gateway to the fjords of Western Norway. Today's walking tour features the UNESCO World Heritage Site of Bryggen. This waterfront maze of ancient timber buildings preserves the town's legacy as an important port for the trading empire of the Hanseatic League from the 14th to the mid-16th century. After lunch, an excursion to nearby Troidhaugen includes a visit to the charming summer home of composer Edvard Grieg, which is now a museum. Embark the *Diana* in the late afternoon and settle in as the ship sails northward. (B,L,D)

Thursday, June 4

## NORDFJORDEID

*Diana* arrives in the village of Nordfjordeid, on the threshold of the Briksdalsbreen Glacier. Briksdalsbreen is an accessible arm of the Jostedal ice field, which is the largest on the European mainland. The scenic drive to this 2,500-year-old glacier passes through charming villages to a lodge at which we board "troll cars." These 7-passenger electric vehicles bring us within a half-mile of the glacier's edge, and we undertake a brief guided walk to enjoy spectacular views of the glacier, surrounding mountains, and Jostedalbreen National Park. Return to the ship in the early evening. (B,L,D)

Friday, June 5

## GEIRANGER

Today, the ship navigates majestic Geirangerfjord, a UNESCO World Heritage Site renowned for its staggering combination of snow-capped peaks, pristine glacial waters, lush greenery, and stunning waterfalls. During our excursion to the small town of Geiranger, take in panoramic views of the town and the mighty Seven Sisters, a series of waterfalls that cascade down a steep cliff face, and visit the Norwegian Fjord Centre, which serves as the education hub of the fjord region. Enjoy time at leisure in town before rejoining the ship. (B,L,D)

Saturday, June 6

## TRONDHEIM

Tucked into lush rolling hills that surround Trondheimsfjord, 11th century Trondheim is one of Scandinavia's oldest cities. This Viking settlement became one of northern Europe's famed "wooden cities" and was Norway's first capital. Visit the Nidaros Cathedral, which was an important pilgrimage site throughout the Middle Ages. Our tour includes the Archbishop's Palace, where three museums house exhibits that range from royal regalia and coronation objects to sculptures, archaeological finds, and the military history of Central Norway. After lunch, travel to the



**Svartisen Glacier, Norway**

nearby Ringve Museum of Musical History, which tells the story of the evolution of Norwegian music. (B,L,D)

**Sunday, June 7**

### **SVARTISEN GLACIER**

The tongue of the mighty Svartisen Glacier juts out memorably from between two mountains. Explore the area this morning, beginning with a Zodiac ride from the ship to the glacier Visitor Center. From the Center, hike towards glacier-formed Svartisvatnet Lake along the edge of the ice flow, which is Norway's second biggest with edges up to 600 feet thick. Back on board, lunch awaits, with a leisurely afternoon to enjoy *Diana's* amenities and talks by Swan Hellenic naturalists as our voyage northward continues. (B,L,D)

**Monday, June 8**

### **LEKNES, Lofoten/CRUISING TROLLFJORDEN**

In the striking Lofoten Islands, Leknes is nestled on the bay-like Buksnesfjorden. Red-painted houses are silhouetted against craggy, mountainous isles, and its white sand beaches resemble the South Seas during the summer, when the region experiences almost two months of the Midnight Sun. Early this evening, the incredible experience of cruising Trollfjorden awaits. With a narrow entrance just 300 feet wide flanked by towering, near-vertical sides, the passage slices through Austvågøya Island at the edge of the Lofoten archipelago. At the end of the fjord, enjoy a captivating final view of the surreal landscape before cruising onward to Tromsø. (B,L,D)

**Tuesday, June 9**

### **TROMSØ**

At 69 degrees north and 220 miles north of the Arctic Circle, we explore vibrant Tromsø this morning, beginning at the fascinating

Tromsø Polar Museum. Its exhibits chronicle early polar explorations and present a variety of natural history and ethnographic collections, providing a comprehensive introduction to traditional Norwegian culture, with an informative section on the Indigenous Sami people. Following lunch at a local restaurant in Tromsø, we tour the iconic modern landmark of the Arctic Cathedral. (B,L,D)

**Wednesday, June 10 – Friday, June 12**

### **SVALBARD**

Over the next three days, *Diana* will explore highlights of the Svalbard archipelago, beginning with its southernmost outlier, Bear Island. Known for thriving bird colonies, Arctic marine life, rugged scenery, and an important climate research station, Bear Island is ironically without a permanent polar bear population. In search of polar bears and further dramatic vistas, we continue farther north into the archipelago. During these flexibly scheduled days, enjoy onboard lectures by Bart Ehrman, *Diana's* comforts, and talks by Swan Hellenic naturalists.

**Saturday, June 13**

### **LONGYEARBYEN/DISEMBARK/COPENHAGEN, Denmark**

Arrive this morning in Longyearbyen, the world's most northerly town. Disembark *Diana* and transfer to the airport for a charter flight to Copenhagen. The balance of the day is at leisure with an overnight at the *Clarion Copenhagen Airport Hotel* (or similar).

**Sunday, June 14**

### **COPENHAGEN/HOMEWARD**

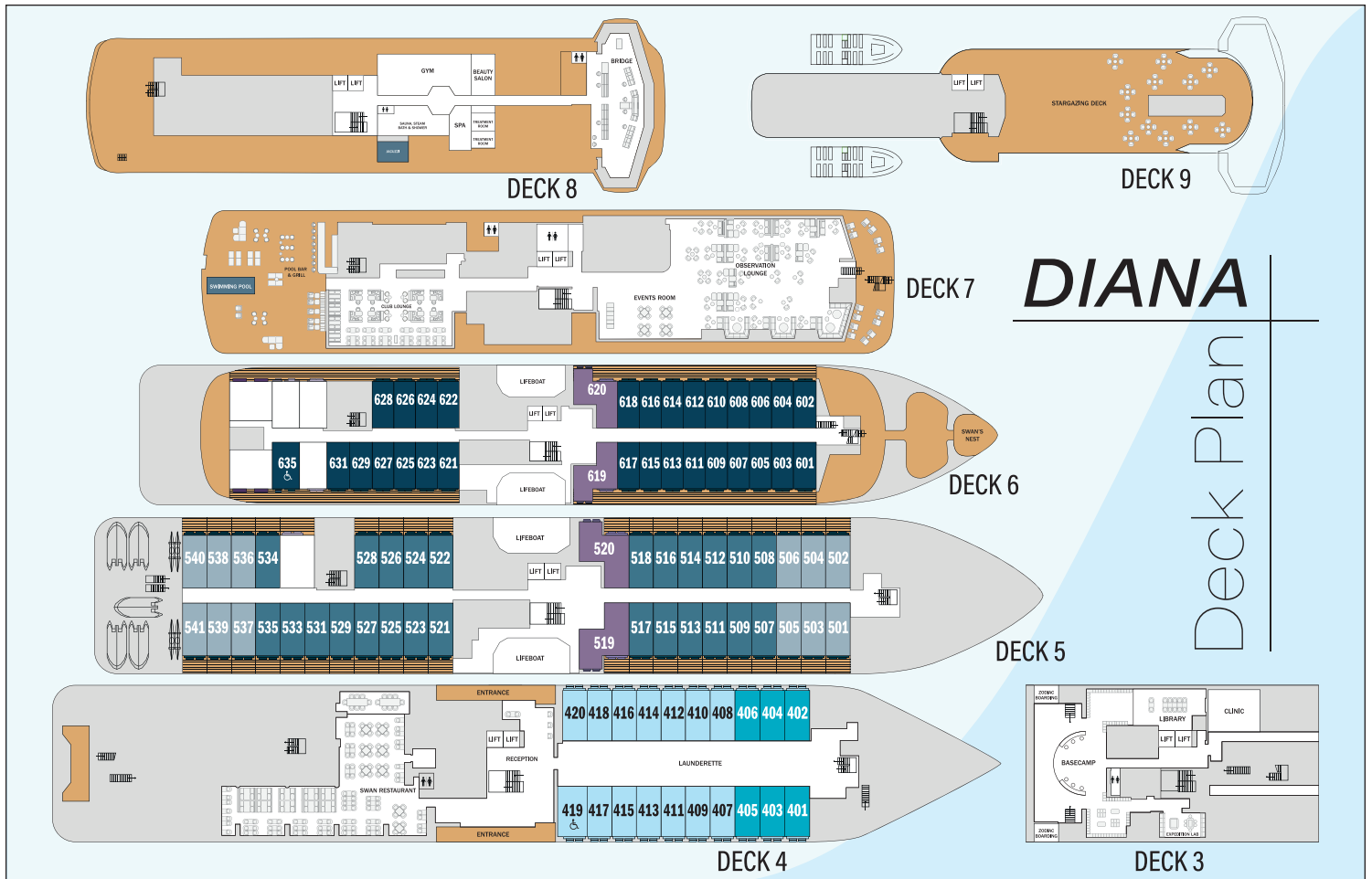
After breakfast at the hotel, transfer to the Copenhagen International Airport for flights homeward.



**Arctic's Midnight Sun**



**Polar bear with cubs**



All accommodations aboard *Diana* are spacious staterooms and balcony suites. They are elegantly decorated, face outside, affording sea views, and include a queen-size bed that can be arranged as two twin beds, a spacious bathroom, mini-refrigerator, safe, ample closet space, climate control, telephone, TV, Wi-Fi, and USB connections, as well as other amenities.

CATEGORY	DESCRIPTION	RATES PER PERSON / DOUBLE OCCUPANCY
<b>E</b>	Oceanview staterooms with two large oval windows. 206 sq. ft. Deck 4. Staterooms 401–406.	\$ 11,990
<b>D</b>	Oceanview staterooms with two large oval windows. 206 sq. ft. Deck 4. Staterooms 407–420.	\$ 12,590
<b>C</b>	Suites with balcony & living room area. 300 sq. ft. Deck 5. Suites 501–506, 536–541.	\$ 13,990
<b>B</b>	Suites with balcony & living room area. 300 sq. ft. Deck 5. Suites 507–518, 521–529, 531–535.	\$ 14,590
<b>A</b>	Suites with balcony and living room area. 300 sq. ft. Deck 6. Suites 601–618, 621–635.	\$ 14,990
Category <b>AA</b> cabins may be available upon request at the rate of \$19,790 per person, double occupancy.		
<b>FOR SOLO TRAVELERS</b>   A limited number of cabins are available for single occupants in Category D at 120% of the per-person, double occupancy rate, and in Categories C, B, and A at 150% of the per-person, double occupancy rate.		



Arctic Cathedral, Tromsø, Norway

## PROGRAM INCLUSIONS

The rates are all-inclusive. There are no hidden costs and no additional charges such as shore excursions or embarkation and port charges. Other than the international airfare and expenses of a personal nature, all else is included. Specifically, the rates include:

- One night at the *Hotel Norge by Scandic* (or similar) in Bergen, Norway at the beginning of the program and one night at the *Clarion Copenhagen Airport Hotel* (or similar) in Copenhagen at the end of the program.
- Welcome dinner in Bergen, and breakfast on the day of embarkation.
- Round trip group flight between Longyearbyen and Copenhagen.
- Cruise aboard the Swan Hellenic *Diana*
- Airport/hotel/pier transfers and handling of luggage on the program arrival and departure dates.
- Lectures and discussions with Bart Ehrman.
- Additional presentations from the onboard expedition team of naturalists.
- Complete program of shore landings and activities ashore, led by professional local guides and onboard experts.
- All meals aboard the ship, with a selection of wines, beer and soft drinks during lunch and dinner.
- Welcome and farewell cocktail receptions aboard the ship hosted by the captain.
- Open bar with select alcoholic beverages.
- Coffee, including espresso and cappuccino, tea and soft drinks throughout the day and night.
- 24-hour room service.
- Gratuities to the ship's crew, guides, porters and drivers.
- Basic Wi-Fi aboard the ship.
- The services of an experienced Thalassa Journeys Trip Director.
- All local taxes and service charges, including port and embarkation taxes.
- Complete pre-departure material.

**NOT INCLUDED:** International airfare; travel insurance; expenses of a personal nature; any items not mentioned in the itinerary or the above inclusions.

### ACTIVITY LEVEL

Travelers can expect an estimated total of 2-3 hours of walking per day. Nature and town excursions may involve walking on inclined or uneven surfaces such as rocky or slippery trails, unpaved paths, cobblestones, or stairs without handrails. During some site visits guests may need to stand briefly if seating is not available. Expedition excursions use motorized Zodiac boats, which can require taking a few big steps on a moving craft with crewmember assistance. Embarking and disembarking from motor coaches will also be necessary. Weather conditions in Norway can vary widely so a spirit of adventure will help you get the most from this unforgettable experience.



Leknes, Lofoten Islands, Norway



Explore Svalbard's landscape by Zodiac



Tromsø, Norway

## GENERAL INFORMATION

BART 26D-0601

**PAYMENT SCHEDULE:** A deposit of \$1,500 per person is required to reserve your space on the tour. Final payment is due 90 days prior to departure. Payment can be made by personal check or charged to a credit card.

**CANCELLATIONS & REFUNDS:** All cancellations are subject to a \$300 per person administrative fee. Cancellations received 71-90 days prior to departure will be assessed a penalty equal to 50% of the total program cost per person. Cancellations received within 70 days of departure are subject to 100% cancellation penalties. Requests for cancellations must be made in writing. No refunds will be made for any part of this program in which you choose not to participate.

**INSURANCE:** We strongly recommend the purchase of trip cancellation insurance, which is available for coverage of expenses in conjunction with cancellation due to illness or accident. Baggage insurance is also recommended. In the event that you must cancel your participation in a travel program, trip cancellation insurance may be the only source of reimbursement.

**ITINERARY:** The itinerary, accommodations and arrangements are subject to change at the discretion of Thalassa Journeys.

**RESPONSIBILITY:** Please read carefully the following terms and conditions, which constitute the sole, legally enforceable agreements between the traveler and Thalassa Journeys. Thalassa Journeys acts solely as agents for the traveler with respect to all transportation, hotel and other tour arrangements. In that capacity, we exercise all reasonable care possible to ensure the traveler's safety and satisfaction, but, we neither assume nor bear any responsibility or liability for any injury, death, damage, loss, accident, delay or irregularity arising in connection with the services of any ship, airplane, train, automobile, motor coach, carriage or other conveyance, or the actions of any third-party, involved in carrying the traveler or in affecting these tours. We are not responsible for damages, additional expenses, or any other losses due to cancellation, delay or other changes in air or other services, sickness, weather, strike, war, civil disturbances, acts or threats of terrorism, travel warnings or bans, termination or suspension of war risks or other carrier insurance, quarantine, acts of God or other causes beyond our control. All such losses must be borne by the traveler, and tour rates provide for arrangements only for the time stated. In the event of cancellation, delay or rescheduling mandated by any of the aforesaid causes beyond our control, the traveler shall have the option of accepting in lieu of the original tour such rescheduled tour or other substituted tour(s) as may be offered by us, or else, receiving a refund of as much of such advance tour expenditures as we are able to recover on the traveler's behalf from carriers, third-party tour vendors, etc., but, we shall not have any obligation or liability to the traveler beyond the foregoing. We reserve the right to make alterations to the tour's itinerary and to substitute hotels, transportation methods, or lecturers if this is required. We reserve the right to cancel, delay, or reschedule any tour prior to departure, and, so long as this is not due to any of the aforesaid causes beyond our control, the traveler shall be entitled to a full refund of all monies paid to that point if he/she so desires. No refund shall be made for any unused portion of any tour. By forwarding their deposit(s), the traveler certifies that he/she and/or their dependents, minors or others covered thereby do not have any mental, physical or other condition of disability that could create a hazard for them or other travelers. We reserve the right to decline to accept or to decline to retain any person as a member of any tour should such person's health, condition or actions adversely affect or threaten the welfare or safety of other travelers or impede the tour. Baggage or valuables brought on the tour shall be transported, handled or stored at the traveler's risk entirely, and, we shall bear no liability or responsibility for any damage or other loss thereto. Resolution of any disputes arising hereunder shall be affected exclusively in the state or federal courts presiding in Florida, pursuant to applicable Florida law.

**RATES:** Tour costs are based upon current airfares, tariffs, and currency values. While we do everything possible to maintain the listed prices, they are subject to change.

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# NORWAY'S MAJESTIC FJORDS & SVALBARD, THE POLAR BEAR ISLANDS

With **Professor Bart Ehrman**



There are more polar bears in the Svalbard archipelago than permanent inhabitants

**FOR RESERVATIONS AND INFORMATION**

**PLEASE CALL**

**THALASSA JOURNEYS AT**

**866-633-3611**

or email

**[reservations@thalassajourneys.com](mailto:reservations@thalassajourneys.com)**