

December 2008

General Information about diving on Svalbard

by

<http://dykk.svalbard.com/>



Longyearbyen Dykkerklubb (Longyearbyen Diving Club, LDK) receives many requests for information about diving on Svalbard, organised diving trips, equipment rental and so on. We are just a small, private club with about 15 members and therefore do not have the capacity to answer all questions personally.

Since we also suffer from a chronic lack of spare time, there is no and will not be any Scandinavian version of this information.

Thank you for your understanding.

Here are some answer to the most frequently asked questions.

- Do you rent out equipment / what equipment do you have?

Yes, we do rent out equipment. We have about 5 complete sets of diving gear (BCD, suit, regulator, lead, tank, fins, masks, gloves). The suits come only in 4 different sizes, therefore it is highly recommended that you bring your own suit. We have 8-15 litre 200 and 300 bar tanks.

We also have a flare gun, a first aid case and an emergency oxygen case to rent out.

We do NOT have anything else to rent out (lights, computers etc).

- Do you organize trips we could join?

No, we do seldom organize trips, and if we do, you cannot join - both because of legal reasons and because the few times we do organize a trip, there is no extra space available

- How about shore diving?

Theoretically possible, but absolute nothing to see in the vicinity of Longyearbyen (mud, sediment from the Adventriver, sewage...). You DO need a boat to get anywhere interesting.

- Do you rent out boats?

No. There are no boats for rent on Svalbard. You can rent a PolarCirkel type boat with guide from some of the tour operators for approx 3000 kr / hour. That will probably take up to 8 divers, and it is fast, giving you the chance to reach some interesting places in a reasonable time.

- Where is the nearest decompression chamber?

There is a chamber in Ny Ålesund, about 30 min flying time from Longyearbyen. Be aware that all chamber treatment requires reasonable weather for flying. No flying conditions - no chamber.

- Can I get Nitrox/Trimix/Argon/WhateverGas

No. You can't get any of those. Neither can you get any support for technical or rebreather diving. There is no dive shop either - bring absolutely everything you might need of spare parts.

- Can you organize me a dive buddy?

No. We have way to many requests of these kind to forward them to our mailing list. If you want to dive, you need to bring your own buddy, or dive solo.

- Can you give me contact info for a dive center?

No. Simply because there is no dive center on Svalbard.

If you want to go diving, you can rent equipment from us, but have to organize everything else yourself. That everything else includes, but is not limited to:

SAR insurance (required by the governor - DAN or other diving insurances are NOT sufficient!), weapon, emergency equipment, guide, boat, car...

- Can I dive in a wet suit / What is the water temperature?

Feel free to dive in whatever you want, it is your own responsibility. Be sure to have your SAR and health insurance in place. The water temperature is between -2 and +6°C.

- What is the best way to get some diving done on Svalbard?

Book a one week cruise incl. diving with Oceanwide Expeditions or other tour operators. If you are a larger group, consider renting the small vessel "Farm" from Henningsen Transport and Guiding for a day or two (approx 8500 kr / day + fuel). There is also a nice sailing boat available for small groups, have a look at <http://www.markvandeweg.nl/>

- I need a cheap place to stay, can you help / Can I stay at your club house?

No and no. We are a diving club, not a tourist information / hotel / tour operator. There are many sites on the Internet with absolutely all necessary information.

Try the following for a start and take it from there. If you can't find it on any of these pages, it doesn't exist on Svalbard. Cheapest place to stay is the campsite at the airport, 4 km from town.

www.svalbard.com

www.longyearbyen.net

www.svalbard.net

We hope that is FAQ answers most of your questions. Feel free to contact us by email (LDK@gmx.org) if you have any further questions, but be aware that it might take some time before you receive an answer (we do work in regular jobs all of us, and we do like to use some of our spare time to do other things than answering emails, e.g. diving...). Please understand that we do not answer questions like "What can I expect to see under water", "what are the nicest diving spots" and the like. Do some research on the net, buy a book (e.g. "Svalbard & Life in Polar Oceans", ISBN-10: 8292496033 is a fantastic overview by the some of the best underwater photographers in Norway) or the like.

Enjoy your stay on this beautiful island!

Longyearbyen Dykkerklubb