Arctic Exploration and the Northern Lights
Aboard the Golden Eagle Private Train

February 10-22, 2017

Meg Urry
Professor of Physics and Astronomy
Dear Yale Traveler

Join renowned Yale astrophysicist Meg Urry to celebrate an unconventional and adventurous winter holiday with alumni and Yale friends above the Arctic Circle aboard the *Golden Eagle Trans-Siberian Express* luxury private train.

Begin in lovely St. Petersburg, where the northern capital takes on a warm patina in the slanted winter sunlight, its fashionable boulevards and serene canals softened by a fresh snowfall. Explore two of St. Petersburg’s wonderful highlights, Catherine’s Palace with its painstakingly recreated Amber Room, and the world-class Hermitage Museum, with one of the largest and most brilliant museum collections in the world.

Board the elegant *Golden Eagle* and venture far above the Arctic Circle to experience twilight at noon.

Accompanied by Professor Urry, search for the mysterious Northern Lights in the skies above Kirkenes, Norway, a polar town overlooking the country’s easternmost fjord. Here, visit the glowing Snow Hotel, its guestrooms built of snow and adorned with snow carvings and ice sculptures, and enjoy a chilled vodka served in a glass made of ice. Embark on an exhilarating dogsled ride behind a team of huskies running over the frozen lakes and across the northern tundra.

Heading back into Russia, make a stop in Murmansk, the most important city on the Kola Peninsula. Board the world’s first nuclear-powered ice-breaker, the *Lenin*, now a museum ship docked in Murmansk. Further south, admire the graceful UNESCO-listed churches in the towns of Suzdal and Vladimir, World Heritage Sites that were seats of political power long before the rise of Moscow.

Disembark the *Golden Eagle* in magnificent Moscow, transferring to one of the city’s top hotels. Explore Red Square and the Moscow Kremlin, including the Armory Museum, housing Russia’s national treasures such as religious icons, Fabergé eggs and Catherine the Great’s ball gowns.

Happy Travels,

Kathy Edersheim ’87
Senior Director, International Alumni Relations and Travel

www.yaleedtravel.org/arctic17
Meg Urry is the Israel Munson Professor of Physics and Astronomy at Yale, Director of the Yale Center for Astronomy and Astrophysics, and President of the American Astronomical Society. Professor Urry received her BS in physics and mathematics from Tufts University in 1977 and her PhD from Johns Hopkins University in 1984. Her scientific research focuses on active galaxies, which host accreting supermassive black holes in their centers. She has published more than 250 refereed research articles on super-massive black holes and galaxies and is a Thomson Reuters “Highly Cited Author.” Prof. Urry is a member of the National Academy of Sciences and a Fellow of the American Academy of Arts and Sciences, the American Physical Society, and American Women in Science. She received an honorary doctorate from Tufts University and the American Astronomical Society’s Annie Jump Cannon and George van Biesbroeck prizes. Prior to moving to Yale in 2001, Prof. Urry was a senior scientist at the Space Telescope Science Institute, which runs the Hubble Space Telescope for NASA. She is also known for her efforts to increase the number of women in the physical sciences, for which she won the 2010 Women in Space Science Award from the Adler Planetarium.

Professor Urry writes: “This will be my first trip to the Arctic, one of great interest due to the northern lights which are a beautiful natural phenomenon and have enthralled humans over millennia. Since we’ll be visiting in the Arctic winter, we’ll have longer nights to enjoy evening ‘fireworks.’ The strength of the lights depends on magnetic storms of the Sun. If there is a particularly large coronal ejection event, the lights will be spectacular. In addition to nighttime displays, I’m looking forward to experiencing all the other aspects of the trip in the great company of alumni—sophisticated, beautiful St. Petersburg, impressive St. Basil’s and Red Square in Moscow, and the mesmerizing landscapes above the Arctic Circle. And of course, traveling by train on the Golden Eagle.”

Highlights

Enjoy onboard lectures and discussions with acclaimed Yale astrophysicist Meg Urry, who explains the science behind the astonishing phenomenon of the aurora borealis, the Northern Lights. Search out the mercurial Northern Lights on two consecutive evenings in Kirkenes, Norway, in the comfort of a cozy coach. This area boasts an abundance of clear winter nights and cool, dry weather, ideal for viewing this celestial phenomenon. Skim over Russia’s icy Lake Onega on a hovercraft to the UNESCO-listed open-air museum on Kizhi Island, and admire the 1714 Cathedral of the Transfiguration, with 22 aspen-shingled cupolas sprouting from its roof.

Want to learn more about the history and culture of St. Petersburg and the Arctic Circle?

Here’s a good start:

Auroras, Fire in the Sky
by Dan Bortolotti, Yuichi Takasaka (Photographer)

These 80 color photos by Yuichi Takasaka celebrate the beauty, history, folklore and science of the northern lights.

In the Kingdom of Ice, The Grand and Terrible Polar Voyage of the USS Jeannette
by Hampton Sides

Award-winning Outside magazine editor Hampton Sides brings to life the colorful characters that launched the expedition of the USS Jeannette into unknown polar regions. Backed by prominent newspaperman James Gordon Bennett Jr., Naval officer George Washington De Long and crew set off for the “Polar Grail,” only to lose their ship to the ice.

Upcoming Trips

Islands of Intrigue: Malta & Sicily
April 28-May 7, 2017
Millicent Marcus
Professor of Italian & Film Studies

Southern England: Literature & Landscapes
June 2-11, 2017
Traugott Lawler
Professor Emeritus of English

Trans-Mongolian Railway: Ulaanbaatar to Moscow
July 9-23, 2017
Marian Chertow ’81 MPPM, ’00 PhD
Associate Professor, Forestry & Environmental Studies

Yale Study Leader

Reader’s Corner

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Associate Professor, Forestry & Environmental Studies
Welcome Phone Call

**Tuesday, January 31 (tentative)**
Please join a pre-trip welcome call with Professor Meg Urry at 4:00pm Eastern to meet other travelers, learn more about what to expect, and ask questions.

Depart USA

**Friday, February 10**
Depart the USA today.

Arrive St. Petersburg, Russia (D)

**Saturday, February 11**
Arriving in St. Petersburg, transfer to a five star hotel with a great location near the city’s main boulevard, famed Nevsky Prospekt. Daily life swirls around Nevsky, where lanky fashion models in stiletto heels brush past stout kerchiefed babushkas, or grandmothers. This evening gather with your fellow travelers for a welcome dinner. *(Overnight at the Astoria Hotel)*

St. Petersburg (B, L, D)

**Sunday, February 12**
Spend some time getting to know this wonderful city, exploring the riches of the world-class Hermitage Museum and admiring the Church of the Savior on the Blood, built on the spot where Czar Alexander II was felled by a bomb in 1881. Daily life swirls around Nevsky Prospekt, the backbone of Peter the Great’s beautiful city. *(Overnight at the Astoria Hotel)*

Board the Golden Eagle Private Train (B, L, D)

**Monday, February 13**
Drive out of town to Pushkin, site of the royal residence of Catherine’s Palace and its fully restored Amber Room, recreated from photos and descriptions of the originals. Board the Golden Eagle private train and settle into your elegant cabin. Enjoy dinner on board as the train heads north, with a signature caviar dinner in the handsome dining car.

Cross the Arctic Circle (B, L, D)

**Tuesday, February 14**
Spend a relaxing day onboard the private train, chatting with the other guests, or enjoying the privacy of your stateroom. Attend a lecture and enjoy afternoon tea with fresh Russian cakes. Later in the day, the train crosses the Arctic Circle.

Kirkenes, Norway (B, L, D)

**Wednesday, February 15**
Disembark and cross the border to the tidy polar town of Kirkenes, on Norway’s easternmost fjord. Located far above the Arctic Circle, Kirkenes experiences continuous daylight from May to August, and conversely, polar night from late November to late January. Visit the fantastic Snow Hotel, assembled each winter since 2006. Enjoy chilled vodka served in a glass made of ice at the Icebar. Search out the Northern Lights across the aurora borealis Zone tonight and tomorrow evening, in the comfort of a cozy coach. *(Overnight at the Thon Hotel)*

Kirkenes, Norway (B, L, D)

**Thursday, February 16**
Join a tour of the village or return to the Snow Hotel to visit their reindeer and a husky dog farm, where more than 80 dogs are raised and trained to pull sleds across the frozen landscape. Embark on a dogsled ride behind a team of dogs running over the frozen lakes and across the northern tundra. Take another chance this evening to observe the Northern Lights, far from the lights of town. *(Overnight at the Thon Hotel)*
Aboard the Train (B, L, D)

Friday, February 17

Re-board the Golden Eagle as it sets off toward Murmansk. Enjoy a relaxing day onboard the private train, free at your leisure to read, chat, dine, or watch the arctic landscape scroll past your cabin window.

Murmansk (B, L, D)

Saturday, February 18

Today’s stop is the port city of Murmansk, founded in 1916. Even though it is above the Arctic Circle, the warm waters of the Gulf Stream keep it ice-free for most of the winter. Board the world’s first nuclear-powered ice-breaker, the Lenin, now a museum ship. The Lenin was launched in 1957 and worked clearing the northern sea routes until 1989. Explore the decks, inner corridors, and some of the vessel’s compartments and exhibitions about the future of the Arctic region.

Vladimir & Suzdal (B, L, D)

Monday, February 20

Discover two of Russia’s Golden Ring towns, Vladimir and Suzdal. The Golden Ring is a modern name given to the ancient towns that form an elliptical circle to the north and east of Moscow. In Vladimir, visit the 12th-century Cathedral of the Assumption (Uspensky Cathedral) rising gracefully from the surrounding countryside. In Suzdal, admire the UNESCO-listed Savior Monastery of St. Euphinius, founded in 1352, and the five-domed Cathedral of the Transfiguration of the Savior, whose interior was frescoed by Gury

continued next page
Nikitin in the late 17th century. Attend a choral concert by some of the monks who live here, then go dashing through the snow on a traditional sleigh ride around the monastery.

**Moscow (B, L, D)**

**Tuesday, February 21**

Arriving in Moscow, disembark and spend the day exploring Russia’s capital city. Visit the Novodevichy Convent, a UNESCO World Heritage Site founded in 1524. The main attraction of the convent is its cemetery: such luminaries as Gogol, Chekhov, Prokofiev, Eisenstein, Khrushchev, Raisa Gorbachev, and Boris Yeltsin are buried here, and some of the graves are quite fanciful. Take a tour of the Moscow Kremlin, including the Armory Museum. Built in the 16th century as a warehouse for the Kremlin’s weaponry, the Armory was transformed into an exhibition hall and museum in 1814. It now houses Russia’s national treasures, such as religious icons, Fabergé eggs, a bejeweled chalice belonging to Prince Yuri Dolgoruky, and Catherine the Great’s ball gowns and shoes. Finish the day with an evening walk on Red Square, which, along with St. Basil’s Cathedral, is perhaps the most recognizable symbol of Russia. *(Overnight at the Four Seasons)*

**Depart Moscow (B)**

**Wednesday, February 22**

The tour concludes today with transfers to the airport for international departures.

**Train Accommodations**

**Silver Class** cabins offer compact (60 sq ft) but comfortable accommodations onboard the Golden Eagle. Modern en suite amenities include a private shower, a DVD/CD player, remote-controlled air-conditioning/heating, wardrobe, personal safe and a large picture window.

**Gold Class** cabins are well-proportioned and feature the same amenities as Silver Class cabins, but in a larger space (77 sq ft), and include a full power shower and under-floor heating in every bathroom. Each cabin is configured with upper and lower berths, and can accommodate double, twin or single occupancy.

**Imperial Suites** are the most beautiful and spacious cabins onboard the Golden Eagle. Measuring a generous 120 sq ft (11.2 sq meters), they are furnished with a luxurious king size bed, dedicated seating area, dressing table and private en suite facilities with large power shower and under floor heating. Individual air-conditioning, wardrobe, DVD/CD player and two large picture windows.

**Program Cost**

The base cost of this program is based on double occupancy:

- **Silver:** $13,995 per person
- **Gold:** $15,595 per person
- **Imperial:** $23,495 per person

**Terms and Conditions**

**MOBILITY AND FITNESS TO TRAVEL** The right is retained to decline to accept or to retain any person as a member of this trip who, in the opinion of Yale Educational Travel ("YET") is unfit for travel or whose physical or mental condition may constitute a danger to themselves or to others on the trip, subject only to the requirement that the portion of the total amount paid which corresponds to the unused services and accommodations be refunded. Passengers requiring special assistance, including without limitation those who permanently or periodically use a wheelchair, must be accompanied by someone who is fit and able to assist them, and who will be totally responsible for providing all required assistance.

**CANCELLATION** In addition to airline cancellation penalties, all cancellations for any reason whatsoever will be subject to a $300 per person cancellation fee. Cancellation from 120 days to 76 days prior to departure will result in forfeiture of 10% of the entire cost of the trip per person; 75 days to 30 days, 50% of the trip cost per person; cancellation from 29 days up to the time of departure will result in 100% forfeiture of the entire cost of the trip. All cancellations must be submitted in writing to Yale Educational Travel.

**PAYMENT SCHEDULE** A deposit of $1,000 per person, payable to Yale Educational Travel, of which $350 is nonrefundable for administrative fees, is required with the reservation application. Final payment must be received 120 days prior to departure. Mail to: The Association of Yale Alumni, Yale Educational Travel, Box 20010, New Haven, CT 06520-9010. Or call: 203-432-1952.

**HEALTH** All participants must be in good health. This program involves extensive walking over uneven surfaces, climbing stairs at monuments and other locations not handicapped accessible, and climbing in and out of various conveyances. Any condition that may require assistance or special medical attention must be reported at the time of your reservation.

**LIMITED AVAILABILITY**
To register, return this form with your deposit of $1,000 per person to the address below. Or fax 203-432-5087. You may also register online at www.yale.edu/arctic17. Final payment is due November 11, 2016.

1) name as in passport

date of birth yale connection
passport origin relationship to other guest

2) name as in passport

date of birth yale connection
passport origin relationship to other guest

To book, return the above form with credit card authorization or check payable to MIR Corporation to Yale Educational Travel, P.O. Box 209010, New Haven, CT 06520-9010. Phone: (203) 432-1952. Fax: (203) 432-0587.

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Join an adventurous wintertime journey above the Arctic Circle on a quest for the mercurial Northern Lights, the strange lights that snake across the sky in billows or wave-like flags in the deep black northern night. Explore Western Russia’s finest cities, St. Petersburg and Moscow, as well as Kirkenes, Norway, Murmansk, Petrozavodsk, and the Golden Ring towns of Vladimir and Suzdal.