

TRAVEL

# In Brief: Visiting Remote Franz Josef Land; Tours in Bhutan

In Transit

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Poseidon Expeditions is offering trips to Franz Josef Land this summer and next. Poseidon Expeditions

## CRUISES

The polar cruise specialists [Poseidon Expeditions](#) is offering trips to [Franz Josef Land](#) this summer and next. The remote archipelago of volcanic, glaciated islands is part of the Russian Arctic National Park and accessible only a few weeks each summer when the ice breaks up. The trips leave from Longyearbyen in the Norwegian region of Svalbard, itself an Arctic attraction known for its concentration of polar bears. The excursions include chances to kayak among the icebergs, hike where polar pioneers

explored, and learn from a professional photographer while shooting glaciers, bird colonies, walrus and whales. The company has two ships, the 114-passenger Sea Spirit and the 128-passenger 50 Years of Victory, and 14-day trips start at \$7,295 a person in July and August, set to repeat in 2017.

ELAINE GLUSAC

## TOURS

If you're looking for an insider's perspective on [Bhutan](#), [Geringer Global Travel](#) is offering a trip that qualifies. Lhatu Wangchuk, Bhutan's former ambassador to the United Nations, under whose leadership the United Nations said that happiness was [a fundamental human goal](#), will conduct a 13-day tour, departing Oct. 31. Stops range from the cultural to the natural, and include a drive to the statue of the sitting Buddha at Kuenselphodrang; a visit to the Royal Textile Academy of Bhutan; and a trek to Paro Takstang, known as the Tiger's Nest Monastery, where a temple complex clings to a cliff above the Paro Valley. Mr. Wangchuk also will host a traditional dinner at his home. Prices begin at \$4,960 per person, based on double occupancy.

DIANE DANIEL

## MUSEUMS

Seine History in Normandy

There was a time when the town of Caudebec-en-Caux, along the Seine River in the heart of Normandy, was famous for "le mascaret": a massive equinox wave that rolled with fury along the river and could splash water up to 30 feet high into the quay. The mascaret was tamed when a sea wall was built in the 1960s, but the Seine still determines everyday life.

After eight years of planning, [Muséoseine](#), a small, charming museum devoted to the Seine, opened in April. Among the highlights: vestiges from ancient Gallo-Roman, Viking and medieval eras; a collection of boats; videos that evoke the river's traditions as a working water highway to the ocean; and footage of the mascaret in 1947. Visitors can watch the boats go up and down the river from a balcony built on a "gribane" — a flat-bottomed wooden barge.

The center of Caudebec-en-Caux was largely destroyed in a fire following bombing by the Nazis in 1940, but merits a visit because of the Flamboyant Gothic [Notre-Dame church](#), built in the 15th and 16th centuries; 333 sculpted human figures adorn its western portal. Then visitors can go on to the nearby [G.a. Manoir de Rétival](#) restaurant, which was awarded its first Michelin star earlier this year.

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