

Visitors to the Torngat Mountains National Park in Northern Labrador arrive with expectations: to explore a beautiful landscape of high mountains, sweeping valleys and sparkling fjords, and to see polar bears, whales, caribou and other wild animals in a remote northern habitat. This spectacular National Park does not disappoint, but all visitors leave having seen and experienced much more. The transformative nature of many visitor experiences in this special place can be attributed to something that few people expect to find here – personal connection.

Each summer, on the banks of a beach where a river meets a sea, a small community is established on the edge of the park. This is Torngat Mountains Base Camp and Research Station, operated by the Nunatsiavut Group of Companies, where Inuit elders and youth from Nunatsiavut and Nunavik stay together with visitors, researchers and Parks Canada staff. In addition to the daily excursions and programming offered at “base camp”, Parks Canada facilitates opportunities for shared experiences between all guests, inspiring profound personal experiences that move far beyond taking pictures of beautiful scenery.

Research – A Meeting of Many Minds

Each season a variety of researchers and scientists travel to Torngat Mountains National Park. Geologists, natural scientists and archaeologists have increased our understanding of the land and the stories it holds by engaging Elders, youth and visitors in their work and sharing their findings at Torngat Mountains Base Camp and Research Station. This is a place where science and Inuit Knowledge meet, creating rich opportunities for shared and enhanced understanding.



TOURISM, CULTURE AND RECREATION (NL), BARRETT AND MACKAY

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 Torngat Mountains
National Park

Experiences

2015

COVER IMAGE: ANDREW ANDERSEN

Sharing the Inuit Story

The remote and wild landscape of Torngat Mountains National Park is an Inuit homeland. Inuit have thrived here, travelling and hunting with their families along the shores of the Labrador Sea. Today, the connections between the land, animals, and Inuit still holds strong, and the park offers visitors a unique opportunity to explore the deep connections between a place and its people. Share the experience while hiking in the footsteps of Inuit ancestors and explore traces of the past through archaeological discovery. Spend time on the land with experienced Inuit hunters and taste traditionally prepared foods. Hear the voices of Inuit elders and youth and learn to see through their eyes. Become part of their story, and invite them into yours.

Perspectives of the Land

Amid the towering mountains and wide valleys of Torngat Mountains National Park, polar bears and caribou roam beside deep fjords as icebergs and glaciers brush against some of the earth's oldest rocks. The spectacular wilderness of this park is home to a wide array of arctic flora and fauna, inspiring local Inuit and researchers to work together to learn from the land. Experience the rich stories of the natural world in this special place and discover the wonders of healthy, thriving Arctic ecosystems.

Walk in the Footsteps of Inuit Ancestors

The spectacular landscape of Torngat Mountains National Park holds centuries of Inuit cultural history in its fjords, valleys, and mountains. A variety of hiking experiences give visitors of every skill level opportunities to explore this special landscape and discover its hidden histories in the company of Inuit guides: light interpretive day hikes foster a deeper connection to the region; and multi-day backpacking excursions follow ancient paths marked by inuksuit.



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Sharing the Inuit Story

VISITOR EXPERIENCES:

The Spirits of Sallikuluk (Rose Island)

Travel across the waters of Saglek Bay watching for whales and icebergs en route to Sallikuluk Island, which has been a cultural epi-centre for the region's Inuit for centuries and is one of three special management areas in the park. Inuit lived and hunted whales and seals here in the cold and ice-packed waters of the Labrador Sea. Walk across this landscape, home to over 600 traditional Inuit graves, cairns and burial mounds. Spot the remains of tent rings and sod houses where Inuit once lived, part of the island's archeological history that stretches back 5,000 years. On a full day excursion from Torngat Mountains Base Camp, hear stories about this important landscape from Inuit who cherish Sallikuluk and protect it for future generations. Approaching land on the return trip, scour the shorelines and valleys for meandering polar bears and caribou.

Picnic, Hike, and Swim at Silluak (North Arm)

Watch for Minke whales, seals and icebergs on a full day boat excursion to Silluak (North Arm) in Saglek Bay. As you travel between tall, narrow 900-metre-(3,000-foot) high soaring fjord walls, see the giant's footprints at the top of the mountain and hear the story of how he used his feet to push these shores further apart. Come ashore and spend time with your Inuit hosts as they prepare freshly caught Arctic char, seared the traditional way on a flat rock over an open fire. Take an easy hike to waterfalls nearby and learn about the many archeological features along the way – ancient food caches and hunting blinds made from stone where Inuit once waited for passing caribou. Then, at a clear indigo mountain lake with a sandy beach, take a perfect mid-summer dip in crisp waters for a refreshing experience! It's a wilderness experience that will make you wish you could stay another day.

HEINO WITTENBORN



Tea at the Old Village in Ramah

Stroll along the shore in Ramah Bay among the remnants of early European and Inuit lifestyles. These two cultures lived side-by-side in the middle of the Torngat Mountains wilderness at a small mission run by the Moravian Church from 1871 until 1908. Then walk to a stunning waterfall and settle down in this scenic spot to enjoy a cup of tea around a fire.

Kitjigattalik, Ramah Chert Quarries National Historic Site

Tools made from Ramah chert – a unique translucent, ice-like stone – have linked the lives of Aboriginal people over thousands of years and across the continent from areas as far south as New England and as far north as Baffin Island. The Ramah chert quarry sites, located high up in a spectacular landscape of windswept mountains sliding into the Labrador Sea, have recently been designated a National Historic Site. Learn more about how these quarries symbolize a series of Aboriginal cultural traditions and way of life important to the development of Canada.

Perspectives of the Land

VISITOR EXPERIENCES:

Bears and Bergs by Boat

Enjoy a half day zodiac tour of up-close visits with majestic icebergs and learn where they came from and where they are going. Accompanied by a Parks Canada Interpreter and an Inuit Bear Guard, help spot polar bears roaming the rocky shores of the outlying islands of the park on their hunt for food. Along the journey, expect to see seabirds, seals and whales and learn all the local Inuktitut names, and their importance to Inuit culture.

“Micro” Torngats – Plants and Insects Hike

Rain or shine, join staff on a half day moderate hike near the Torngat Mountains Base Camp and Research station to appreciate the northern flora. Get close to the small arctic flowers, plants and insects of this tundra climate and discover how they have adapted their amazing survival techniques to this northern landscape. Identify key plants of the region – in English and Inuktitut – and learn about their traditional Inuit uses.

Some of the Oldest Rocks in the World

The towering mountains and sweeping, fjords of the park represent a rich and unique geological history. Discover the hidden stories beneath your feet on a half-day excursion by zodiac that will allow you to walk on ancient pieces of the Earth's Mantle. Geologists are on a search to find the oldest rocks in the world here in the Torngat Mountains, and some areas have been recorded as being over 3.9 Billion years old! Along with a light interpretive hike, staff and visitors will savour a traditional Inuit shore lunch of freshly caught Arctic Char.

Walk in the Footsteps of Inuit Ancestors

VISITOR EXPERIENCES:

I Am From Here: a Nakvak Brook Journey

Stand alongside a commemorative inuksuk built to mark one end of a historic travel route that even today connects Inuit of Ungava Bay to Inuit on the Labrador Coast. This Inukshuk was erected by the Cooperative Management Board for the Torngat Mountains National Park to celebrate and honour the connection between Inuit of Nunavik and Nunatsiavut. It is a highlight of a full-day boat trip to the north side of Saglek Fjord at the delta of Nakvak Brook. Watch for black bears fishing the shallows for Arctic char. Amid wildflowers and grand views, walk the beginning of the traditional Inuit travel route in the company of Inuit who have personal connections to this place.

Multi-Day Backcountry Adventure

Choose your own adventure – bring your family and friends to an ancient land and select a hiking route that matches your skill level and interests. Travel with an Inuk guide who will share stories of the land and of the people who have walked here before you. Follow paths marked by inuksuit and river valleys, and discover the archeological traces along the way. Sleep under the stars... or under the Northern lights!

MANDY ARNOLD

