

The Ilulissat Ice Fiord

The nature and climate of Greenland provides strong impressions. Often we are overwhelmed by a deep fascination with the magnificent scenery of snow- and ice-covered mountains and fjords. Simultaneously, we sense the coldness and the impotence humanity is facing in its attempt to survive in these remote areas close to the northernmost areas of the planet.

The Ilulissat Ice Fiord, Kangia is a fiord just south of the town of Ilulissat in North Greenland. Ilulissat means iceberg in Greenlandic. The glacier Sermeq Kujalleq daily sends about 46 cubic kilometres of ice through the fiord and into the Disko Bay and further out into the Davis Strait and the Atlantic Ocean. Maybe it was an iceberg from Kangia that was the fate of Titanic?

Kangia is included on UNESCO's list of World Heritages Sites. The Sermeq Kujalleq glacier is the most active glacier in the Northern Hemisphere. It is estimated that the hinterland of the glacier covers 110,000 square kilometres of the Greenlandic Ice Sheet.

The largest icebergs run aground at the mouth of the fiord at depth of 225-250 meters until they are so eroded that the iceberg's point of balance changes. The enormous icebergs can be observed from most places in the town of Ilulissat.

Between the large icebergs and millions of ice floes the local hunters and fishermen are moving around in small boats. The main catch is the Greenland halibut fish, which is the main economic base for the town of Ilulissat and the surrounding villages.



Silent Giants in The Ilulissat Ice Fiord, February 2009