

## Guests for the afternoon tea

The small town Narsaq in South Greenland went through a special day this sunny day in August 2009. In Narsaq live 1,600 inhabitants, but this day has a guest arrived out in the bay close to town.

It is not any guest. It is a cruise ship. Princess Danae is a French cruise ship, which has about five hundred tourists on board. Most of these five hundred tourists intend to visit Narsaq. The tourists are already being received out on the fiord of a few young people in kayaks. Inside the town a major event awaits the tourists.

Many locals have put on their national costume. The tourists have a chance to attend a Greenlandic polka dancing show and they can visit ruins from the era of the Northerners. The tourists can also visit the handicraft workshop, the church or the local museum.

The visit ends with choral singing. Most are free for the tourists, but the local shops and restaurants and the local artist craftsmen hopes to sell their commodities and their work to the guests.

After a short visit the cruise ship - with a

giant blow of the ship's horn – leave to sail further north to other settlements along the west coast of Greenland. Narsaq can return to ordinary life.

Princess Danae is a small cruise ship. Other ships have two to three thousands tourists on board. The big ships spend around three million Danish kroner on their visit to Greenland in the form of taxes and purchases.

The cruise tourism in Greenland is now considerable. The cruise tourism reached its largest number with 30,000 tourists in 2010, but the number has declined in the recent years.

So much traffic with these gigantic, floating hotels awakens often concern in Greenland. It has been suggested that the cruise ships should sail in pairs to improve preparedness by accident, but it has so far been rejected.

Another problem is that sailors without local knowledge let the small boats of the cruise ships full of tourists sail too close to the dangerous icebergs in the Northern Greenland. A tumbling iceberg can smash to pieces these small boats.



*Cruise ship outside Narsaq, August 2009*