

ARCTIC

Icebreaker to Take Tourists on Polar Cruise

Following the Arktika and the Sibir', which have been to the Pole, the atomic icebreaker Rossiya is also preparing to visit the top of the earth. Unlike its counterparts, it will not be carrying scientists but tourists from capitalist countries. An agreement on this has been concluded between the Murmansk Marine Steamship Line (MMSL) and the West German firm "Polar Schiffahrts Konsulting."

"A journey to the Pole is, of course, an expensive pleasure," said N. Matyushenko, senior deputy chief of MMSL, who is busy organizing the first cruise. "Our passengers will therefore be well-to-do people only. Under the agreement, the cost of a ticket is 35,000 West German marks.

"The cruise will begin in Murmansk, where the tourists will arrive on a special flight from the Federal Republic of Germany. Here they will be shown the sights of the city and its suburbs, and on the following day, July 30, the Rossiya will leave the port of Murmansk with its guests on board and set course for the Arctic.

"Three possible routes were considered for the cruise. The shortest was from Murmansk west of Franz Josef Land to the Pole. The second passed to the east of these islands. A third was chosen--the route followed by the atomic ship Arktika in August 1977. It will take 15 days--a few days more than the first alternative--but it has already been approved. According to the calculations, the icebreaker will reach the Pole on August 6-7. The return to Murmansk is planned for August 13.