

INTRODUCTION

Antarctica Expedition Cruises 2018 / 2019

Antarctic Peninsula - Falkland Islands - South Georgia

Itinerary All promoted itineraries are for general guidance. Programs may vary depending on ice, weather, and wildlife conditions. Flexibility is paramount for expedition cruises. Landings are subject to site availabilities and environmental concerns per IAATO regulations. Official sailing plans and landing slots are scheduled with IAATO prior to the start of the season, but the expedition leader determines the final plan.

Rubber Boots Aboard *Plancius* and *Ortelius*, all passengers are provided a pair of sturdy rubber boots to keep the feet warm and dry for all landings. Sizes need to be pre-ordered with Oceanwide Expeditions at least eight weeks prior to departure. A voucher will be sent with final travel documents approximately four weeks prior to departure. Requesting equipment items without a pre-order and voucher is not possible while boarding the vessel. Boots need to be returned to the expedition team at the end of the voyage.

Shore Excursions and Zodiac Cruising Our cruises emphasize active wildlife and nature experiences. Guided shore excursions, walks, wildlife spotting, and Zodiac cruises are included in the fare and offered to all passengers during the voyage.

Basecamp – Our Activity Base (C H K M P) “Basecamp” is by definition a temporary storing location from which an activity begins. During designated Basecamp voyages, the ship will be taken to carefully chosen areas in the Antarctic. The vessel will stay in fewer locations than during our regular trips, serving as a comfortable hub that allows for additional outdoor activities. Mountaineers (M) can climb in alpine terrain, hikers (H) can make glacier hikes, photographers (P) can explore photo opportunities, campers (C) can sleep overnight at shoreline camps, and kayakers (K) can explore waterways the ship cannot. Passengers who do not wish to engage in these activities will enjoy our Zodiac excursions, following the normal shore program: easy to moderate walks, and hikes with a focus on wildlife. All activities are free of charge.

Bilingual voyages (B) English is the language of the ship. Some German- or French-speaking expedition staff will be on board for bilingual voyages (English – German or English – French). Welcome and safety briefings, announcements, daily briefings, and recaps will be provided in English, German, or French. Lectures in different languages may vary in content. Simultaneous translations of lectures will not occur, but a summary in the secondary language may be given at the end of a lecture. Guidance during on-shore activities will depend on the group each passenger chooses according to their own physical ability. In the Arctic we aim to split into three hiking groups: a strenuous walking group, a medium-paced group with more time for photography, and a leisurely group. A German- or French-speaking staff member will not necessarily be available for each group. During Zodiac cruises, the driver/guide of each boat will not necessarily be bilingual.

Camping (C) On some voyages we offer an exciting open-air camping option for an intensive Antarctic wilderness experience. Special gear and field equipment is provided: tents and bivouac bags (a lightweight alternative to tents) that are wind and waterproof. This shelter will protect you from the overnight elements, with mattresses and polar sleeping bags to provide comfort. The maximum number of participants for camping is 30 per night. One expedition guide will conduct the activity on shore. Camping is always subject to local weather and environmental regulations. One night must be booked prior to the trip, but any additional nights (if possible) must be arranged on board. There is no guarantee of a second night. Additional nights will be charged by the hotel manager. For more details, please refer to the Activity Manual.

Polar Diving (D) Polar divers must be advanced and experienced in dry-suit, cold-water diving. We hope for 1 – 2 dives per day parallel to other activities. Diving depends on local ice and weather conditions. Dive masters and guides are responsible for safety during dive operations. Basic equipment (scuba tanks, compressors, weights, diving essentials) is offered, but divers must bring their own personal gear. For prices, please refer to our Dates & Rates. For more details, please refer to the Activity Manual.

Hiking (H) During hiking voyages, we exceed our normal shore excursion walking program. In general we plan to offer three possibilities to be active on shore: Easy, moderate, and more demanding walks will be offered in the vicinity of the landing sites. We offer walks to suit everyone's capability. In the Arctic we aim for two hikes per day, each 2 – 3 hours long, during the morning and afternoon landings. We also offer several full-day walks (5 – 7 hours) with a packed lunch. The final plan for these hiking options will be made by the expedition leader on the day of the excursion. We recommend bringing a proper pair of ankle-high hiking boots and gaiters. Hiking is free of charge. More details can be found in the Activity Manual and day-by-day itineraries.

Kayaking (K) In general we plan to offer four or more days of kayaking. Basic kayak experience is welcome, but not required. Physical fitness is essential. Parallel to all other activities, there will be kayak excursions during morning and/or afternoon landings. The final plan will be made by the expedition leader on the day of the excursion. Oceanwide Expeditions will provide kayaks and neoprene wet suits. Kayakers must bring their own personal gear. Kayaking is subject to weather and prevailing ice conditions. For prices, please refer to our Dates & Rates. For more details, please refer to the Activity Manual.

Photo workshop (P)

On select voyages as well as Basecamp voyages, we offer workshops for beginners and advanced photographers under the supervision of an on-board photo expert. Everybody is welcome to participate, no previous experience required. The workshop group (up to 20 participants per guide, per landing) is accompanied by the photo expert during activity on shore. Participants with an interest in specialized photography must bring the applicable equipment. During cruise days participants can listen to photo lectures to learn more about objects, exposures, and photo composition. The workshop is not intended to teach the use of specific camera models, only to give an insight into better photo results by employing basic photography rules. Photographers can also take part in other activities of their choice. Photo workshops are free of charge on Basecamp voyages, and supplemented on other voyages. The workshop must be booked prior to departure.

Snowshoeing/Hiking (S) There is still snow on the hills and mountains during early departures at the beginning of the season. For this reason we aim to offer hiking excursions with easy-to-use snowshoes on north Spitsbergen voyages. With snowshoes it is easier and safer to walk on snowy surfaces. Snowshoes will be provided for everybody on board. They fit all boot sizes and can be used in combination with our rubber boots. Snowshoeing is free of charge. More details can be found in the Activity Manual and day-by-day itineraries.

Mountaineering (M) This is a more technical and strenuous activity for passengers who want to walk beyond the shore, reaching higher grounds and viewpoints. Participants walk in rope parties under the leadership of a certified mountain guide and assistants (depending on group size), mostly across glaciated environments. Physical fitness is essential. No more than six mountaineers per rope party. Special glacier equipment is provided: ropes, carabiners, harnesses, helmets, crampons, and ice axes. Participants must bring personal protective outdoor clothes as well as rigid mountain boots.

Trips Under Charter (*) Voyages marked with * are currently under charter.

Antarctic Peninsula - Polar Circle

PLA29 D K

Feb 28 – Mar 11

11 nights

Ushuaia – Ushuaia
aboard Plancius

All itineraries are for guidance only. Programs may vary depending on local ice, weather, and wildlife conditions. The on-board expedition leader will determine the final itinerary. Flexibility is paramount for expedition cruises. Average cruising speed of m/v Plancius is 10.5 knots.



Day 1: End of the World, Start of a Journey

Your voyage begins where the world drops off: Ushuaia, Argentina, reputed to be the southernmost city on the planet, located on the far southern tip of South America. Starting in the afternoon, you embark from this small resort town on Tierra del Fuego – nicknamed “The End of the World” – and sail the scenic, mountain-fringed Beagle Channel for the rest of the evening.

Day 2 – 3: Path of the Polar Explorers

Over the next two days on the Drake Passage, you catch a taste of life from the perspective of the polar explorers who first braved these regions: cool salt breezes, rolling seas, maybe even a fin whale

blasting up sea spray. After passing the Antarctic Convergence – Antarctica’s natural boundary, formed when north-flowing cold waters collide with warmer subantarctic seas – you are in the circum-Antarctic upwelling zone. Not only does the marine life change, the avian life changes too: A variety of albatrosses and petrels show up, along with Cape pigeons and southern fulmars. Then, near the South Shetlands Islands, the first icebergs flash into sight.

Day 4 – 9: Enter the Antarctic

Options for Antarctic Peninsula activities are many, and no less great during the late summer. Humpback whales are prolific in this region, gorging themselves on krill before their migration north. The penguin chicks are also fledging, stirring up activity on the beaches while sleek leopard seals lie in wait, poised to attack the less fortunate ones.

Sites for your adventures may include:

Livingston Island – Here you find a wide variety of gentoo and chinstrap penguins on Hannah Point, as well as southern giant petrels and elephant seals hauling out onto the beach.

Deception Island – Actually a subducted crater, this island opens into the sea and creates a natural harbor for the ship. Hot springs, an abandoned whaling station, and multiple bird species – cape petrels, kelp gulls, brown and south polar skuas, and Antarctic terns – can be seen here. Wilson’s storm petrels and black-bellied storm petrels also nest in the ruins of the whaling station in Whalers Bay.

Cuerville Island – A small precipitous island nestled between the mountains of the Antarctic Peninsula and Rongé Island, Cuerville houses a large colony of gentoo penguins and breeding pairs of brown skuas.

Neko Harbour – An epic landscape of mammoth glaciers and endless wind-carved snow. Opportunities for Zodiac cruising and kayaking provide you the closest possible view of the ice-crusting alpine peaks. You might also be able to set foot on the Continent here.

Paradise Bay – You could take a Zodiac cruise in these sprawling, ice-flecked waters, where you have a good chance of seeing humpback and minke whales.

Pléneau & Petermann Islands – If the ice allows it, you may sail through the Lemaire Channel in search of Adélie penguins and blue-eyed shags. There’s also a good chance you’ll encounter humpback and minke whales as well as leopard seals.

Crystal Sound – The journey takes you south along the Argentine Islands to this ice-packed body of water, and from here across the Polar Circle in the morning.

Detaille Island – You may make a landing at an abandoned British research station here, taking in the lofty mountains and imposing glaciers.

Fish Islands – Further north, you encounter one of the southernmost Adélie penguin and blue-eyed shag colonies in the Antarctic Peninsula.

Melchior Islands – A beautiful landscape rich with icebergs. Leopard seals, crabeater seals, and whales are found here, and there are excellent opportunities for kayaking and diving.

Conditions on the Drake Passage determine the exact time of departure.

Day 10 – 11: Familiar Seas, Familiar Friends

Your return voyage is far from lonely. While crossing the Drake, you’re again greeted by the vast array of seabirds remembered from the passage south. But they seem a little more familiar to you now, and you to them.

Day 12: There and Back Again

Every adventure, no matter how grand, must eventually come to an end. It’s now time to disembark in Ushuaia, but with memories that will accompany you wherever your next adventure lies.

Antarctic Peninsula – Polar Circle, Deep South Discovery and Whale Watching voyage

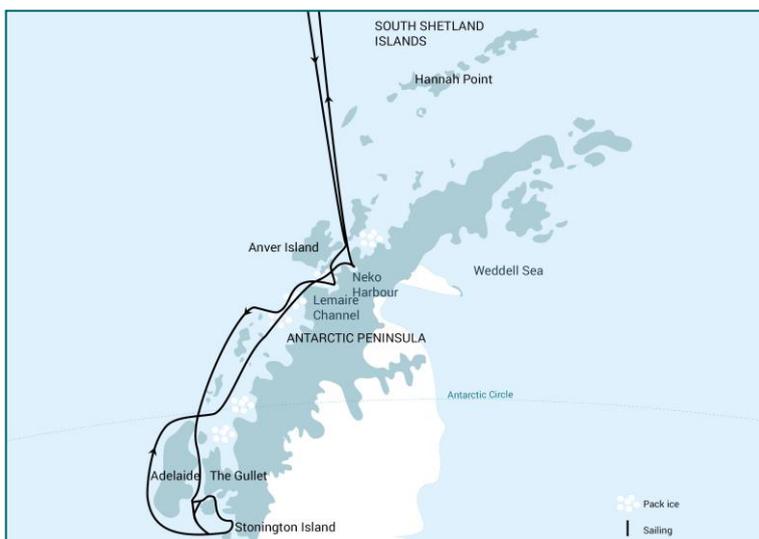
OTL33 D

Mar 18 – Mar 31

13 nights

Ushuaia – Ushuaia
aboard Ortelius

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Day 1: End of the World, Start of a Journey

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Day 2 – 3: Path of the Polar Explorers

Over the next two days on the Drake Passage, you catch a taste of life from the perspective of the polar explorers who first braved these regions: cool salt breezes, rolling seas, maybe even a fin whale blasting up sea spray. After passing the Antarctic

Convergence – Antarctica’s natural boundary, formed when north-flowing cold waters collide with warmer subantarctic seas – you are in the circum-Antarctic upwelling zone. Not only does the marine life change, the avian

life changes too: A variety of albatrosses and petrels show up, along with Cape pigeons and southern fulmars. Then, near the South Shetlands Islands, the first icebergs flash into sight.

Day 4 – 5: Enter the Antarctic

Gray stone peaks sketched with snow, towers of broken blue-white ice, and dramatically different wildlife below and above. You first pass the snow-capped Melchior Islands and Schollaert Channel, sailing between Brabant and Anvers Islands. Then on to Cuverville Island, stabbing up between Rongé Island and the Antarctic Peninsula. On Cuverville lives a massive colony of gentoo penguins as well as pairs of breeding brown skuas. Neko Harbour, the next stop, affords you the first chance to step onto the Antarctic Continent itself – an epic landscape of mammoth glaciers and endless wind-carved snow. During the following stop at Paradise Bay, you may be able to take a Zodiac cruise in its sprawling, ice-flecked water before sailing on to the Lemaire Channel.

Day 6 – 8: Through the Gullet

After a comfortable night of sailing, you wake among the many islands south of Lemaire Channel. You are now near the Antarctic Circle. At this point a voyage through the aptly named Gullet – a narrow but picturesque channel between Adelaide Island and the Continent – is possible if the ice isn't too thick. You can explore this area either from the prow of the ship or the edge of a Zodiac, getting the closest possible contact with the terrain as you venture southward.

You might also circumnavigate Pourquoi Pas Island, named after the ship of the famous French explorer Jean-Baptiste Charcot. This location is known for its tight fjords and lofty, glacier-crowded mountains. On Horseshoe Island is the former British Base Y, a remnant of the 1950s that is now unmanned, though still equipped with almost all the technology it had while in service.

Stonington Island is home to the former US East Base and British Base E, which was occupied until 1975. If a stop here is possible, it marks the southernmost landing site of the trip – 68° south. From there your road turns north again, through the Gunnel Channel into Hanusse Bay, with its countless icebergs – and a good chance of spotting whales.

Day 9 – 11: Whales of Crystal Sound

You are near the Antarctic Circle again, cutting north through the countless ice floes of Crystal Sound. Humpback whale sightings are likely, and your approach to the Fish Islands offers the possibility of a Zodiac cruise or even a landing. Whatever the case, the scenery is beyond compare in this area. There may also be more Adélie penguins congregating among the icebergs nearby.

If you're a bird lover, Petermann and Pléneau Islands provide a great variety of avian life as well as Zodiac cruises among icebergs that are popular leopard seal and crabeater seal hangouts. Minke whales, humpbacks, and gentoo penguins also love to frequent this "hot spot" of Antarctic activity.

Conditions on the Drake Passage determine the exact time of departure.

Day 12 – 13: Familiar Seas, Familiar Friends

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Day 14: There and Back Again

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Day 6 – 8: (Alternate program if the route to the south of Crystal Sound/Hanusse Bay is blocked by ice)

You may take a course around the western side of Adelaide Island to reach Marguerite Bay. Should ice conditions also not allow this approach, you may continue the program by exploring the Antarctic Peninsula in and around the Penola and Gerlache Straits.

Weddell Sea Discoverer

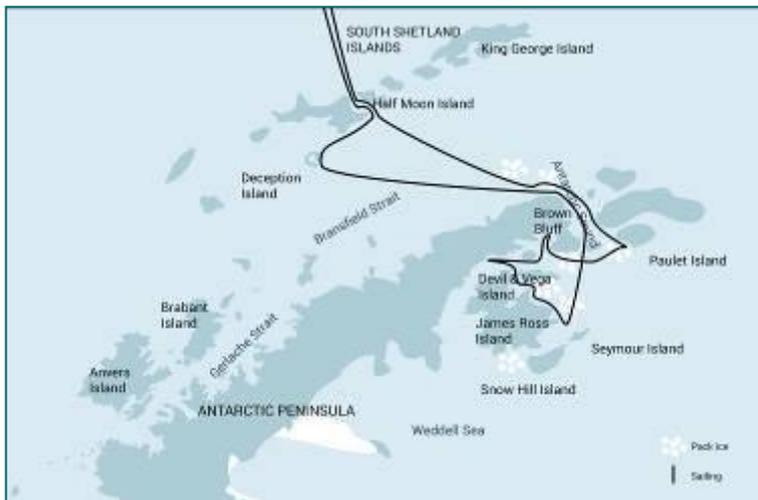
PLA30

Mar 11 – Mar 22

11 nights

Ushuaia – Ushuaia
aboard Plancius

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Day 4 – 8: Enter the Antarctic

You sail directly into the Weddell Sea through the often ice-clogged Antarctic Sound. Huge tabular icebergs herald your arrival to the eastern side of the Antarctic Peninsula. The Weddell Sea is largely covered in sea ice during the year, but the northwestern corner offers great opportunities for exploration in places only the lucky few get to visit.

The sites for your activities may include:

Paulet Island – A huge number of Adélie penguins take residence here.

Brown Bluff – Maybe the most scenic location in the entire northern tip of the Antarctic Continent: sheer canyon walls, fallen boulders, beautiful volcanic creations capped with ice. A large Adélie penguin rookery lives here, with gentoo penguins and nesting snow petrels also to be found.

Dundee Island – A mostly uninhabited Argentine station, Base Petrel, can be seen here, as well as Antarctic fur seals (and southern elephant seals) along the coastline.

Farther into the Weddell Sea, the options vary with the ice conditions:

James Clark Ross Island – You can explore a number of rarely visited places here. The imagination is further stirred by suggestive names like Brandy Bay and Whiskey Bay.

Devil Island – A large Adélie penguin rookery as well as stunning views of Erebus and Terror Gulf are seen here.

Snow Hill Island – This location, known for its sedimentary rock, tells tales of the incredible Antarctic explorations of the early 20th century.

Day 9: Scenes of South Shetland

The volcanic islands of the South Shetlands are windswept and often cloaked in mist, but they do offer subtle pleasures: There's a wide variety of flora (mosses, lichens, flowering grasses) and no small amount of fauna (gentoo penguins, chinstrap penguins, southern giant petrels).

In Deception Island, the ship plunges through Neptune's Bellows and into the flooded caldera. Here you find hot springs, an abandoned whaling station, and thousands of cape petrels – along with a number of kelp gulls, brown and south polar skuas, and Antarctic terns. Wilson's storm petrels and black-bellied storm petrels also nest in the ruins of the whaling station in Whalers Bay.

As an alternative, you may be able to engage in activities near Half Moon Island. Here chinstrap penguins and Weddell seals often haul out onto the beach near Cámara Base, an Argentine scientific research station. Conditions on the Drake Passage determine the exact time of departure.

Day 10 – 11: Familiar Seas, Familiar Friends

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