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ANTARCTICA AND HIGH ARCTIC

INCLUDING THE FALKLAND ISLANDS & SOUTH GEORGIA





ANTARCTIC & ARCTIC SPECIALISTS

Antarctica & Arctic Travel Centres are the specialist Polar arm of Tailor-Made Journeys (formerly South America Travel Centre – since 1995). We are a wholly owned Australian company. We are an associate member of the International Association of Antarctic Tour Operators (IAATO) and an affiliate member of the Association of Arctic Expedition Cruise Operators (AECO) as well as a member of AFTA (Australian Federation of Travel Agents).

Unlike a cruise/ship operator, we're not tied to selling particular ships; we have hand-picked a number of smaller vessels (with less than 200 passengers) and Antarctic and Arctic operators who we know well and can trust to provide you with a holiday of a lifetime. As a result we can select a vessel and an itinerary that best suits your personal requirements.

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SPITSBERGEN – HIGH ARCTIC

PASSIONATE AND KNOWLEDGEABLE EXPERTS

With many shared years of first-hand experience in Antarctica and the High Arctic upon which to draw, we are eager to pass on our knowledge and enthusiasm. It was 2001 when I undertook the first of numerous voyages to Antarctica and in 2001 to the Arctic. The 'White Continent' became my passion, along with the Falkland Islands and – my outright favourite – the wild and magnificent island of South Georgia that is home to over 100,000 pairs of king penguins as well as (in my opinion) the world's most beautiful bird, the wandering albatross. In the North (the Arctic) it's the archipelago of Svalbard and its incredible wildlife that continues to draw me back.

My extensive experience and knowledge gained while formerly working as Peregrine's Polar Expeditions Manager, in partnership with Quark Expeditions and One

Ocean Expeditions, enables me and my team to offer the expert advice that will ensure your journey to the Polar regions is not only your trip of a lifetime but an 'experience of life' you will never forget.



Alex Burridge

Managing Director





CHOOSING YOUR ANTARCTIC VOYAGE

THE SEASON

In simple terms the Antarctic Peninsula, Falkland Islands and South Georgia open up for exploration in late October and early November and the season runs through until March when the shortening days and encroaching sea ice close this magical place to all but the hardest visitor.

November: If you would like to witness the dominant bull elephant seals battling for control of a harem of females on the beaches of South Georgia, you must take an early season voyage – leave it too long and the bulls will have headed out to sea. On the Peninsula the penguins are arriving and beginning their courtship displays.

December: The daylight hours are long and the beaches and hillsides are now hectic with tens of thousands (sometimes more) of courting penguins.

January: After a relatively brief period of calm while both parents are incubating the eggs, the penguin colonies erupt into activity once again and feeding newly hatched, hungry and fast-growing chicks becomes a full time job.

February: Seals, skuas, petrels and penguins are all busy attending to their sub-adult young and the 'summer' will soon be over. Penguin chicks slowly lose their down, to be replaced by their adult feathers.

March: Whales, who have been busy feeding throughout the Antarctic summer, seem to have more time now to investigate their visitors (us!); leopard seals have an easy time catching juvenile penguins who are taking their first swim – and then the brief season abruptly comes to a close.

WEATHER

Antarctic weather is unpredictable. Surprisingly it's generally not that cold. Any voyage can experience extreme conditions, shortly followed by beautiful clear days – in fact the best weather very often follows a storm. Calm conditions will often lead to low cloud or fog. The infamous Drake Passage can be the "Drake Lake" or the "Drake Shake" and there's no certainty as to which one you'll experience (for those who simply don't want to consider crossing the Drake Passage, a Fly-Cruise voyage is the answer).

SITES

There are over 100 sites to visit on the Antarctic Peninsula, some more renowned like Deception Island and the Lemaire Channel, others less well known but equally beautiful, like Cierva Cove and Spert Island.

On the Falkland Islands and South Georgia there are another 50+ sites of interest. The problem is less which sites to choose than which ones there is simply not enough time to include.

No two voyage itineraries will be the same, even with the same ship and the same operator. There are many factors that influence the itinerary and the three major considerations are:



» **Selection of sites** occurs only three months before the particular season commences and is governed by the International Association of Antarctic Tour Operators (IAATO – see page 50) to ensure ships and their passengers are evenly distributed among the many sites and you don't end up with several ships queuing at one site to go ashore.

» **Weather conditions** – in particular heavy seas when crossing from Ushuaia to the Peninsula or to the Falklands and South Georgia.

» **Local conditions at each site** - sea ice can block entry to many sites, particularly early in the season (both the Lemaire Channel and Deception Island can be 'closed' for this reason). Strong winds, fog, and a large swell can also prevent the use of the Zodiacs (rubber inflatable boats) needed to visit the majority of sites.

We mention this to prepare you and request, when travelling, to bring along a flexible attitude, a degree of patience, and an understanding that, in the face of the powerful forces of nature, we don't set the agenda and changes may be necessary. The wonderful thing is that very often the 'replacement' site turns out to be even better than the original choice made for that day.



ANTARCTIC PENINSULA & SOUTH SHETLAND ISLANDS

GENTOO PENGUIN AND CHICK



The Peninsula is the most northerly part of the mainland of Antarctica, lying only about 1,000km across the Drake Passage from Tierra del Fuego, South America's southernmost tip. It is one of the continent's richest breeding grounds for penguins, seals and seabirds. And to its north-west stretches a 540km-long chain of four groups of volcanic islands that together make up the South Shetlands.

DECEPTION ISLAND

The island is the flooded caldera of an active volcano, creating a natural harbour accessed through a narrow gap known as Neptune's Bellows. The volcano, an abandoned whaling station, and an old airstrip are three of the interesting features of this site. For those so inclined there are some great hikes and, on a clear day, some stunning views.



LEMAIRE CHANNEL

Just 1600m wide at its narrowest point and hemmed by steep cliffs, this is an 11km-long strait between the Antarctic continent (Graham Land) and Booth Island with its 1000m-high peaks. The channel's protected waters are often as still as a lake, a relatively rare occurrence in the Southern Ocean, and provide incredible photographic opportunities of nature at its best. The principal difficulty encountered is that icebergs may fill the channel, especially early in the season.



WILHELMINA BAY

This 24km wide, glaciated bay along the west coast of Graham Land was discovered by Gerlache during the Belgian Antarctic Expedition of 1897-99 and named for the young Queen Wilhelmina of the Netherlands. Mountains and high glaciers surround the bay which is a bountiful feeding ground for whales and seals – and was therefore a prolific hunting ground for whalers of the past; the wreck of the whale factory ship "Gouvernøren", sunk in 1916 after a fire, can still be seen.

PARADISE HARBOUR

Surrounded by ice cliffs and heavily glaciated mountains that are reflected back by the calm waters, this bay is undeniably beautiful and was named by the whalers of the early 1920s in recognition of its splendour. It is home to an abundance of seals, penguins, cormorants and petrels, and also a popular destination for those wanting to witness huge ice calving from the glacier at the head of the bay.



HALF MOON ISLAND

This small, crescent-shaped rocky island in a bay on the eastern side of Livingston Island was known to sealers as early as 1821, although perhaps to no one else. Its creviced cliffs are home to a large rookery of chinstrap penguins as well as nesting Antarctic terns and kelp gulls; whales are often seen patrolling the shores and several species of seals are regular visitors. The Argentine navy has maintained a small summer only research station here since 1953.

A wide-angle photograph taken from the deck of a ship, looking out over a vast expanse of the Antarctic Peninsula. The sea is filled with numerous icebergs of various sizes, some showing greenish-brown patches of algae. In the background, snow-covered mountains rise from the water's edge. On the right, a dark, rocky cliff face is partially covered in snow. On the left, the white metal structure of the ship's mast and observation platforms is visible. A group of people, dressed in winter gear, are gathered on the deck in the lower foreground, looking out at the ice. The sky is overcast and grey.

EXPLORING **THE PENINSULA**

NEPTUNE'S BELLOWS – DECEPTION ISLAND



To gain the most from any voyage it's essential to have a variety of excursions. Some areas are best appreciated from the vantage point of the ship, others discovered in the Zodiacs, and still others explored on foot.

ZODIAC CRUISING

With an expert guide to navigate, Zodiac cruising offers access to places that may otherwise be out of reach. And the inflatables get you closer to icebergs, to seals and occasionally 'spy-hopping' whales, and to sites where landing is not possible. Reminding you to "dress warmly" may seem ridiculous but is relative to where you are, and on a Zodiac excursion you must ensure you have extra layers because you're sitting for some time (not moving around and creating your own body heat) and this, together with the wind chill, keeps temperatures low.



LANDING ON THE 7TH CONTINENT!

It is always the intention on every voyage that you actually set foot on the continent of Antarctica (not on a nearby island). There are several ideal landing places and, given the relatively protected nature of the western side of the peninsula, you will realise that dream.



ANTARCTIC PENINSULA WILDLIFE

Reaching further north than any other part of Antarctica and having land free of permanent snow and ice means the peninsula has a concentration of wildlife found nowhere else on the continent.

Penguin species found on the peninsula, especially near the tip and on surrounding islands, include: chinstrap, gentoo and Adélie (and, very occasionally, emperor). Some colonies have just a few hundred pairs, while other populations number more than 10,000.

Seals include: Leopard, Weddell, southern elephant seal and crabeater, the most populous seal, with tens of millions of these krill (not crab) -eating animals.

Seabirds of the Southern Ocean and on the peninsula include: Fulmar, giant petrel, cape petrel, snow petrel, Wilson's storm petrel, Imperial shag, snowy sheathbill, skua, prion, Antarctic tern and wandering albatross.

Whales include: Minke, humpback, sei, fin and orca who all head south for the summer.

For the incredibly fortunate, blue whales are occasionally seen, perhaps when crossing the Antarctic Convergence (roughly around latitude 55° South) where the cold, nutrient-rich waters of the Antarctic circumpolar current meet and mix with warmer waters to the north - the result is a high concentration of krill and therefore the animals that feed on krill.



THE FALKLAND ISLANDS



DEVIL'S NOSE - WEST POINT ISLAND



A trip to the Falkland Islands will be part of most longer voyages (15 nights or more) and, far more than just a convenient break en route to South Georgia, it can be a highlight of these trips. The birdlife is really quite spectacular, while the rugged landscapes offer some great hikes and excellent photographic opportunities. Add the history of the 1982 Falklands War, referred to locally as 'the conflict', and you begin to get an idea of how much interest the Falklands has to offer – particularly when in combination and contrast with both South Georgia and the Antarctic Peninsula.

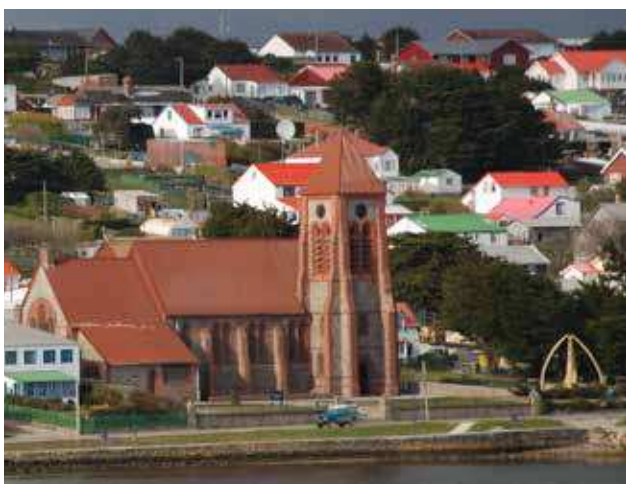
SAUNDERS ISLAND

Lying north-west of West Falkland is the stunning Saunders Island, the fourth largest of the Falkland Islands; it boasts three small peaks and is run as a sheep farm. Birds for which the island is of conservation significance include the Falkland steamer duck (250 breeding pairs), ruddy-headed goose, gentoo penguin (6,700 pairs), rock-hopper penguin (6,900 pairs), macaroni penguin (4,200 pairs), and black-browed albatross (11,000 pairs)



WEST POINT ISLAND

Only 6km long with a maximum width of 4km, the main destination on this tiny island is Devil's Nose, a rocky promontory with over 2,000 pairs of black-browed albatrosses and about 500 pairs of rock-hopper penguins. The hike from the landing point is not too demanding and affords incredible views as well as good proximity to the albatross colony. Often completing the visit is an invitation to enjoy some Falklands hospitality with home-baked cakes and a welcome cup of tea.



PORT STANLEY

The small capital of the Falklands, with around 3,000 people, offers many activities and the choice is yours. You can wander around the town, visit the excellent museum and small galleries showing locally produced artwork, or enjoy a pint in one of the three pubs. A regular option is to visit nearby Gypsy Cove, either by vehicle or on foot (6km), while the wreck of the iron barque 'Lady Elizabeth' that has lain in Whalebone Cove since 1936 will offer more great photographic opportunities.

WILDLIFE

The Falkland Islands are a birder's paradise with two endemic species – the Falklands flightless steamer duck and Cobb's wren – as well as a number of others unlikely to be seen anywhere else, with over 220 different bird species having been recorded here.

As well as five species of penguin (gentoo, macaroni, rock-hopper, Magellanic and king - low numbers), the islands are home to 60% of the world's breeding black-browed albatross. Commerson's and Peale's dolphins are also quite common, the former often seen riding the bow wave of Zodiacs as you go ashore.



SOUTH GEORGIA





South Georgia is one of the most stunning places on earth. This small archipelago rears up from the Southern Ocean to a height of almost 3,000 metres. The rugged landscape forms a dramatic backdrop to the many beaches and coves which are home to millions of penguins and petrels, thousands of elephant and fur seals and hundreds of albatrosses.

SALISBURY PLAIN

This wide coastal plain within the Bay of Isles on the north coast of South Georgia is flanked by the mouths of two large glaciers, Grace and Lucas. It is legendary as the breeding site for as many as 200,000 king penguins - words cannot do justice to the sight and sound of tens of thousands of birds dotting the plain and lining the rivers and streams. The beaches also throng with elephant seals and southern fur seals. In 1912-13, the American ornithologist, Robert Cushman Murphy, was first to make a detailed study of the birds in the area (he also famously wrote "I now belong to a higher cult of mortals, for I have seen the albatross!")



GRYTVIKEN

Established in a natural harbour, Grytviken is the final resting place of the great polar explorer, Sir Ernest Shackleton. After the loss of their ship in the Weddell Sea, Shackleton, Frank Worsley and Tom Crean crossed 1,500km of the roughest seas in the world from Elephant Island in the 8m-long open boat 'James Caird', then traversed uncharted glaciers and mountains that form the backbone of South Georgia, from King Haakon Bay to Stromness. From here Shackleton made his way to Buenos Aires and finally back to Elephant Island to rescue all of his men. You can visit his grave in Grytviken and also explore the old abandoned whaling station, and a fascinating museum, and hike up on to the surrounding cliff tops.



PRINCE OLAV HARBOUR

The site of one of the island's seven main whaling stations established by the Norwegians in 1911, it was initially a floating factory site before a shore station was set up in 1916 and continued until March 1931.

WILDLIFE

South Georgia is like the Serengeti of the sub-Antarctic islands but instead of wildebeest, there are hundreds of thousands of king penguins. The archipelago is also home to two endemic birds, the South Georgia pipit and pintail. Four species of albatross make South Georgia their home - wandering, grey-headed, light-mantled sooty, and black-browed.



ELEPHANT SEALS

The giants of South Georgia, male elephant seals are a spectacular sight. To see them in action you must head to the island on the first voyages of the season (November). The dominant bulls, or beachmasters, fight to control an area with tens, occasionally hundreds, of females. Elephant seals are great examples of sexual dimorphism with males being more than five times the size of the females.

A DAY IN ANTARCTICA OR THE HIGH ARCTIC



GRYTVIKEN - SOUTH GEORGIA



In many ways it can be said there is no 'typical' day, as no two days are ever alike. You may be woken by the announcement that breakfast will be served in half an hour – or that there is a pod of orcas off the starboard bow! If there were a typical day, it might unfold something like this:

7:00AM

Many guests will rise some time before breakfast to soak up the views from the bridge, the lounge or out on deck (the more time you spend looking, the more you will see).

10:30AM

After a hearty buffet breakfast there's usually a briefing about the morning's activity. Armed with the knowledge of what to expect, you'll be given adequate notice to get ready and, once the ship is anchored, it's time to climb into the Zodiacs and set off.

1:00PM

After exploring either by Zodiac or on foot, it's back to your floating hotel, perhaps for a shower, then a warming drink and later lunch. Depending on the locality of the next site, there may be time for an absorbing presentation, time to socialise in the ship's lounge, or to review your images taken on the morning's excursion.

3:30PM

With batteries recharged (your own and your camera's), if the next site is not too far away, you'll don your gear once again and venture out in the mid-afternoon or early evening for further exploration. Maybe you'll cruise past thousand-year-old icebergs, or visit penguin colonies that number in thousands; on another day it could be an impromptu stop to enjoy whales spy-hopping (where they raise their heads straight up out of the water to check out their visitors). Excursions can last anywhere from 1-3 hours.

7:00PM

Back aboard ship, with time to change and warm up before dinner.

9:00PM

After dinner the time is yours – simply to take it easy, chat with your fellow passengers, or to join some of the expedition crew in the bar or lounge for a relaxed but informative discussion about Shackleton, or whaling, or albatross conservation...

DAYS AT SEA

Time at sea is put to very good use. A series of on-board presentations by the assembled experts (expedition staff) will have you well informed and prepared for your trips ashore, as well as equipping you to return home as ambassadors for the marvellous places you have visited.

Petrels, prions, shearwaters and particularly albatrosses accompany the ships on the longer sea crossings. Whales can be spotted at any time, especially as you cross the Antarctic Convergence, where the cold nutrient-rich waters of the Southern Ocean meet the warmer waters of the Atlantic Ocean.



EXPLORING ANTARCTICA

Broadly speaking, voyages can be divided into five categories:

~ FLY-CRUISE ~

~ ANTARCTIC PENINSULA ~

~ ANTARCTIC PENINSULA INCLUDING ANTARCTIC CIRCLE ~

~ FALKLAND ISLANDS, SOUTH GEORGIA AND ANTARCTIC PENINSULA ~

~ SOUTH GEORGIA ~

The following pages will provide an example of each of the above.

FLY-CRUISE VOYAGES

If you want to maximise your time in Antarctica, Falklands or South Georgia (and to avoid the long sea crossings including the Drake Passage crossing), then flying from, or to, Punta Arenas in Chile to King George Island in Antarctica's South Shetland Islands, or to Mount Pleasant in the Falkland Islands is a perfect solution.

Note: Weather conditions need to be suitable for landing and take-off in Antarctica and you must understand that delays can occur – that said, most voyages depart and return as planned and, with many years of experience in the coordination of air and sea operations, the operators run these programmes expertly.



OCEAN NOVA (68)



CLASSIC ANTARCTICA FLY-CRUISE

DAY 1 PUNTA ARENAS

Arrive in Punta Arenas, Chile, where you are welcomed and transferred to your hotel. In the afternoon, attend a briefing that provides important information about your voyage and reviews the essential guidelines for Antarctic visitors. Later, gather for a welcome dinner and meet your fellow adventurers while enjoying a typical regional menu.

DAY 2 FLY TO ANTARCTICA

Your Antarctic adventure begins with a 2-hour flight from Punta Arenas to King George Island in the South Shetland Islands. As you exit the airplane, the clear Antarctic air fills your lungs for the first time. Explore the area surrounding Chile's Frei Station and Russia's Bellingshausen Station before boarding a Zodiac to embark your expedition vessel Ocean Nova.

DAYS 3-6 ANTARCTIC PENINSULA

Cruise between the South Shetlands and the west coast of the Antarctic Peninsula, sailing along ice-filled fjords and among spectacular icebergs while enjoying the company of sea birds, penguins, seals and whales. Each day disembark by Zodiac and explore the landscape with your expert polar guides.

DAY 7 DEPART ANTARCTICA

Return to King George Island and bid farewell to Antarctica before boarding the flight back to Punta Arenas. Upon arrival, transfer to your hotel for overnight.

DAY 8 DEPART PUNTA ARENAS

After breakfast, transfer to the airport for your onward flight.

Pre- and post-voyage nights in Punta Arenas are included as indicated. In part this makes good sense and affords maximum flexibility as there are often quite small weather windows in which to fly and the operator will know where all passengers are and can quickly respond.



AKADEMIK SERGEY VAVILOV (92)

POLAR CIRCLE FLY-CRUISE

For the more adventurous traveller, this expedition extends your time on the Antarctic Peninsula by 2 additional nights, with the goal of sailing farther south in an attempt to reach the Antarctic Circle (66° 33' S).

FALKLANDS, SOUTH GEORGIA & ANTARCTICA FLY-CRUISE

Several ships are now combining a flight from Punta Arenas to King George Island and back from Mount Pleasant (Falkland Islands) to Punta Arenas. This saves approximately 4 days at sea, which can be spent exploring. NOTE; for these longer voyages there are still 'days at sea' to link the Antarctic Peninsula with South Georgia and the Falkland Islands.

DAY 1 PUNTA ARENAS, CHILE FLY TO KING GEORGE ISLAND

DAYS 2-4 GERLACHE STRAIGHT AND ANTARCTIC PENINSULA

DAY 5 ANTARCTIC PENINSULA AND WEDDELL SEA

DAY 6 ELEPHANT ISLAND, ANTARCTICA WILD POINT

DAYS 7-8 SCOTIA SEA

DAYS 9-12 SOUTH GEORGIA

DAYS 13-15 SAILING TOWARDS THE FALKLAND ISLANDS

DAYS 16 FALKLAND ISLANDS

DAYS 17 STANLEY TO PUNTA ARENAS, CHILE

SHIPS OFFERING FLY-CRUISE VOYAGES:

Luxury Ships Hebridean Sky (71)

Expedition Ships Ocean Nova (68), Akademik Sergey Vavilov (92) & Akademik Ioffe (96)

A photograph of a small inflatable boat with several people in red and orange gear navigating through a narrow passage between large, towering icebergs in the Antarctic. The water is a deep blue, and the sky is clear. The title 'ANTARCTIC PENINSULA VOYAGES' is overlaid in a white box at the top.

ANTARCTIC PENINSULA VOYAGES

A great introduction to Antarctica, exploring the world's last great wilderness.

DAY 1 USHUAIA

Today is the first day of your adventure when you board your vessel in Ushuaia, the world's Southernmost city at the tip of Argentina. In the early evening the ship sets sail on its voyage, leaving the city behind and charting a course through the Beagle Channel.

DAYS 2-3 DRAKE PASSAGE

Crossing the Drake Passage, there is much excitement in the air as you make your way ever closer to the White Continent. Everyone eagerly soaks up the friendly atmosphere aboard as the numerous Polar experts prepare you for your adventures with presentations on everything Antarctic, from wildlife to history. As you cross the Antarctic Convergence, you will notice a distinct drop in temperature when you enter the waters of the Antarctic Ocean. Along the way, you will witness many spectacular sights, from icebergs to an array of seabirds and even several whale species, among them blue, sei, humpback and fin whales.

DAYS 4-8 ANTARCTIC PENINSULA

In the waterways of the Antarctic Peninsula, it is hoped to make as much time as possible to explore by inflatable Zodiacs and marvel up close at nature's glory. Planned excursions might include Neko Harbour, Wilhelmina Bay, and even the southerly Petermann Island, where you will see Weddell, crabeater and elephant seals, skuas and other seabirds, as well as a stunning abundance of penguins including some very large colonies of the comical Adélie penguin. At Half Moon Island you can see a breeding colony of chinstrap penguins that share their territory with fur seals and blue-eyed shags. With luck you might also see the gentle humpback whale dining on krill in its feeding grounds and possibly have an opportunity to observe orcas and minke whales as you go.

Finally, perhaps at Paradise Harbour, Hope Bay or Neko Harbour, you will arrive on the continent of Antarctica. Prepare to be dazzled by your first glimpse of the continent



as the scenery here is amazing. In particular you will be struck by the oddly-shaped icebergs that look as if they've been sculpted, as well as the colossal tabular icebergs that break away from the continent's ice shelf. If the weather is mild enough, you will all set foot on the White Continent itself.

DAYS 9–10 DRAKE PASSAGE

As you leave this magical place and make your way north, heading again across the Antarctic Convergence and the Drake Passage before rounding Cape Horn, there is no doubt that time will be spent sharing and reflecting on the wonderful experiences of the last few days. Sailing up the Beagle Channel, you will celebrate the conclusion of your polar expedition at a special dinner.

DAY 11 USHUAIA

In the early morning, arrive back in Ushuaia. It is time to say goodbye to your crew and fellow travellers. You will be transferred to your hotel or to the airport for your onward flight.

Note: Sites mentioned will vary by ship, voyage and time of year.

SHIPS OFFERING SIMILAR ITINERARIES:

Luxury Ships

Sea Spirit (114), National Geographic Explorer (148), Silver Explorer (132), Silver Cloud (200), Le Boreal (200) & Le Soleal (200)

Expedition Ships

Akademik Sergey Vavilov (92) & Akademik Ioffe (96)

While these are among our featured vessels, there are other ships operating this route and we would be happy to discuss them with you.



ANTARCTIC CIRCLE VOYAGES

LEMAIRE CHANNEL

These voyages start operating in late December as the ice recedes and vessels can usually push a little further south, with the goal of crossing the Antarctic Circle – a great option if you want to experience more of the Peninsula, more wildlife and more amazing polar scenery. After all, Antarctica's a very long way to go!

DAY 1 USHUAIA

Upon embarking your vessel in the afternoon and being welcomed aboard by your crew, there will be time to settle in before departing Ushuaia and charting a course through the Beagle Channel.

DAYS 2-3 DRAKE PASSAGE

The crossing of the infamous Drake Passage could be a challenging or a tranquil introduction to your Antarctic adventure but either way will certainly be exciting. Your expedition team will be on deck looking out for whales and identifying seabirds, or preparing you for the wonders that await with informative presentations on everything from wildlife to history.

DAYS 4-10 ANTARCTIC PENINSULA

On reaching the waters around the Antarctic Peninsula, the first goal will be to head directly south to the Antarctic Circle (66° 33' S) and into Matha Strait or Marguerite Bay. The farther

south you go, the more sea ice is found and the aim is to cross the circle before getting stopped by this ice. Few ships venture this far south and you will be able to take full advantage of being on a modern, ice-strengthened vessel of this calibre. Given favourable conditions, the ship will push its exploration even further southward, looking for historic and wildlife sites. From its most southerly point (south of the circle) it will then make its way north, cruising through the narrow waterways and channels of the Antarctic Peninsula. Spectacular waterways such as Crystal Sound, the Lemaire Channel, the Neumeyer Channel and the Gerlache Strait will all feature in your itinerary. Landing sites might include Neko Harbour, Wilhelmina Bay, Petermann Island and the Yalours, where you can observe Weddell, crabeater and elephant seals, skuas and other seabirds, as well as an abundance of penguins including some very large colonies of Adélies. Sharing territory on Half Moon Island with fur seals is a breeding colony of chinstrap penguins, and as you proceed along the peninsula you may spot orcas and minke whales and perhaps gentle humpbacks. The expedition team will plan on walking ashore on the mainland of Antarctica at Paradise



Harbour or Neko Harbour. Although it will not be your first glimpse of the Antarctic, a walk ashore among its breathtaking scenery will evoke emotions you will carry with you for the rest of your life - in particular the sight of the weather-sculpted icebergs and the immense tabular icebergs that have broken away from the continent's ice shelf. Some passengers may wish to camp ashore overnight. Whatever your vantage point, whether it is on board or ashore, expect to feel transformed as you experience twilight from the very bottom of the planet.

DAYS 11-12 DRAKE PASSAGE

Reluctantly leaving this extraordinary place and heading north, once again crossing the Drake Passage, the ship will round Cape Horn before turning towards Ushuaia. As you sail up the Beagle Channel, you and your fellow explorers will reflect on your wonderful polar experiences as you share a celebratory dinner.

DAY 13 USHUAIA

Arrive back in Ushuaia in the early morning and farewell your crew and new friends before being transferred to your hotel or to the airport for your onward flight.

Note: Sites mentioned will vary by ship, voyage and time of year.

This itinerary is just an example and durations for Antarctic Circle voyages may vary from 12 - 14 nights, depending on the season, the ship and the operator, and whether pre-voyage accommodation is included.

Please refer to the insert for all dates, durations and cabin prices, or go to our website where you can see each ship's detailed itineraries: www.antarcticatravelcentre.com.au/voyages

Even better, call one of our specialists on 1300 668 112 and they'll be pleased to help you select the best option.


SHIPS OFFERING SIMILAR ITINERARIES:

Luxury Ships

Sea Spirit (114) & Le Soleal (200)

Expedition Ships

Akademik Sergey Vavilov (92) & Akademik Ioffe (96)



ANTARCTICA, FALKLAND ISLANDS & SOUTH GEORGIA VOYAGES

If your time and budget will stretch to a longer trip, these voyages offer an incredible experience of the sub-Antarctic islands as well as the Antarctic Peninsula. Be warned – many people choose a shorter voyage, only to find themselves travelling back to Antarctica on a second trip to include the fascinating Falkland Islands and South Georgia, with all its stunning wild beauty and accessible wildlife.

DAY 1 USHUAIA

The excitement of the journey ahead begins as soon as you have been assigned your cabin aboard and the ship slips anchor to enter the Beagle Channel, quickly leaving the world's southernmost city receding into the distance.

DAY 2 AT SEA

As you head towards the Falklands, there is plenty of time to spend with the on-board polar experts who will be pleased to educate you about the wonders of Antarctica. Sailing northeast, you'll likely be joined by swooping seabirds including the wandering albatross that you'll come to know well on this journey.

DAYS 3-4 FALKLAND ISLANDS

Reaching the Falklands overnight and eager to make a first shore excursion, the plan is to explore the islands of the West Falkland Archipelago, home to a profusion of seabirds and migratory birds. The first penguin sightings will be on the island of West Point with its bustling rookeries of rock-hoppers, alongside a great colony of black-browed albatrosses. On Saunders Island, you will see nesting macaroni penguins along with oystercatchers, geese and flightless steamer ducks that are permanent Falkland residents. Next day make a stop in the capital, Port Stanley, on East Falkland Island and wander the streets of brightly painted houses, perhaps visiting the memorials of the 1982 British-Argentine conflict.

DAYS 5-6 AT SEA

The ship turns south-east and heads for South Georgia and, when you're not scanning the horizon in search of whales and seabirds, the on-board experts will tell you tales of the whalers and sealers who reached this wild island, and fill your minds with heroic stories of the polar explorers, including Shackleton's epic feat of courage.

DAYS 7-9 SOUTH GEORGIA

Majestic snow-covered mountains greet you on South Georgia, the most rugged island in this region. You will cruise the protected waters of the eastern coast looking for suitable landing spots, like Salisbury Plain and St Andrews Bay. The highlight of both these excursions is the mind-boggling numbers of king penguin adults and young that live in these locations by the hundreds of thousands, covering every inch of the shore. But that is not the only wildlife on display; fur seals can be seen poking their heads above the water, skuas and giant petrels swoop in the skies above, while the albatross, your constant companion, is never far away. South Georgia is also home to roughly 300,000 elephant seals and an estimated 5 million macaroni penguins. It is also hoped to explore the old whaling station at Grytviken and visit Sir Ernest Shackleton's grave.



DAYS 10-12 AT SEA & SOUTH ORKNEYS

As the ship crosses the Scotia Sea, sailing ever closer to Antarctica, a visit is planned to the South Orkney Islands* which are linked to the Antarctic Peninsula by an enormous submarine mountain range, the often mist-shrouded islands protected by large icebergs and sea ice. *On early season voyages pack ice has not melted sufficiently to allow access.

DAYS 13-16 SOUTH SHETLAND ISLANDS & ANTARCTIC MAINLAND

Next you will spend some time cruising among South Shetland's islands that frame the north-west edge of the Antarctic Peninsula, providing some shelter from the winds. Dazzling wildlife sightings await on your excursions to some of these islands that may include King George, Half Moon, Barrientos or Livingston. Adélie, chinstrap and gentoo penguins thrive here as do several species of seals, and you may see yet more whales. If the weather allows, you might visit the flooded volcanic caldera of Deception Island. For those wanting to stretch their legs, a spectacular hike to the crater rim offers a challenge. Finally, after so much anticipation, you will arrive at the Antarctic mainland in Paradise Harbour or Hope Bay. The scenery here - from the colossal icebergs to the seemingly endless Antarctic ice sheet - is truly astounding. Conditions permitting, you will undertake a shore excursion and set foot on the White Continent itself..

DAYS 17-18 DRAKE PASSAGE

The ship's bow turns north towards South America and you may look back with some sadness as Antarctica is left behind. But the sights and experiences of the past days will live long in your memory and the completion of your journey is celebrated at a final dinner.



DAY 19 USHUAIA

Having sailed up the Beagle Channel through the night, the early morning arrival at Ushuaia becomes a flurry of activity and there is a rush to farewell your crew and companions as you disembark and transfer to your hotel or the airport for your onward flight.

Note: Sites mentioned will vary by ship, voyage and time of year.

This itinerary is just an example and durations for Antarctica, Falkland Islands & South Georgia voyages may vary from 18 – 22 nights, depending on the season, the ship and the operator, and whether pre-voyage accommodation is included. Please refer to the insert for all dates, durations and cabin prices, or go to our website where you can see each ship's detailed itineraries: www.antarcticatravelcentre.com.au/voyages Even better, call one of our specialists on 1300 668 112 and they'll be pleased to help you select the best option.

SHIPS OFFERING SIMILAR ITINERARIES:

Luxury Ships

Sea Spirit (114), National Geographic Explorer (148), Silver Explorer (132) & Le Soleal (200)

Expedition Ships

Akademik Sergey Vavilov (92) & Akademik Ioffe (96)

While these are among our featured vessels, there are other ships operating this route and we would be happy to discuss them with you.



SOUTH GEORGIA VOYAGES

South Georgia is one of the most stunning places on earth. This small archipelago rears up from the Southern Ocean to a height of almost 3,000 metres and is home to millions of birds. The rugged landscape forms a dramatic backdrop to the many beaches and coves which are home to millions of penguins and petrels, thousands of elephant and fur seals and hundreds of albatrosses.

DAY 1 PUNTA ARENAS

Your journey commences this morning in the southern Chilean city of Punta Arenas, transferring from the central meeting point to the airport and flying on the scheduled service to Port Stanley, the capital of the Falkland Islands. You will be met on arrival and transferred to the pier. There is time to explore the town before you make your way to your expedition ship.

DAYS 2-3 AT SEA

The ship charts a south-easterly course across the Scotia Sea. Days at sea are never dull – this stretch of the South Atlantic is rich in its bio-diversity and showcases an abundance of astonishing wildlife, and much of your time will be spent on the bridge or outer decks, scanning the horizon in search of whales and other marine mammals. You will be joined by hundreds of seabirds including the wandering albatross.

DAYS 4-5 SOUTH GEORGIA – KING HAAKON BAY & NORTHWEST COAST

Given favourable weather conditions it is hoped to navigate the ship into the historic location of King Haakon Bay. It was here, 100 years ago, that Shackleton and his men made landfall in their small lifeboat, the 'James Caird', after completing the perilous ocean crossing from Elephant Island. Elsehul Bay allows for great Zodiac cruising and will be a possible location to launch the kayakers for a paddle. One of the most

anticipated sites in South Georgia is Salisbury Plain. The black sand beaches and tussock-covered dunes are home to a staggering abundance of king penguins, perhaps 100,000 birds. The majestic 'Kings' are not the only wildlife on display. Fur seals can be seen poking their heads above the water, the elephant seals will enjoy lazing about the beach, while the skuas and giant petrels swoop and weave in the skies above.

DAYS 6-7 SOUTH GEORGIA – FORTUNA BAY, STROMNESS, GRYTVIKEN & CENTRAL NORTH COAST

Your adventure takes you next to Fortuna Bay, a majestic 4.8km long and 1.6km wide fjord. Here at Fortuna Bay you can expect to see king penguins, elephant seals and even reindeer. History comes into sharp focus as you continue west to Stromness and Grytviken. From 1912 until the 1930s, Stromness, and nearby Leith and Husvik, operated as whaling stations and the rusted and ghostly remnants of these old stations now seem out of place in such a pristine environment. This area is key to the Shackleton story and it was here, in 1916, that Shackleton and his companions, Frank Worsley and Tom Crean arrived after their epic mountain crossing from King Haakon Bay on the south coast. If the weather co-operates, it is hoped to be able to hike the last few kilometres across the saddle separating Fortuna Bay from neighbouring Stromness. At the head of the bay lies Grytviken, the largest of the old whaling stations on South Georgia. A highlight of the landing here is a visit to the gravesite of Sir Ernest Shackleton.



DAYS 8-9 AT SEA, SOUTH GEORGIA – ST ANDREWS BAY, GOLD HARBOUR & EASTERN COAST

The next few days will take you to St Andrew's Bay and Gold Harbour, places that are teeming with wildlife including fur seals, elephant seals and massive colonies of the colourful king penguins.

DAY 10 AT SEA, SOUTH GEORGIA – ODTUL & PRION ISLAND

Next you'll visit the old whaling shore depot at Godthul where there is a terrific hike up to a beautiful lake. Cooper Bay is home to a sizeable Macaroni penguin rookery. Nearing the end of your visit to South Georgia, it's hoped to enjoy a shore landing at Prion Island. Situated in the breathtaking Bay of Isles, Prion Island has been designated as a 'Specially Protected Area' by the South Georgia Government, due to the breeding wandering albatross colonies at this location. The site is closed to visiting ships between November and mid-January due to the massive concentration of fur seals on the beaches. The boardwalks provide access to several observation platforms where you can view nesting wandering albatross at close quarters. Your visit to this breathtaking place is a fitting way to complete your journey.

DAYS 11-13 AT SEA TOWARDS FALKLAND ISLANDS

Educational presentations continue and you will enjoy an entertaining and memorable voyage recap by your Expedition Leader. A particular highlight of the return journey will be frequent sightings of the majestic albatross, petrels and other seabirds as they soar above the ship on the winds of the Southern Ocean.

DAY 14 AT SEA – SEA LION ISLAND, FALKLAND ISLAND

Launching the zodiacs, you go ashore to view the incredible diversity of wildlife found at this location. Three species of penguin including gentoo, Magellanic and rockhopper, as well as southern elephant seals and South American sea lions are known to inhabit the area. Weather permitting, there may be time to visit neighbouring Bleaker Island.

DAY 15 PORT STANLEY, FALKLAND ISLANDS/ PUNTA ARENAS, CHILE

In the early morning, the ship navigates through the narrows and into the harbour of Port Stanley. After disembarking, it will be time to say farewell to your crew and you will be transferred to Mount Pleasant airport for the return flight to Punta Arenas.

Note: Voyage duration, start and end points and sites visited will vary by ship, voyage and time of year.

SHIPS OFFERING SIMILAR ITINERARIES:

Luxury Ships

Sea Spirit (114) & National Geographic Explorer (148)

Expedition Ships

Akademik Sergey Vavilov (92)

ARCTIC

The High Arctic circles the top of the globe from Russia's Far East to Svalbard. Covered in sea-ice for most of the year, it is only during the short summer months (May to September) that it is possible to witness the stunning scenery, incredible and diverse wildlife and interesting indigenous communities the Arctic has to offer. Currently fewer Australians head north than to Antarctica: with which we have closer connections with. For those who do venture north they are exhilarated by their experiences, it's our strong recommendation it will be an equal, yet quite different, to a trip to Antarctica.

We have first-hand experience of the Arctic and can look after all aspects of your holiday; flights, pre and post voyage arrangements and of course your voyage, including the Canadian Arctic, Greenland, Svalbard (Spitsbergen) and the North Pole.

The High Arctic is best explored as the pack ice recedes and the temperatures rise and the race is on for all living creatures to make the most of the short summer. There's a lot to see; Polar bears, walrus, seals, Arctic foxes, millions of seabirds, remote villages, icebergs and magnificent scenery and historic sites all make for an unforgettable holiday.





CHOOSING YOUR ARCTIC VOYAGE

THE SEASON

High Arctic voyages operate during the Northern hemisphere summer, starting in May the season runs through until September when the shortening days and encroaching sea ice send most of its inhabitants (wildlife and humans) south to warmer climes.

These voyages are operating in the vast reaches of the Canadian, Scandinavian and Russian Arctic often high above the Arctic Circle with one to the 'Top of the World' – the North Pole.

May: Early in the season it's only the southern Arctic that is accessible, Norway's Fjords and southern Spitsbergen. Further north sea-ice prevents all but the Nuclear Powered *50 Years of Victory* from accessing the region.

June/July: The migratory birds have arrived on-mass and are in a hurry to breed, given the very short summer. Polar bears are roaming widely, as the sea ice breaks up finding their preferred prey, seals, becomes more of a challenge and their diet broadens to include birds eggs and chicks.

August: The bird cliffs and colonies are frantically feeding to ensure their young can fledge and migrate. Interestingly the young of guillemots are launched by their dads from their cliff nesting site out to sea (they can't fly – just glide – hopefully reaching the water) where they will continue to grow and finally fledge.

September: In Late August or early September most of the birds are already heading south. As the 'summer' ends the normally ice-choked waters of the fabled Northwest-Passage have become navigable for a short period of time, before winter takes over and the Arctic summer comes to a close.



ASSOCIATION OF ARCTIC EXPEDITION CRUISE OPERATORS (AECO)

We are proud to have been approved as an Affiliate Member. AECO is to the Arctic what IAATO is to the Antarctic. AECO's objectives include ensuring that cruise tourism in the Arctic is carried out with the utmost consideration of the natural environment and local cultures. As in the Antarctic only 100 guests may go ashore at one time. See page 50 for more information on AECO & IAATO.



WEATHER

Arctic weather is almost as unpredictable as that of the Antarctica, perhaps lacking some of the extremes. Generally it's not that cold, on clear still days it can be very pleasant. Most voyages will experience a range of conditions, foggy days are often followed by beautiful clear skies. Most of the sea days are close to one landform or another (Greenland, Baffin Island or Svalbard) and hence sailing conditions are relatively calm.

SITES

There are hundreds of sites of interest throughout the Arctic region. In many ways the High Arctic has glacial scenery to match Antarctica, with massive glaciers and Icebergs found all through the region (in particular on Greenland, Svalbard (Spitsbergen) and Baffin Island). On Greenland there are several Inuit communities where we learn of the ways of these hardy folk.







FAUNA AND FLORA

Here's where a trip to the Arctic is quite different to Antarctica, perhaps with the exception of South Georgia. In the Arctic there are far more species of fauna and, in particular, flora that you need to consider. It is a delicate environment, so please do all you can to leave it as you find it.

Birdlife is far more varied than in Antarctica with guillemots, razorbills, puffins, terns, gulls, geese, ducks, phalaropes, curlew, sandpipers, owls and falcons. Other wildlife includes: three species of seal, four species of whale, Arctic fox, Musk Ox, walrus, for the very fortunate Narwhal, and the stars of the show Polar bears.

POLAR BEARS

Polar bears would have to be one of the most amazing creatures on earth. A true marine mammal, equally at home in the water as it is on land/ice, that over-winters in sub-zero temperatures and roams widely in search of a variety of prey. Polar bears are found throughout the Arctic.

WALRUS

Walrus are sensitive to boats and human presence, especially females with calves (quite understandable given they were hunted close to extinction). Noises, smells and sudden movements can elicit a fright response. Your guides will ensure your approach is careful and does not frighten them and as a result you can often view them at quite close proximity. There are several well known 'hall-outs' sites (on Spitsbergen, Franz Josef Land & Baffin Island) where you may find a few or perhaps 80 individuals.

ARCTIC WILDLIFE VIEWING

Your guides will follow a 'no disturbance principle': the avoidance of disturbing the animals, i.e. we don't move forward until we see a reaction, and then stop, we avoid provoking a reaction in the first place. In the event of a polar bear sighting, on land, on ice, from a zodiac or a ship your guides will make sure that a safe distance is maintained at all times (at least 30 meters when in a zodiac and 200 metres from ships). The guides will still follow the 'no disturbance principal': if at that distance the bear shows any signs of stress they will retreat further. We explain this to help you understand that requests to move closer for a better photograph will be declined.

FIREARMS

In Polar bear country it is a requirement for your guides to carry appropriate firearms and other 'bear deterrent devices'. There are very strict guidelines as to use of any device as well as stringent training required of the guides. The guns are there for your safety and the guides are there to do everything possible to ensure that the guns are purely a precaution – the idea is not to use them.

The training and adherence to strict guidelines works well – **so please don't be concerned.**



SVALBARD

If wildlife is a major interest then Spitsbergen (the largest island in the archipelago of Svalbard) should be on your list. Spitsbergen's wildlife is protected and has been for many years, as a result you have the chance to view the animals in their natural state and often in great abundance and often up-close.

Spitsbergen, a Dutch word for 'pointed peaks', is one of the most beautiful wilderness areas in the world. The bird life is prolific, and with several well know 'hall-outs' for walrus there's a good chance to see and photograph many of the Arctic's most wonderful inhabitants including Polar bear.

SPITSBERGEN ENCOUNTER (10 -12 DAYS)

Days are busy with shore excursions to places of historic interest, visits to wildlife colonies, viewing the exquisite native flora and soaking up the stunning landscapes. A choice of a short or a longer hike are features of many Arctic voyages along with regular cruising in the Zodiacs.

DAY 1 LONGYEARBYEN

Today we embark in Longyearbyen and sail out into Isfjorden during the early evening. With almost 24 hours of daylight at this time of the year, you enjoy the views from the outer decks of the ship as we depart.

DAY 2 BOURBONHAMNA

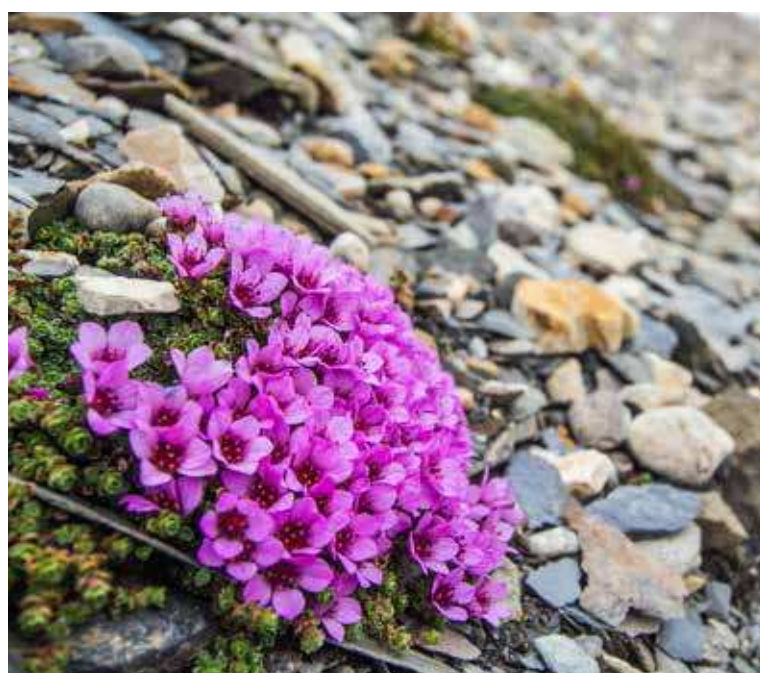
Beluga whales are frequently seen as they transit the narrow sound near Bourbonhamna. It is estimated there are approximately five to ten thousand belugas in the Svalbard population. On your shore excursion, an old hunting cabin and other artefacts are points of interest. You may also hope to catch a glimpse of dozens of reindeer that inhabit the area.

DAY 3 LILLIEHOOK GLACIER

The Lilliehook Glacier is an incredible sight. The face stretches almost seven kilometres across and has a height of around 80-meters. Viewed from the ship or on a zodiac cruise you come to appreciate the enormous scale of our surroundings. The area is home to numerous bird colonies as well as bearded and ringed seals.

DAY 4 MONACO GLACIER

No trip along the north coast of Spitsbergen would be complete without a visit to Monaco Glacier. A wide glacier face at the head of the fjord makes for spectacular kayaking and zodiac



cruising. The coastal plain near the mouth of Liefdefjorden offers superb hiking and is often a great place to spot polar bears that come here to hunt for ringed seals or feed on birds' eggs.

DAY 5 PHIPPSOYA

At 81° north latitude, Phippsoya is just 540 nautical miles from the North Pole. Because of its proximity to the permanent Arctic ice pack, Phippsoya offers the potential for great polar bear viewing.

DAYS 6 - 7 HINLOPEN STRAIT

The Hinlopen Strait has amazing 'bird cliffs' at Alkefjellet home to thousands of guillemots. The nearby Murchison Fjord is a wonderful place to kayak or zodiac cruise between the islands. There are also some excellent hiking routes which afford breathtaking views.

DAY 8 FUGLESANGENOYA & SMEERENBURG

Fuglesangenoya is home to a large Little auk (dovekie) colony. Nearby is the old whaling station of Smeerenburg, literally translated as 'Blubber Town'. As you hike the shoreline of the

old station, you learn about the importance of whaling in the discovery and exploration of the Svalbard archipelago.

DAY 9 PRINCE CHARLES ISLAND

You visit to a walrus haul-out on Prince Charles Island with the hope to see these odd looking animals ashore. Approaching from downwind will confirm that walrus are ashore – the smell of a walrus haul out is quite 'unique'. Tonight you celebrate your journey with a special dinner attended by the ship's Captain.

DAY 10 LONGYEARBYEN

Arriving back into Longyearbyen this morning, your journey comes to an end.

SHIPS OFFERING SIMILAR ITINERARIES

Luxury Ships

Sea Spirit (114) & National Geographic Explorer (148)

Expedition Ships

Akademik Sergey Vavilov (92) & Ocean Nova (68)



CANADIAN HIGH ARCTIC

We use the term High Arctic as the areas visited are a long way north: north of the Arctic Circle and most of Alaska. One of the gateways into this region, via a flight from Ottawa, is the remote community of Resolute, there is a saying that 'Resolute is not the end of the world, but you can see it from here' that should give you an idea of location.

It's likely the variety of scenery and wildlife as well as the knowledge that you're venturing where few people go that is the draw to this area. Baffin, Devon and Ellesmere Islands all offer incredible scenery; mountain, fjords, glaciers and pack ice that make up this wilderness area and provide homes for rare and interesting wildlife including: muskox, walrus, beluga whales and polar bear. The Canadian High Arctic also offers history and culture of the region and a chance to follow in the wake of some of the most amazing and daring explorer's. There's also a chance to meet the Inuit, who carry with them the spirit of the North and who will enchant you with stories of life in the High Arctic.

CLASSIC NORTHWEST PASSAGE & GREENLAND

The Northwest Passage is a sea passage through the Arctic that connects the Pacific and Atlantic Oceans. The search for this Passage claimed the lives of many, it is now a journey you can enjoy whilst your expedition's historian will help you discover the courage, misery and the incredible endurance of some of history's greatest explorers (Franklin in particular).

DAY 1 CAMBRIDGE BAY

You depart Edmonton on a charter flight to Cambridge Bay, a remote outpost above the Arctic Circle. Located on the southern shores of Victoria Island. Enjoy a walking tour of the town and then board your ship.

DAY 2 VICTORIA STRAIT

As the ship charts a course into the Northwest Passage, on-board presentation series begins and you delve into the tale of the Franklin expedition.

DAY 3 CONNINGHAM BAY

This morning you arrive at Conningham Bay on the shore of Prince of Wales. This is one of the most remarkable wildlife sites in the Arctic. A hotspot for polar bears who come here to feast on Beluga

whales, it is not unusual to find the shoreline littered with whale skeletons and very healthy looking polar bears!

DAY 4 BELLOT STRAIT

Today you transit the narrow passage of Bellot Strait. The mixing of waters in this strait provides an abundant food source for marine mammals, and keep your eyes peeled for harp seals, bearded seals and even polar bears. The historic site of Fort Ross, located at the southern end of Somerset Island, is a former Hudson's Bay Company fur trading outpost. Fascinating archaeological sites nearby tell a story of more than a thousand years of habitation by the Inuit and their predecessors.

DAY 5 BEECHEY ISLAND

Beechey Island is of great historic importance. It is here that Sir John Franklin's ill-fated expedition spent its last 'comfortable' winter in 1845 before disappearing into the icy vastness. A trip ashore at Beechey Island to visit the grave markers on a remote windswept beach gives one pause to wonder on the bravery (or foolhardiness) of these pioneering explorers, as they sought a way through the barren, frozen landscape.

DAY 6 DEVON ISLAND

Cruising the coastline of Devon Island, you are now in the waters of Lancaster Sound – a rich, bio-diverse region often referred to as the wildlife 'super highway' of the Arctic. Massive volumes of water from Baffin Bay to the east, Beaufort Sea to the west, and the archipelago of islands to the north combine here to make a rich cocktail of nutrients supporting an abundance of Arctic wildlife. We plan to visit the old Royal Canadian Mounted Police (RCMP) outpost at Dundas Harbour.



DAY 7 NAVY BOARD INLET & SIRMILIK NATIONAL PARK

The vast landscapes of Sirmilik National Park surround us as you approach the remote Inuit community of Mittimatalik (Pond Inlet). A highlight will be a visit to the Natinnak Centre, where a fascinating cultural exhibit showcases daily life, culture and history of the people of the north. You will also enjoy meeting the local children of Mittimatalik and marvelling at their athletic abilities as they demonstrate traditional Inuit games.

DAY 8 GIBBS FJORD

This morning you enter the spectacular Gibbs Fjord. Your expedition ship will be dwarfed by the giant peaks and snowy glaciers as we cruise along the dark waters.

DAY 9 BAFFIN BAY

Leaving the rugged coastline of Baffin Island, you cross Baffin Bay which allows time to slow down and reflect on the beauty of the experience. On-board experts will continue to educate you on the history and wildlife of the region while naturalists keep watch for fulmars, little auks, pilot whales and perhaps orca. On the approach to Greenland, there are increased chances of spotting some of the larger baleen whales; like the fin and sei.

DAY 10 JACOBHAVN ICEFJORD

If one word could sum up today's experience it would be 'ice'. Truly one of the wonders of the world, the Jacobshavn Icefjord, a UNESCO World Heritage site that spews giant tabular icebergs into Disko Bay. The glacier that creates these stunning monoliths advances over 40 metres per day, creating around 50 cubic

kilometres of ice annually. Approach to Ilulissat is dependent on the amount of ice in and around the mouth of the fjord.

DAY 11 SISIMIUT

Explore the fjord behind the town of Sisimiut before going ashore to explore this beautiful location. Characterized by colourful local houses, the town features a towering granite peak as a backdrop. Also meet a few of the traditional Greenlandic kayakers and see a demonstration of 'Eskimo rolling' by one of the former Greenland kayak champions. A small museum is another interesting option.

DAY 12 SONDRE STROMFJORD

One of the world's longest fjords, Sondre Stromfjord towers above the ships that sail along it. The ship will venture into some of the small side fjords to explore by zodiac, on foot or by kayak. Major geologic and geomorphologic features surround you. Muskox are often sighted along the shores of the fjord with white-tailed Sea eagles soaring high above, riding the thermals off the ridges.

DAY 13 KANGERLUSSUAQ

Your journey through the Arctic is all but complete as you disembark the ship in Kangerlussuaq and make your way to the airport for your onward flight.

SHIPS OFFERING SIMILAR ITINERARIES

Luxury Ships

National Geographic Explorer (148)

Expedition Ships

Akademik Sergey Vavilov (92) & Ocean Nova (68)



GREENLAND & ICELAND

Everything about Greenland is big: it's the largest and oldest Island on our planet. With most of the Island covered in an enormous ice cap it's the coast where the maritime influences combine with incredible glacial scenery to offer 'big' experiences. Even the names follow the 'big' theme, Qeqertarsuaq translates literally as 'large island' in the local Inuit language. After the main landmass of Greenland, this is the territory's second largest island and one of the ten largest islands on earth. In addition to enormous fjords, glaciers and icebergs, Greenland also has great historic and geological interest. Keeping with the theme and one of the wonders of the world the Jakobshavn Icefjord – a UNESCO World Heritage site – spews gigantic tabular icebergs out into Disko Bay. The glacier that creates these enormous bergs advances at over 40 meters per day, creating something in the order of 50 cubic kilometres of ice each year.

Whilst dwarfed by its northern neighbour, Iceland offers great contrast with volcanoes, geysers, hot springs and lava fields. Massive glaciers are protected in Vatnajökull and Snæfellsjökull national parks.

Iceland's bird life is excellent, being a little further south than Greenland, there is greater variety of seabirds including large colonies of puffins. Iceland shares its Viking history with southern Greenland.

SPITSBERGEN, EAST GREENLAND & ICELAND

DAY 1 LONGYEARBYEN

DAY 2 EMBARKATION IN LONGYEARBYEN

Sailing into a true wilderness: Isfjorden on your first evening is spectacular and there is already the possibility of marine mammal encounters.

DAY 3 EXPLORATION OF NORTHWEST SPITSBERGEN

This area contains the archipelago's most impressive scenery and some of the Arctic's best wildlife viewing opportunities. Deep fjords and narrow channels are flanked by jagged snowy mountain peaks. Polar Bears can be spotted anytime, anywhere in and around Svalbard. Ny Ålesund, a former mining town, is now home to an international community of Arctic researchers, complete with museum, gift shop, and post office.

DAYS 4-5 GREENLAND SEA

From Svalbard you head southwest across the Greenland Sea toward East Greenland. In these far northern latitudes it is possible to encounter sea ice any time of the year. Heading south, with accompanying darker nights, there is a greater possibility of seeing aurora borealis.

DAYS 6-11 EAST GREENLAND

The Kaiser Franz Joseph and Kong Oscar fjord systems are part of *Northeast Greenland National Park*, the world's largest national park. Scoresby Sund is the largest and longest fjord system in the world. This whole area contains some of the Arctic's most impressive scenery. Deep fjords and narrow channels, flanked by ice-clad peaks up to 2000 meters high, reach far into the mountainous heart of Greenland. The tundra is home to musk oxen and Arctic hare. The landscapes are vast, open, and seemingly untouched since the beginning of time are a hikers' paradise. The Inuit village of Ittoqqortoormiit is the only permanent settlement in the region. The community boasts an excellent museum, gift shop, post office, Greenlandic sled dogs, and of course the opportunity to meet Inuit people.



DAY 12 DENMARK STRAIT

You cross the Denmark Strait toward Iceland, crossing the Arctic Circle on the way. Seabird viewing and whale sightings can be enjoyed from the deck, bridge or lounge.

DAY 13 ÍSAFJÖRÐUR, ICELAND

Situated in beautiful Vestfirðir (Westfjords), the town of Ísafjörður embodies Iceland's unique blend of rich cultural heritage and contemporary charm. Ísafjörður's longstanding significance as a fishing and trading port are reflected in its many historical buildings and museums. The local folk museum contains the oldest house in Iceland, built in 1734. Yet the small, relatively isolated town has a surprisingly vibrant and modern feel to it.

DAY 14: SNÆFELLSNES, ICELAND

The famous Snæfellsjökull volcano and picturesque Kirkjufell mountain are dominant features in the impressive landscape of the Snæfellsnes peninsula. A rich cultural and literary history and the success of fishermen and merchants are evident in local fishing villages.

DAY 15: DISEMBARKATION IN REYKJAVÍK, ICELAND

After breakfast we say farewell in Reykjavík, the capital of Iceland and ending point of your expedition.

Note: There are a number of quite different voyages that combine Iceland with Greenland. Please go to www.arctictravelcentre.com.au to fully research the options, or call us and we can help find your ideal voyage.

SHIPS OFFERING SIMILAR VOYAGES

Luxury Ships

Sea Spirit (114) & National Geographic Explorer (148)

Expedition Ships

Ocean Nova (68)



NORTH POLE & FRANZ JOSEF LAND

Currently there's only one vessel that can take travellers to the North Pole; the nuclear powered ice-breaker *50 Years of Victory*. On your cruise to the North Pole, watch (and feel) in amazement from high above the frozen surface of the Arctic Ocean, as the ship forces its way over and through sea-ice. Generating 75,000 horsepower, the ship can force its way through sea-ice up to three meters thick.

This is a one-of-a-kind trip with the single-minded goal of reaching 90 degrees North. There will be opportunities to view wildlife, including the polar bear. On the return journey you'll visit the archipelago of Franz Josef Land, home to walrus, seals and many bird species including the rare Ivory gull.

NORTH POLE

DAY 1 MURMANSK

Welcome to the city of Murmansk on Russia's Kola Peninsula, starting point of your adventure. You are met upon arrival at the airport and transferred to your hotel.

DAY 2 EMBARKATION IN MURMANSK

Today you board the nuclear-powered icebreaker *50 Years of Victory* (50 Let Pobedy). Explore the ship and get orientated before sailing north out of Kola Bay.

DAYS 3-6 BARENTS SEA

Nowhere can it be more truly said that "getting there is half the fun". Cruising northward through the Barents Sea there is always the possibility of seeing whales. Meanwhile, you have the opportunity to learn about the unique icebreaking capabilities of the ship. You are also treated to a tour of the

engine room. As we make our way across the ice cap, you witness firsthand, the ship's awesome power as massive ice blocks give way under the enormous bulk of the special spoon-shaped bow. Taking advantage of the 24-hour daylight helicopter 'flightseeing' tours add the wonder of this voyage. From the air you can observe the ship crushing a path through the ice. You also have a unique vantage point from which to witness the stunning beauty of this vast polar icescape.

DAY 7 NORTH POLE

Welcome to the geographic North Pole! After carefully navigating to 90 degrees North, you disembark onto the frozen sea. Now is the time to experience the long-anticipated thrill of standing at the top of the world. Join hands with your fellow passengers and literally walk around the world during our special International Round Dance. You may even have the chance to take a plunge into the icy water! After your memorable time at the North Pole the ship heads south.



DAYS 8-10 FRANZ JOSEF LAND

The Franz Josef Land is an archipelago of 191 islands, and is part of the Russian Arctic National Park. Polar bears, walrus, beluga whales and for the very fortunate even narwhal can be spotted anytime. Scree slopes and cliffs around the islands host enormous colonies of migratory seabirds such as guillemots, little auks and ivory gulls. Excursions by Zodiac and helicopter are again taken. Franz Josef Land is also home to some very interesting geological features, such as the mysterious stone spheres on Champ Island. Collectors of geographical extremes may take note that Cape Fligely on Rudolf Island is the northernmost point of land in the Eastern Hemisphere.

Tikhaya Bukhta is currently a Russian Arctic National Park ranger station occupying Soviet-era research buildings and was also a major base for polar expeditions. Nearby, the fascinating columnar basalt cliffs of Rubini Rock are home to thousands of nesting seabirds.

DAYS 11-12 BARENTS SEA

After our amazing time in Franz Josef Land we cross back south through the bountiful waters of the Barents Sea. Presentations and workshops by your expert staff ensure that these days at sea are not idly spent.

DAY 13 DISEMBARKATION IN MURMANSK

After breakfast on board say farewell knowing you've joined a rare group of humans who've stood on the 'Top of the World'.

SHIP OFFERING THIS VOYAGE:

Icebreaker: 50 Years of Victory (128)

FRANZ JOSEF LAND

The Sea Spirit offers an itinerary that combines the east coast of Svalbard with Franz Josef Land. An itinerary currently unique to this vessel. Please call for more information.

WHICH SHIP?

Perhaps the question should be what sort of experience am I looking for:

Luxury?

Expedition?

Fly Cruise?



OCEAN NOVA (68) – FLY-CRUISE ANTARCTICA

OUR PREFERRED PARTNER SHIPS

We've selected ten of the very best Polar ships (operators) to deliver you to these wondrous wilderness areas, classified in three categories; Luxury, Expedition and Fly Cruise; which is more about the operational style than the classification of the ship. All vessels have less than 200 passengers, three with a maximum capacity of less than 100.

NUMBER OF PASSENGERS

There are several questions we recommend you ask when considering 'what's right for me?'. One has nothing to do with style, simply the size of the vessel. IAATO & AECO regulations limit the number of guests going ashore at one time to 100. Ships with up to 200 guests will, more often than not, have 100 guests waiting while the other 100 are ashore. In practical terms this will limit the number of sites larger ships (100+ guests) can visit. Ships with over 500 guests cannot land in Antarctica.

OTHER SHIPS

While we have our preferred vessels, there are other ships we know about and can offer you if they better meet your requirements.

50 YEARS OF VICTORY (128) – ICE-BREAKER



ICE-STRENGTHENED OR ICE-BREAKER

Only one of the ships is an Icebreaker – the *50 Years of Victory* which offers the chance to reach the 'top of the world' the North Pole.

All of the other ships are 'ice-strengthened', which basically means they have strengthened hulls that allow them to safely enter polar regions. Each ship will have its own rating, each captain their own view as to what they will do with their ship (experienced Polar captains are a must). Sadly as there are many ice-rating methods dependent on where the ship is registered, built or insured it's not possible to give a simple summary. Generally 1A is a higher/better rating than 1C, the reality is that if there is too much sea-ice blocking a ship's path the ship will need to amend its itinerary, whatever its class.

FLY-CRUISE



BRITISH AEROSPACE 146 – KING GEORGE ISLAND

HEBRIDEAN SKY (70)



AKADEMIK IOFFE (96) & AKADEMIK SERGEY VAVILOV (92)



FLY-CRUISE SHIPS

These ships/voyages maximise time in Antarctica, or the Falklands and South Georgia by overflying some of the longer sea crossings, including the Drake Passage, to land closer to the destination.

OUR SHIPS OFFERING FLY-CRUISE VOYAGES:

Luxury:	Hebridean Sky – 114 guests
Expedition:	Ocean Nova – 68 guests
	Akademik Sergey Vavilov– 92 guests
	Akademik Ioffe – 96 guests

For more information on FLY-CRUISE operation see page 16.



LUXURY SHIPS

ANTARCTICA & ARCTIC

These ships combine more traditional-style of 'cruising' with an Antarctic or Arctic adventure. They offer large, very comfortable cabins with en-suite facilities and many suites have private balconies. The on-board service is excellent as is the cuisine. Most also offer wellness programmes, a spa and well-equipped gymnasium.

They all have a fleet of zodiacs, expert guides and knowledgeable expedition leaders occasionally with special guest escorts.

Many of the ships in this category are larger vessels, several with up to 200 guests. As a result of higher numbers there is a greater emphasis on the on-board experience – in part as you'll spend more time on the ship (particularly if compared with a smaller 'Expedition' style ship).



SEA SPIRIT (114)



OTHER LUXURY SHIPS: SILVER CLOUD (200), LE SOLEAL (200), LE BOREAL (200), NATIONAL GEOGRAPHIC ORION (189), HEBRIDEAN SKY (114)



NATIONAL GEOGRAPHIC EXPLORER (148)



SILVER EXPLORER (132)

EXPEDITION SHIPS

ANTARCTICA & ARCTIC

Expedition ships generally have a greater emphasis on maximising time off the vessel or out on deck. All three ships in this category have fewer than 100 guests, as a result all guests can go ashore at the one time which often translates into the opportunity to visit more sites, or to spend more time ashore (when compared with 200 passenger ships).

Fewer clients also affords greater flexibility. Some sites in the Antarctic or High Arctic allow two or three different excursions to be offered at the one place; perhaps a short hike, a group with a special interest (e.g. photography, or flora) or a longer hike.

The cabins are generally smaller than on luxury ships, they are simple/comfortable and the food excellent. **Expedition doesn't mean 'budget'**, the guides are of an equally high standard to those found on luxury ships (many will have worked on both types and simply choose one style over another). There is a strong focus on the total guest experience. In some instances the cabin prices are higher than for a similar voyage on a luxury ship; this may seem strange and it is simple economics – larger ships have more clients over which to spread the fixed costs, in particular fuel.





AKADEMIK SERGEY VAVILOV (92) & AKADEMIK IOFFE (96)



OCEAN NOVA (68)

ADVENTURE OPTIONS



KAYAKING

ANTARCTICA AND HIGH ARCTIC

Kayaking in Antarctica or the Arctic is probably one of the most intimate and inspiring ways you can explore these incredible regions, gliding through the silent waters, taking in its magnificent beauty, and perhaps experiencing close encounters with wildlife. Kayak excursions will be offered in conjunction with the Zodiac excursions whenever weather conditions permit. The choice of activities at each landing site will be explained to help you decide what to participate in, based on your own interests.

WHO CAN DO IT?

Programmes are aimed at any adventurous passenger with a basic paddling ability. The guides are experienced instructors and will help you with any additional skills as well as tailor the kayak excursions to your skill level and advise when you should or shouldn't be paddling.

WHAT IS PROVIDED?

Drysuits, kayak-specific PFDs (personal flotation devices), neoprene booties, a waterproof deck bag, pogies, and many other vital paddling accessories.

Note: Kayaking is highly weather-dependent. Your kayak guides will always attempt to take you out as many times as is safe throughout your voyage. All operators charge a non-refundable fee for kayaking. There are very limited places on this option and it should be added at the time of booking – due to its great popularity, it is not available for booking on board the vessel.



CAMPING

ANTARCTICA ONLY

Not very many people have the opportunity to say they've camped on the '7th Continent'. Picture it... you are lying in your sleeping bag listening to the crackling and grumbling of glaciers, the splintering of icebergs and the soothing sounds of water and brash ice washing onto the beach. Who said that sleep would come easy? But when it does, you drift away knowing you are breathing pristine air and experiencing something very few others have. After your night ashore, you will be taken back to your vessel so that you can enjoy a hot shower, perhaps a sauna, and then a delicious breakfast.

WHO CAN DO IT?

Directed at any passenger with an adventurous spirit and an ability to "rough it" for a night, this activity has proven very popular. Sleeping under the midnight sun, ashore in Antarctica, is something to write home about. The experienced expedition team will select a camping site that is snow-covered and isolated from any breeding wildlife.

WHAT IS PROVIDED?

All of the camping gear required for your night ashore, including appropriately warm sleeping bags. Operators provide tents for use ashore, however for the 'true experience' some offer a bivvy bag - warmer than a tent and much easier to set up, the bivvy bag doesn't block out the incredible scenery all around you.

Note: Camping is not available on all ships. Often only available on Antarctic Peninsula voyages and has a limited number of available places. It is complimentary on some vessels, at an extra cost on others - please check that with us. If you want to participate, please book along with your voyage.



PREPARING FOR YOUR VOYAGE

“There’s no such thing as bad weather, just inappropriate clothing”

We don’t need to tell you that it can be cold, wet and windy in Antarctica, and it is common to experience daytime temperatures below freezing. While expensive specialty gear is not required, make sure you are prepared with warm, water- and windproof clothing that will adequately protect you from the weather and wet conditions (sea spray is common aboard the Zodiacs). You will be travelling to the coastal regions of Antarctica (maybe Falklands and South Georgia) during the southern summer when conditions are mild but unpredictable; pack so you can dress in layers and be prepared for these rapid weather changes. Average daily temperatures during mid-season range between -4°C and +5°C, however wind-chill can make it seem a lot colder. Some operators have wet-weather gear available for rental or purchase aboard the ship (must be prearranged), while others include a waterproof parka as part of your cost, and/or will loan you rubber boots for the duration of the voyage.

We will ensure you know what is included and/or provided on your voyage and give you a detailed list of what you will need to take with you in order to be well prepared.

JOINING YOUR VOYAGE

Please note that we require all clients to arrive into the starting point, depending on the cruise, no later than the night before the voyage departs.



YOU ARE IN SAFE HANDS

ANTARCTICA

South America Travel Centre has been creating tailor-made holidays throughout South America, Central America, Cuba and Mexico since 1995. Having the two specialist teams under one roof means we are perfectly placed to coordinate your travel plans before and after your Antarctic adventure. As Antarctica is quite 'a hard act to follow', we would generally recommend that most additional arrangements are undertaken before you join your voyage. To inspire you, here are just a few suggestions – we can make very many more!

SANTIAGO & BUENOS AIRES

International flights will usually take you first to Santiago where you can choose to break your journey in the Chilean capital or connect directly on to Buenos Aires. For those who stop over in Santiago there are several charming boutique hotels to choose from, among them enchanting Le Rêve in Providencia, inspired by the small hotels of Paris and surrounded by excellent restaurants, or, in the heart of bohemian Bellavista, the vivid crimson Castillo Rojo (Red Castle) with its restored and reimagined 1920s styling.

Argentina's capital, beautiful Buenos Aires, is definitely worth 2 or 3 days, in part to recover from your long flight but also to experience the city's seductive combination of old-world and contemporary, to discover the colour and character of the individual barrios (neighbourhoods) and to take in an energetic Tango show. Perhaps stay at that icon of grand elegance, the historic Alvear Palace, or enjoy the impeccable sophistication of the boutique Hub Porteño, discreetly hidden in a quiet Recoleta side street.

ESTANCIAS & WINERIES

Travelling beyond the city bounds, a 2-night stay on an estancia (ranch) is a wonderful way to experience Argentina's traditional gaucho lifestyle that, despite 21st century advances, continues little-changed today. Among the many historic estancias, some only 1-2 hours' drive from Buenos Aires, are La Bamba de Areco and El Ombu, each dating from the early 19th century, and you will feel as if welcomed into a beautiful private home of the era.

For the lover of fine wines and gourmet cuisine, Mendoza may provide all the answers. Among its nearly 2,000 vineyards there are several wonderful wineries at which you can stay, including Cavas Wine Lodge with its lovely adobe-walled apartments dotted amid the vines, or the simpler Finca Adalgisa, a secluded vineyard where the original third-generation family home was lovingly converted into Mendoza's first boutique hotel and viña.

IGUAZÚ FALLS

If flying into Buenos Aires, a side trip to the sensational falls is a great addition. To really appreciate them, a 2-night stay allows you to enjoy both close-up (Iguazú – Argentina) and panoramic (Iguassu – Brazil) views. Each side offers accommodation inside the park overlooking the cascades and, for an unparalleled experience, we recommend the graceful Belmond Hotel das Cataratas, a traditional Portuguese-colonial residence just a short stroll from the falls on the Brazil side.



PATAGONIA

For those with a little more time to explore, the stunning landscapes and amazing wildlife of Patagonia provide a perfect lead-in to your main trip. This breathtaking region is not just for hardened trekkers and you can get close to the natural wonders without sacrificing comfort, with a 3 or 4 night inclusive package at some sublime properties in or on the edge

of Chile's Torres del Paine National Park – like Awasi Patagonia with 12 spacious villas nestled in a private reserve, or Tierra Patagonia, a contemporary eco-hotel stretching along a bluff overlooking Lake Sarmiento. Some areas of Patagonia are only accessible by sea and there are small-boat cruises that navigate the channels and archipelagos of the Chilean fjords, emerging amongst their icebergs and floes. Skorpions Cruises sail routes from Puerto Montt through the Northern or Southern Icefields, while Australis operates short voyages “at the end of the world” between Punta Arenas and Ushuaia.

GALAPAGOS ISLANDS

Combine two incredible wildlife cruises into one memorable journey – the Galapagos Islands & Antarctica. Accessed by flights from Quito or Guayaquil in Ecuador, the Galapagos are not only for birdwatchers or wildlife obsessives but for every traveller with any interest in seeing incredibly diverse and often unique species of birds, reptiles and mammals, wildlife whose isolation has made them almost totally unafraid of humans. With more than 70 cruise boats to choose from, just some of our favourites in the three main vessel sizes – 16, 48 and 90 berths – are the sleek catamaran, Ocean Spray (16), the Grace (18), named for her late owner, Princess Grace of Monaco, the very stylish mid-sized La Pinta (48), and Santa Cruz II (90), a first class cruise ship that is ideal for families and groups.



JOINING YOUR ARCTIC VOYAGE

If you're taking a charter flight to the start of your voyage please be prepared for the significant temperature difference between boarding the plane and exiting – you'll need to dress accordingly (a little like when flying from Punta Arenas to King George Island in the South Shetland Islands – Antarctica).

The major gateways to the High Arctic are; Ottawa, Edmonton, Reykjavik, Oslo and Helsinki/Murmansk for North Pole Voyages. We can look after your needs in all of these gateway cities. Should you wish to extend your holiday we have excellent local partners who are well placed to look after you.

OSLO & LONGYEARBYEN

The gateways for Spitsbergen are Oslo and then Longyearbyen. Due to a combination of frequency and availability (particularly if you book late (4-5 months from departure) you may need to spend a few nights in Longyearbyen before or after your voyage – so please book early.

Oslo is a beautiful city and it would be easy to spend a few nights here either before or after your voyage. There are several excellent museums to get you in the mood for your Arctic voyage. Norway's fjord ridden coastline is world renowned and also easily combined.

REYKJAVIK/ICELAND

Iceland is an amazing destination, especially given its diminutive size. Iceland is defined by its dramatic landscape with volcanoes, geysers, hot springs and lava fields. Massive glaciers are protected in Vatnajökull and Snæfellsjökull national parks. Birdlife is prolific along its coast as well as at several lakes Lake Myvatn in particular. There are also thermal baths at Myvatn for visitors to enjoy after a day of exploration.

INTERNATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF ANTARCTIC TOUR OPERATORS (IAATO) & ASSOCIATION OF ARCTIC EXPEDITION CRUISE OPERATORS (AECO)

IAATO & AECO are world-leading industry organisations with oversight of responsible private sector travel to Antarctica and the High Arctic, and any high quality operator will be a member and operate within the IAATO/AECO guidelines. We are very happy to have been accepted as an associate member of IAATO and an affiliate of AECO. All the vessels we work with are full members of IAATO/AECO. It's worth making it clear at this point that in Antarctica & the High Arctic, in respect of passenger numbers, "size matters":

<100 Ships carrying less than 100 can land the entire ship's complement at one site

Between 100 & 200 guests. If the vessel you are aboard has more than 100 wishing to go ashore at the same site, some will have to wait. On the Antarctic Peninsula it may be possible (but not always) to position the ship close to two sites, allowing half the passengers to visit one site and half the other.

200> Ships carrying over 200 can only visit a handful of sites, and if all passengers have to visit the same site you'll either spend less time ashore, or visit far fewer sites (compared to a 100 passenger vessel).

500> Ships with over 500 cannot land passengers, meaning you will see the Antarctic Peninsula but will not experience it.

There are many other characteristics shared by IAATO & AECO with regards to; safe operation and respect for communities and wildlife.

Many of the guidelines are in place to ensure our impact in visiting such incredible places is as positive as it can be. Your expedition crew will give briefings whilst on-board to make sure you are well informed.

For more information please visit www.iaato.org & www.aeco.no

While different styles, all ships have key characteristics in common:

- All ships and their operators are well known by us and we know they will safely deliver a high quality operation
- For the safety of the guests and crew and the safety of the environment, all vessels have two engines (or in the case of Ocean Nova an auxiliary engine that is capable of bringing the ship back to port)
- All are IAATO/AECO members (as is the Antarctica/Arctic Travel Centre)
- All operate with a high ratio of crew to guests



LATAM Airlines to fly non-stop from Melbourne to Santiago, Chile

From 5 October 2017, LATAM will operate three non-stop flights per week between Melbourne and Santiago, Chile operated by our Boeing 787-9 aircraft.

Melbourne – Santiago:

Departs: 19:55 Duration: 13h 00m
Arrives: 19:00 Schedule: Tuesday/Friday/Sunday

Santiago – Melbourne:

Departs: 12:55 Duration: 15h 00m
Arrives: 15:00 Schedule: Monday/Thursday/Saturday

*Itinerary subject to change



A large colony of penguins, likely King penguins, is gathered on a snowy beach. The penguins are mostly white with black wings and backs, and some have distinctive black and white patterns on their heads. They are standing close together, some looking towards the camera and others looking away. The background shows a clear blue sky and the ocean.

HOW TO BOOK

TALK TO US: 1300 118 112

We regularly have clients call who are quite confused by the options, the differences and benefits of each ship, season or voyage. Often within one phone call or one email we've removed any confusion and you're then left a reasonably simple (and exciting) decision. We can look after all aspects of your Antarctic and Arctic holiday, including your flights and travel insurance.

Most ships have early booking offers and some late specials (please note; booking late will often mean paying a lot more for your flights); we will always make you aware of them.

We start by asking you lots of questions – where to, when, for how long, what standard and style of ship, what cabin type, and whether you have any particular personal interests that may direct the choice of voyage or ship. Once we have a good understanding of just what you're looking for, we can select the best voyage and ship/operator to meet your requirements and, most importantly, to deliver the interest and enjoyment that will make the experience one that exceeds your expectations. We can hold a cabin (subject to availability) for up to 7 days, while other aspects of your holiday are put into place.

PLEASE BOOK EARLY:

Many of these ships book out 10-12 months in advance, particularly over the December/January period. Please also consider that there may be only a small number of cabins in the category you would prefer.

VOYAGE SCHEDULES & PRICES

There are no dates or prices printed in this brochure. There should be a separate insert providing current dates and prices by ship, together with the Booking Terms & Conditions. You will also find all voyage dates and prices in our website:

On our web sites www.antarcticatravelcentre.com.au and www.arctictravelcentre.com.au – click on the ships tab and then on the ship of interest; you'll find all the voyages and dates and cabin prices under each ship.

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TAILOR-MADE JOURNEYS

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