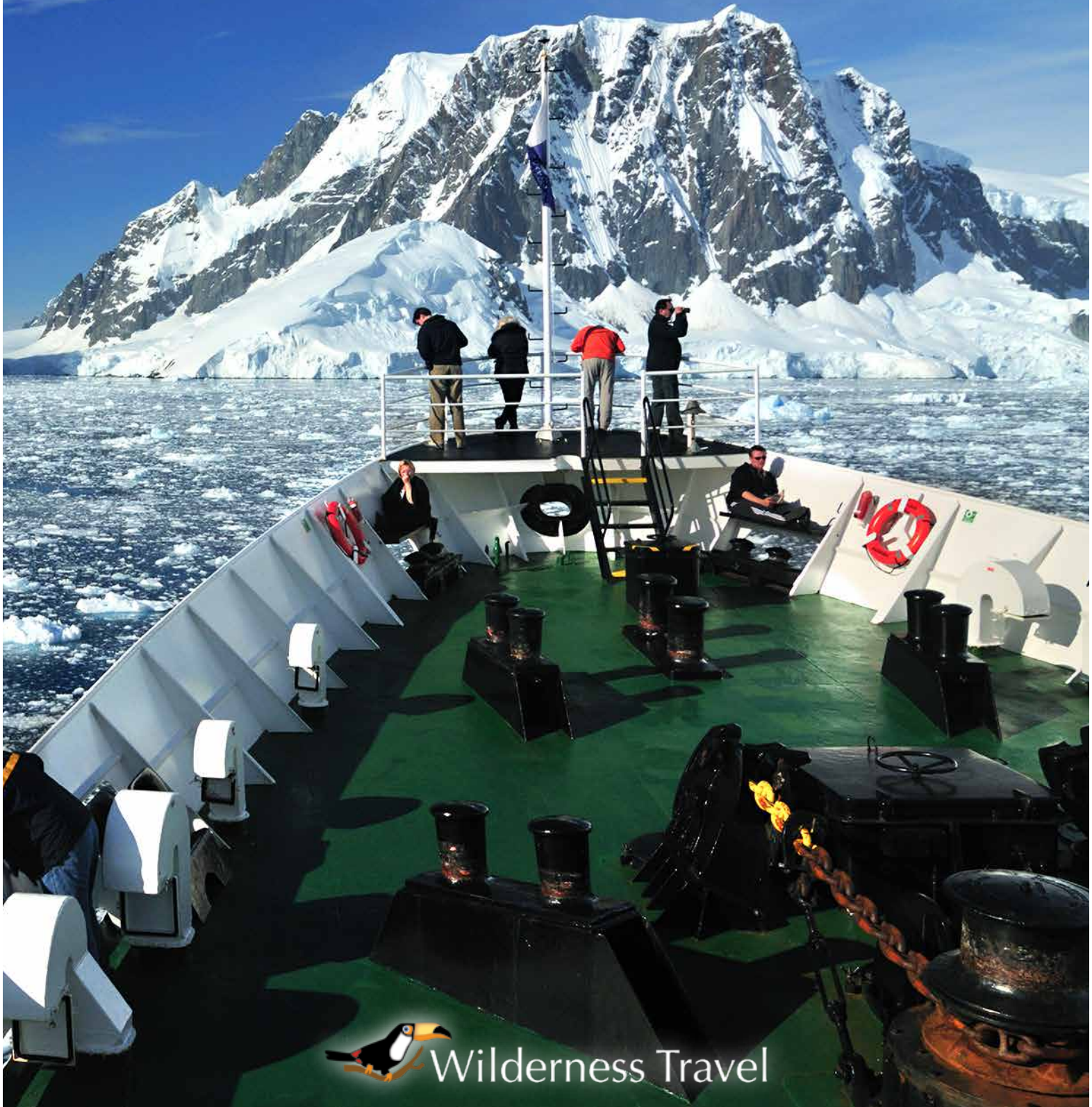


Antarctica Air Cruise

ANTARCTIC ADVENTURE BY AIR AND SEA
ABOARD THE *HEBRIDEAN SKY*, *OCEAN NOVA*, OR *MAGELLAN EXPLORER*



Wilderness Travel

Terra Australis Incognita

'The Unknown Land of the South'





TRIP DATES

WINTER 2023-2024

Dec 1-8, 2023*, Magellan Explorer
 Dec 2-9, 2023*, Ocean Nova
 Dec 6-13, 2023*, Magellan Explorer
 Dec 7-14, 2023*, Ocean Nova
 Dec 11-18, 2023*, Magellan Explorer
 Dec 12-19, 2023*, Ocean Nova
 Dec 16-23, 2023*, Magellan Explorer
 Dec 17-24, 2023*, Ocean Nova
 Dec 21-28, 2023 Holiday Departure, Magellan Explorer
 Dec 22-29, 2023*, Ocean Nova
 Dec 26, 2023-Jan 2, 2024**, Magellan Explorer
 Dec 27, 2023-Jan 3, 2024**, Ocean Nova
 Dec 31, 2023-Jan 7, 2024**, Magellan Explorer
 Jan 14-21, 2024**, Magellan Explorer
 Jan 17-24, 2024**, Ocean Nova
 Jan 19-26, 2024**, Magellan Explorer
 Jan 22-29, 2024**, Ocean Nova
 Jan 27-Feb 3, 2024**, Ocean Nova
 Jan 31-Feb 7, 2024**, Magellan Explorer
 Feb 1-8, 2024**, Ocean Nova
 Feb 5-12, 2024**, Magellan Explorer
 Feb 6-13, 2024**, Ocean Nova
 Feb 10-17, 2024**, Magellan Explorer
 Feb 11-18, 2024**, Ocean Nova
 Feb 15-22, 2024**, Magellan Explorer
 Feb 25-Mar 3, 2024*, Magellan Explorer
 Mar 1-8, 2024*, Magellan Explorer

*Low Season

**High Season

WINTER 2024-2025

Nov 26-Dec 3, 2024*, Magellan Explorer
 Dec 1-8, 2024*, Magellan Explorer
 Dec 2-9, 2024*, Ocean Nova
 Dec 6-13, 2024*, Magellan Explorer
 Dec 7-14, 2024*, Ocean Nova
 Dec 11-18, 2024*, Magellan Explorer
 Dec 12-19, 2024*, Ocean Nova
 Dec 16-23, 2024*, Magellan Explorer
 Dec 17-24, 2024*, Ocean Nova
 Dec 21-28, 2024**, Magellan Explorer
 Dec 22-29, 2024**, Ocean Nova
 Dec 26, 2024-Jan 2, 2025**, Magellan Explorer
 Dec 27, 2024-Jan 3, 2025**, Ocean Nova
 Dec 31, 2024-Jan 7, 2025**, Magellan Explorer
 Jan 14-21, 2025**, Magellan Explorer
 Jan 17-24, 2025**, Ocean Nova
 Jan 19-26, 2025**, Magellan Explorer
 Jan 22-29, 2025**, Ocean Nova
 Jan 27-Feb 3, 2025**, Ocean Nova
 Jan 31-Feb 7, 2025**, Magellan Explorer
 Feb 1-8, 2025**, Ocean Nova
 Feb 5-12, 2025**, Magellan Explorer
 Feb 6-13, 2025**, Ocean Nova
 Feb 10-17, 2025**, Magellan Explorer
 Feb 11-18, 2025**, Ocean Nova
 Feb 15-22, 2025**, Magellan Explorer
 Feb 20-27, 2025**, Magellan Explorer
 Feb 25-Mar 4, 2025*, Magellan Explorer
 Mar 2-9, 2025*, Magellan Explorer

These dates often sell out well in advance. Please check our website for the latest information.

Why Travel to Antarctica With Wilderness Travel?

ENJOY THE ABSOLUTE BEST OF ANTARCTICA

Wilderness Travel has over 30 years of experience in Antarctica. We know this continent intimately and have carefully selected the best designed itineraries—true to our active, expert-led style of travel, and the most comfortable and well-run expedition vessels, allowing you to voyage through the waters of the Southern Ocean in the ultimate combination of adventure, style, and safety. You'll be traveling under the care of the finest expedition cruise companies, and while these voyages are not directly operated by Wilderness Travel (as our small-group land programs are), the trips are eligible for, and count toward, our frequent traveler Toucan Club discounts.



THE WONDERFUL ADVANTAGE OF SMALL EXPEDITION SHIPS

The relatively small size of these vessels (just 65 to 123 passengers!) translates to superb maneuverability, with the ability to anchor close to shore. You'll have more time to explore on land, since all passengers can go ashore simultaneously (regulations in Antarctica limit the number of passengers who can make landfall at one time; travelers on larger ships must wait in shifts to explore). Small ships also provide a far more personal experience—you will get to know other guests at meals that are able to accommodate everyone at one seating, and you will have quality time with the expedition team on board.





STELLAR TEAMS OF ONBOARD EXPERT LECTURERS

Each of our expedition ships offer a fleet of go-anywhere Zodiacs for exciting shore visits and an expert team of world-class naturalist guides who will accompany you on the twice-a-day shore landings. These are possible on most days when not we're not "at sea," conditions permitting. They also provide you with fascinating presentations on their fields of expertise, from marine biology, ornithology, and environmental science to tales of the incredible historic expeditions undertaken by Antarctic explorers.

SHIPS THAT MEET RIGOROUS SAFETY & ENVIRONMENTAL STANDARDS

Traveling into the ice-realm of Antarctica requires a vessel that has been expressly built for expedition cruising. All of the ships we have chosen have ice-strengthened hulls with the proper safety rating for Antarctica's waters, advanced stabilization systems, and state-of-the-art navigation and communication equipment. We have selected only the vessels that fully adhere to the strict IAATO Antarctic Visitor Guidelines that protect the pristine environment of this fascinating, fragile, continent.



COMFORT AND PERSONAL SERVICE

The trips we offer are aboard the world's finest expedition ships. The majority of the ships are all-suite, luxury expedition ships with state-of-the-art amenities and delightful touches of elegance. They feature ocean-view staterooms with en suite bathrooms throughout, an abundance of public space for relaxing and enjoying lectures or presentations, including well-stocked libraries, comfortable lounges, a theater/lecture room, and elegant dining salon.



Antarctica Air Cruise Itinerary

TRIP DETAILS AT-A-GLANCE

- Length:** 8 days
- Arrive:** Punta Arenas, Chile
- Depart:** Punta Arenas, Chile
- Lodging:** 5 nights aboard expedition vessel, 2 nights hotel
- Meals:** All meals included, except dinner on second-to-last day (B=Breakfast, L=Lunch, D=Dinner)
- Activity:** Small Ship Cruising, Wildlife & Natural History, Sea Kayaking, Photography, Whale Watching
- Trip Level:** ② 3 4 5 6 7
5-day expedition cruise, nature walks on uneven ground, Zodiac cruising with wet landings, often rough seas and cold weather

Antarctica is one of the most magnificent and pristine destinations imaginable, with snow-clad mountains rising straight from the sea and a wealth of fascinating wildlife, from millions of penguins to a plethora of seabirds, seals, and whales. A visit here is undoubtedly one of the most thrilling experiences in the world. This adventure takes advantage of a convenient flight from Punta Arenas, Chile, to King George Island in Antarctica's South Shetland Islands, avoiding the two-day, 600-mile crossing of the infamous Drake Passage. You'll soar high above the Southern Ocean and keep an eye out for the first icebergs as you approach the airstrip. Upon arrival, board your comfortable expedition vessels, the Ocean Nova and Hebridean Sky, for four full days of exploring the wonders of the "Last Continent." If you're limited in time, this is the perfect way to experience Antarctica!





DAY 1 PUNTA ARENAS, CHILE

Arrive in Punta Arenas, Chile, before 2:00 pm, where you are met and transferred to your hotel. In the afternoon, you are welcomed at Explorers House to attend a briefing that provides important information about your air-cruise and reviews the essential guidelines for Antarctic visitors. Later, gather for a welcome dinner and meet your fellow adventurers.

DAY 2 FLY TO KING GEORGE ISLAND, ANTARCTICA / EMBARK

A two-hour flight from Punta Arenas over Cape Horn and the mythical Drake Passage brings you to King George Island, in the South Shetland Islands. Upon arrival, explore the area surrounding Chile's Frei Station before boarding a Zodiac to embark your expedition vessel.

DAYS 3-6 EXPLORING THE ANTARCTIC PENINSULA

Over the next three days, cruise between the South Shetland Islands, Antarctica's northernmost archipelago, and the western coast of the Antarctic Peninsula. Your journey will be an authentic expedition with sites and landings dependent upon weather and ice conditions. Along with your experienced

leaders who are able to adapt quickly to change and use their knowledge to seize opportunities, you'll disembark by Zodiac and explore the islands, bays, and coves where stunning birdlife and unique marine species can be witnessed up close.

"The on-board experience, and excursions like kayaking, exceeded my expectations. The small ship size allowed us to make friends easily, and access very interesting places. Flying across Drake's Passage is the only way to go."

-Kris G., Buckeye, AZ

The Antarctic Peninsula region contains some of the world's most impressive scenery and some of Antarctica's best wildlife viewing opportunities. Protected bays and narrow channels are surrounded by towering mountain peaks covered in permanent snow and immense glaciers. The whole area is alive with penguins foraging at sea and forming large nesting colonies at special places on land, and waters rich with krill are home to a variety of whale and seal species.

The South Shetland Islands contain numerous landing sites with abundant wildlife and historical significance. Among them is Deception Island, where the flooded caldera of an active volcano harbors an abandoned whaling station. This sea-filled volcanic crater, which last erupted in 1970 (with minor eruptions as late as 1992), has a thermally heated spring near Pendulum Cove—bring your bathing suit for a hot soak in Antarctica! Deception was a

Itinerary (cont'd)

major whaling station in the early 20th century (rusty boilers used to make whale oil remain, as well as whale bones) and it was from here that explorer Nathaniel Palmer allegedly became the first American to sight the Antarctic continent in 1820 from a high point called Neptune's Window.

Farther south, on the Antarctic Peninsula, the vast Gerlache Strait area contains sheltered bays, accessible wildlife, and stunning scenery. Places like Paradise Bay, Hope Bay, and Port Lockroy are the epitome of everything Antarctic: glaciated mountains, towering icebergs, feeding whales, seals on ice floes, and bustling penguin colonies.

At the southern end of Gerlache Strait is the famous Lemaire Channel, also known as "Kodak Gap" because of the photogenic way the mountainous sides of the narrow channel are reflected in calm waters strewn

with icebergs. At the south end of the channel lies Pleneau Island, first explored during Charcot's 1903-05 French Antarctic Expedition. Pleneau boasts dazzling ice formations and teeming gentoo penguin rookeries, as well as southern elephant seals that often haul out in the wallows.

"I wasn't sure what to expect on the trip, the only certainty was penguins and icebergs. There were lots of both! The pristine beauty of Antarctica has to be seen to be believed. I always had a smile on my face and didn't want to return to the ship. We have been all over the world and this has to be in the top three of favorites."

-Sandy S., San Diego, CA

On board the ship, you'll attend an engaging program of lectures and presentations, and savor spectacular vistas from the glass-enclosed lounge while sharing your daily sightings and highlights with fellow passengers.

DAY 7 PUNTA ARENAS

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

transfer to your hotel in Punta Arenas for overnight.





Airplanes

This extraordinary adventure offers the convenience of a flight from Punta Arenas, Chile, to King George Island in Antarctica's South Shetland Islands, thereby avoiding the Drake Passage: the body of water between Cape Horn and the Shetland Islands where the Atlantic, Pacific, and Southern seas converge. Because the currents here meet no resistance from landmass, this infamous two-day, 600-mile crossing contains some of the choppiest waters in the world. Flying high above the Southern Ocean, you'll skip over the long crossing and experience magnificent bird's-eye views as you watch for icebergs and wildlife on approach to the landing strip.

Three similar aircraft are used for flight operations: the BAE-146-200, the AVRO RJ 85, and the AVRO RJ 100. These aircraft were manufactured in the United Kingdom by British Aerospace (which later became part of BAE Systems). They are high-wing aircraft with very short runway requirements, which means they are particularly suited for this kind of destination. They are operated by Aerovías DAP, which has more than 25 years of experience flying in Patagonia and Antarctica.

Models: BAE 146-200, AVRO RJ 85, AVRO RJ 100

Engines: 4 turbofans Honeywell ALF 502R-5

Length: 93 ft 8 in (28.55 m)

Wingspan: 86 ft 5 in (26.34 m)

Cruise Speed: 465 mph (750 km/h)

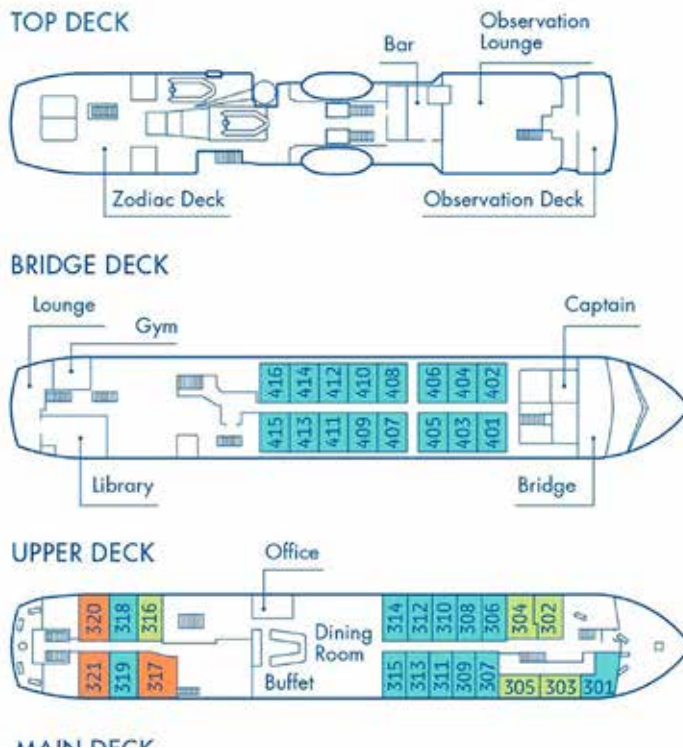
Service Ceiling: 31,200 ft (9,500 m)

Capacity: 75 passengers

Ocean Nova

DATE AND PRICING INFORMATION

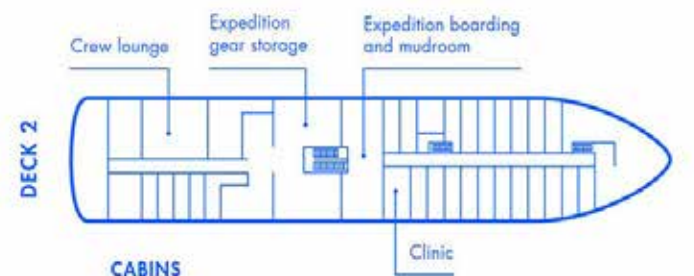
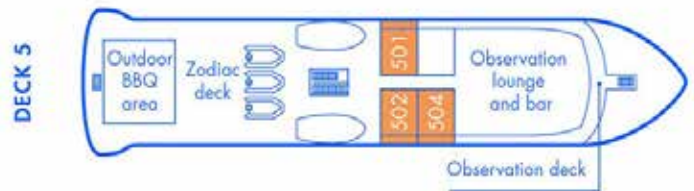
Dates	Triple	Twin	Single
Nov-Dec 2023 Low Season	\$11,495	\$13,595	\$17,795
Jan-Feb 2024 High Season	\$13,595	\$15,595	\$21,995
Nov-Dec 2024 Low Season	\$11,495	\$13,795	\$17,795
Jan-Feb 2025 High Season	\$13,595	\$15,595	\$21,995



Magellan Explorer

DATE AND PRICING INFORMATION

Dates	Triple	Porthole	Veranda	Deluxe Veranda	Penthouse	Grand	Single
Nov-Dec 2023 Low Season	\$13,995	\$14,995	\$18,395	\$19,395	\$22,795	\$25,995	\$25,995
Nov-Dec 2023 Holiday Departures	\$15,995	\$17,295	\$20,995	\$21,995	\$25,795	\$28,995	\$28,995
Nov-Dec 2023 High Season	\$15,495	\$16,595	\$19,795	\$20,795	\$24,995	\$27,995	\$27,995
Nov-Dec 2024 Low Season	\$17,995	\$15,995	\$19,995	\$21,995	\$24,995	\$26,995	\$26,995
Nov-Dec 2023 High Season	\$19,995	\$17,995	\$21,995	\$23,995	\$27,495	\$28,995	\$28,995



CABINS

Additional Trip Costs, Payment & Terms

ADDITIONAL PRICING

Optional Kayaking*: \$895 *Ocean Nova* (limited availability)

Optional Kayaking* \$995 *Magellan Explorer* (limited availability)

Optional Hiking and Snowshoeing: \$85 per person, per excursion (can be requested and booked on board)

Hotel & Transfer package*: \$195 per person, double occupancy or \$315 single occupancy (subject to change)

*Call for special cancellation policies

TRIP COST INCLUDES

- 1 overnight with breakfast in Punta Arenas at the Cabo de Hornos or similar, with a welcome dinner including drinks on Day 1.
- 1 overnight with breakfast in Punta Arenas at the Cabo de Hornos Hotel or similar on the day of the scheduled return flight from Antarctica.
- Transfers airport/hotel on the day of the scheduled return flight from Antarctica, and transfers hotel/airport on last day of the Air-Cruise program.
- Flight from Punta Arenas to Frei Station on King George Island and/or vice versa as indicated in the program corresponding to each voyage.
- Ship cruise along the Antarctic Peninsula as indicated in the program corresponding to each voyage.
- Daily buffet breakfast and lunch on board ship offering a wide choice of dishes.
- Daily served dinner on board ship offering a choice of three main courses.
- Wine, beer, juice, and soft drinks served with lunch and dinner on board ship
- Coffee, tea, chocolate, cappuccino, water and snacks on board ship throughout the expedition.
- All guided shore excursions.
- Lectures and entertainment on board.
- Comprehensive pre- and post-voyage information material.
- Loan of waterproof boots for landing in Antarctica.
- Contingency Plan as described below.
- IAATO passenger fee.

TRIP COST DOES NOT INCLUDE

Airfare to Punta Arenas, Chile, and return; pre- or post-voyage expenses in Punta Arenas; passport, visa expenses (if necessary); emergency medical evacuation insurance (required); trip cancellation and insurance (highly recommended); excess baggage fees; meals other than specified above; personal expenses such as beverages purchased at the ship's bar, laundry, telephone calls, faxes, internet, and e-mail service; and gratuities to shipboard personnel.

TRIP PAYMENT SCHEDULE*

At time of reservation: \$3000

130 days prior to departure: Balance

CANCELLATION AND TRANSFER FEE SCHEDULE*

Minimum fee: \$1000 per person

120-179 days prior to departure: \$3000 per person

90-119 days prior to departure: 90% of trip cost

30-89 days prior to departure: 95% of trip cost

29 days or less: 100% of trip cost

Kayaking payment & cancellation fee:

If confirmed: \$895 (*Ocean Nova*) due at time of booking

If confirmed: \$995 (*Magellan Explorer*) due at time of booking

120 days or more prior to departure: 50% of kayaking fee

119 days or less: 100% of kayaking fee

*Please note that these differs from our regular catalog departures.

Extensions



PAINE NATIONAL PARK EXTENSION

Granite Towers, Huge Glaciers, Iceberg-Dotted Lakes

Enjoy incredible day hikes amid magnificent granite towers in Torres del Paine and stay in beautifully located lodges on this active extension. *5 days from: \$3845*

TIERRA DEL FUEGO CRUISE, PUNTA ARENAS TO USHUAIA

Fjords and Channels of Patagonia

Explore Patagonia on an adventurous five-day journey from Punta Arenas to Ushuaia through some of the planet's most remote, untamed wilderness.

5 days from: \$2353



Arrival & Departure

You are responsible for your own transportation arriving to Punta Arenas, Chile, and departing from Punta Arenas, Chile. If you have any questions, please call our office at 1-800-368-2794.

Please do not purchase your tickets until you are confirmed on the trip. Once your tickets have been purchased, please send us a copy of your airline schedule.

PREFERRED SEATING ON ANTARCTICA FLIGHTS

For an extra level of comfort, travelers can purchase Preferred Seats on their Antarctic flight. This option offers a guaranteed aisle or window seat at the front of the aircraft and a guaranteed empty middle seat. It also offers priority boarding in Punta Arenas and an amenities kit. Capacity is limited to aisle 2, 3, 4, and 5 of the aircraft. Cost is \$495 per person.

2021 - 2022 DEPARTURES

Arrival & Meeting Place

Punta Arenas, Chile (airport code PUQ)

Date: Day 1

Required arrival time: 2:00 pm (at the latest)

A complimentary group transfer is provided from the Punta Arenas airport to the hotel for all trip members arriving on Day 1. Arrival by 2:00pm on Day 1 is required due to mandatory briefing about the Antarctica flights, Zodiacs, security procedures, contingency plan, etc.

Departure

Punta Arenas, Chile (airport code PUQ)

Date: Day 8

A complimentary group transfer from the group hotel to the Punta Arenas airport is provided to all group members departing on the last day.

HOTEL AND TRANSFER PACKAGE

\$185 per person, double occupancy (subject to change)

Should you wish to arrive in Punta Arenas a day earlier, or spend an extra night there after you return from Antarctica the package includes accommodation at the Cabo de Hornos Hotel (or similar) and combines perfectly with your Antarctic air-cruise. The package is available pre-expedition and post-expedition and includes:

- Dedicated group airport transfers
- 1 night hotel accommodation
- Breakfast
- Drink voucher

BAGGAGE ALLOWANCE

The maximum weight allowed on the flights to and from Antarctica is 20 kg (44 Lb.) per passenger, including hand luggage. Excess luggage will be kept in custody in Punta Arenas and will be handed over to travellers upon their return from Antarctica. The baggage weight limit is a technical requirement imposed by the flight operation. Unfortunately, it is not possible to purchase extra allowance. Note that at certain points during the expedition you will be required to handle your own luggage.

CONTINGENCY PLAN

While historically a majority of flights has operated on the scheduled day, in some instances weather conditions have required that adjustments to the departure time of Antarctic flights be made to avoid protracted delays. In the unlikely event that the flight to Antarctica cannot take place on the scheduled day due to unfavorable weather conditions, a Contingency Plan will go into effect. The primary goal of the plan is to provide an engaging and comfortable travel experience while your cruise staff adapts to the weather. A change in the flight schedule can impact travel to Antarctica or return back to Punta Arenas, and the plan includes a range of activities determined by the circumstances. Additionally, the Contingency Plan offers you financial protection by providing a refund should weather conditions prevent you from reaching Antarctica. Please call for more details on the Antarctica Air Contingency Plan.

What to Expect

WHAT THE TRIP IS LIKE

The trip is rated Level 1+, Easy. You will be travelling to a very remote destination. You must be able to complete on board safety drills and emergency evacuation procedures without the assistance of others. Rolling seas and windy conditions require you to be stable on your feet, especially when walking on slippery decks or up and down steep gangways. Shore excursions often require hiking over uneven terrain without the benefit of a developed trail. Some agility is required for getting in and out of the Zodiac landing crafts. While several Zodiac landings are dry, many will require that you step in the water to get ashore. Zodiac and shore excursions are weather permitting.

HIKING AND SNOWSHOEING

The hiking and snowshoeing program is a small-group experience limited to a maximum of 12 participants led by a Hiking and Snowshoeing Guide. Every day you will work with the Expedition Leader to look for the best hiking or snowshoeing opportunities within the trip's schedule, based on suitable and safe weather conditions. Each excursion will be approximately one and a half hours in duration. Participants can select the excursions they want to join and book while on board, paying an \$85 per excursion fee. To take part in the hiking and snowshoeing program you do not need previous experience. However, your level of physical fitness should be good.

CHOOSING THE RIGHT TRIP

Adventure travel often involves exotic destinations, unusual levels of physical exertion, or activities you may not have participated in previously. We work hard to help you choose the right trip for you, paying attention to your individual interests, abilities, and needs. If you have questions about the level of comfort or any of the activities described in this itinerary, please call Wilderness Travel at 1-800-368-2794 and ask for the Expedition Cruise Manager or email us at antarctica@wildernesstravel.com.

A NOTE ABOUT FUEL COSTS & RATES OF EXCHANGE

Given the uncertain, often volatile oil market and the dollar's decline relative to other currencies, it is extremely difficult to predict fuel costs over the long term, and, more specifically, at the time of these voyages. Our prices are based upon the prevailing fuel rates and rates of exchange at the time of brochure printing, which is well in advance of departure. While we will do everything possible to maintain our prices, it may be necessary to institute a surcharge. Thank you for your understanding.

THE RIGHT CLOTHING FOR YOUR ADVENTURE

Since having the right clothing and gear is vital to the enjoyment of your trip to Antarctica, we have created the Wilderness Travel Gear Store in conjunction with our online retail partner, New Headings, to provide you with exceptional gear and apparel in a one-stop shop. They also provide waterproof layers for rent which can be delivered to you in Ushuaia. A polar jacket is included on some voyages; waterproof boots are available to borrow on all cruises.

Visit wildernesstravel.newheadings.com to begin shopping. Be sure to check out our Get Ready Packages, which features 3 Polar Packages that provide excellent value for the gear necessary to keep you warm and dry.

Wilderness Travel donates all profits from your purchases to the cultural and conservation groups we support worldwide. See the projects we support on our Making a Difference webpage.

TRAVEL INSURANCE

Due to Antarctica's remoteness, emergency medical evacuation insurance is required for passengers on all Antarctica itineraries.

When to Go

The Antarctica Expedition Cruising season begins in late October (the Antarctic Spring) and continues through mid-March (the Antarctic Fall). Throughout this period you will be surprised with how mild the weather can be, with average daytime temperatures in the mid-30s°F ranging to highs in the 50s°F. While there is an abundance of wildlife and natural beauty throughout this time, there are differences in what wildlife is present through the Antarctic summer season.

EARLY SEASON (LATE OCTOBER TO DECEMBER)

Climate and Environment:

- Visitors experience the reawakening of Antarctica after the long winter.
- Average temperatures will be a chilly 20-25°F in October, rising to 30-38°F by early December.
- The pack ice is beginning to break up and icebergs will be at their greatest mass.
- Although Antarctica is never crowded, this is a favorite time for many veterans as there are fewer ships exploring the Peninsula and South Georgia.

Wildlife:

- Many species of penguins and other austral birds will be returning, building nests, courting and tending to their eggs on the Peninsula.
- In the Falklands and South Georgia, elephant seals and fur seals will be congregating on the beach and establishing territories, often with dramatic fights for harems.
- In South Georgia, due to the long breeding cycle, adults and chicks congregate by the thousands as the colonies are continuously occupied year round. Hungry chicks loudly clamor to be fed while the males shuttle back and forth to the sea in the hunt for food.
- By early December, southern right whales and Antarctic minke whales begin arriving.
- There is great light for dramatic landscape photography.





MID-SEASON (JANUARY TO MID-FEBRUARY)

Climate and Environment:

- The days are magnificently long, with up to 20 hours of sunlight daily from late December to January.
- Average temperatures reach their highest ranges, from 30-45°F.
- The calmest seas tend to be found at this time.
- Sunlight and salt water begin to melt and erode icebergs, transforming them into ever-changing works of art.

Wildlife:

- On the Peninsula, recently-hatched penguin chicks sporting thick warm coats will be loudly demanding food from their parents.
- Baby seals can be seen on the beaches, suckling from their mothers.
- Whale sightings, including humpbacks, minkes and orcas increase along the Antarctic Peninsula.
- Elephant seals begin their annual molt whereby they shed the outer layer of hair and skin. It will take a month and they'll stay on shore fasting the entire time.
- Orcas begin their hunt for young seals and penguins who are now foraging on their own having left the nest.

LATE SEASON (MID-FEBRUARY TO MARCH)

Climate and Environment:

- As the pack ice recedes even further, our "Crossing the Antarctic Circle" itinerary will make its attempt to go south of the Polar Circle.
- More landing sites open up as the sea ice continues to recede.
- The days begin to get shorter once again and sunsets more spectacular.

Wildlife:

- South Georgia Island's king penguin rookeries are densely crowded with activity.
- Chicks are quite large and starting to fledge.
- On the Peninsula, you feel the tension and the race against time for penguins who got a late start, and have young who have yet to molt and forage on their own.
- This is when you get the best possibilities for whale watching.
- With more sunlight during the mid-season creating plankton blooms, we should enjoy excellent sightings of humpback and minke whales as they feed on plankton.
- Orcas continue their hunts of young seals and penguins.

Other Antarctic Journeys

In addition to the Antarctica Air Cruise, we offer variations on this itinerary from 8-15 days in duration.

THE ANTARCTIC PENINSULA: 11-12 DAYS

The Antarctic Peninsula is located just below the southern tip of South America (across the Drake Passage), and is the principal objective of any itinerary setting out to experience the wonders of Antarctica. This is one of the world's most breathtaking and dramatic destinations with fabulous vistas of jagged glacier-encrusted peaks, channels filled with enormous ice bergs that seem like wild pieces of modern art, varied and plentiful wildlife all along its shores, and many fascinating and well-preserved historical sites from the days of early explorers. While you might initially be surprised that most trips to Antarctic go no farther south than the Peninsula, rest assured—this is most definitely part of the mainland. You will have truly been to Antarctica, and it is hard to imagine a more scenic wonderland. The Peninsula also offers the best and most abundant wildlife viewing opportunities of the entire continent.

CROSSING THE ANTARCTIC CIRCLE: 15 DAYS

For those of you who would like to travel as far south as possible and cross the Antarctic Circle at 66 degrees South, you can consider going in late-February/early-March when the ice pack is at its most reduced. Keep in mind that your success in crossing the Polar Circle is dependent on weather and the sea ice that year!

ACTIVE ANTARCTICA PENINSULA: 12 DAYS

Because the waters along the Antarctica Peninsula are well protected, for the most part, it is possible to offer an itinerary with adventurous activities like kayaking, snowshoeing, glacier walks, and even camping on the ice.

WEDDELL SEA: IN SEARCH OF EMPEROR PENGUINS: 11 DAYS

This is one of the most spectacular Antarctic adventures ever! Deep in Antarctica's Weddell Sea is Snow Hill Island, home to a breeding colony of some 4,000 pairs of emperor penguins, the largest and most colorful penguins on the planet. Weather permitting, shipboard helicopters whisk us above the frozen sea to a base camp from where we head off on foot for fascinating encounters with these incredible creatures.



For those who have even more time, we highly encourage you to consider a comprehensive Antarctic expedition, which visits the Falklands and South Georgia Island, often considered the crown jewel of this otherworldly realm. We firmly believe that this extended itinerary is worth every second of the journey!

SOUTH GEORGIA AND THE FALKLAND ISLANDS: 20-21 DAYS

The Falkland Islands have several different species of penguin including the handsome three foot tall king penguins who are so emblematic of the Antarctic Seas, and yet are rarely seen on the Peninsula. There are large colonies of southern elephant seals, cormorants, black-browed albatross, and numerous species of whales are often seen close to shore. For many travelers the friendly local British citizenry and the fascinating history of their war with Argentina make it an intriguing visit.

South Georgia Island is a not-to-be-missed destination. With a chain of mountains running down its entire 100 mile length, rearing right out of the ocean to as high as 10,000 feet, it is an extraordinary landscape. These mountains shelter the northeastern length of the island from the prevailing

weather and because of this a series of dramatic valleys are literally carpeted with a phenomenal concentration of wildlife including some of the planet's most populous colonies of many different seals, penguins and seabirds such as albatross. South Georgia has well-preserved evidence of the fascinating history of explorers and whalers and we stop to pay respects at the grave of one of the most famous—Sir Ernest Shackleton.

Traveling clockwise from Tierra del Fuego to the Falklands and then South Georgia, you are largely cruising with the wind behind you. As you sweep back east to the South Orkneys, you do so largely in the protected lee of the Antarctic Peninsula. This allows you to get your sea legs before finally crossing the Drake Passage at the very end of your voyage.

View all of our Antarctica offerings here:

<https://www.wildernesstravel.com/trips/antarctica>





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