

ANTARCTICA - THE GREAT AUSTRAL LOOP



INTRODUCTION

EARLY BIRDS: Book and save up to 10% off select voyages.

Leaving the lights of Ushuaia behind, the course is set for the wild and beautiful Falkland Islands as you embark on this exceptional 16-day cruise. Continuing east, you reach the remote sub-Antarctic island of South Georgia, with its impressive glaciers, rich history and vast colonies of king penguins that reside on black sand beaches. Continuing south across the Weddell Sea, a labyrinth of ice and majestic icebergs, sail to the Antarctic Peninsula. Here you are greeted by floating ice fields, iridescent icebergs, glaciers and snow-capped peaks, and an extraordinary wildlife that includes whales, seals and penguins. Return to Ushuaia via the Drake Passage - a memorable finale to an amazing voyage.

ITINERARY

TRIP CODE

ACTSGAL

DURATION

17 Days

LOCATIONS

Antarctic Peninsula, Falkland Islands, South Georgia



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DAY 1: Arrival in Buenos Aires

Your cruise includes a pre-embarkation night in Buenos Aires. You can check in in the late morning where you will be met at the hotel by our local representative. The rest of the afternoon will be spent at your leisure. Buenos Aires, Argentina's elegant, historic and cosmopolitan capital, is known as the "Paris of the South" due to its European atmosphere with glamorous avenues lined with fashionable shops and Parisian-style restaurants and cafes. Located on the western shore of the estuary of the Río de la Plata, Buenos Aires has many fascinating neighbourhoods to explore including the colourful and lively La Boca, home to art galleries and tango shows; San Telmo with its restored mansions and antique stores and Recoleta, the city's most exclusive area.



DAY 2: Fly to Ushuaia and Embarkation

After an early morning breakfast you will be transferred to the airport for your flight to Ushuaia. Capital of Argentina's Tierra del Fuego province, Ushuaia is considered the gateway to the White Continent and the South Pole. Nicknamed "El fin del mundo" by the Argentinian people, this city at the end of the world nestles in the shelter of mountains surrounded by fertile plains that the wildlife seem to have chosen as the ultimate sanctuary. With its exceptional site, where the Andes plunge straight into the sea, Ushuaia is one of the most fascinating places on earth, its very name evocative of journeys to the unlikely and the inaccessible. (Flight to Ushuaia is approximately 3 and a half hours)



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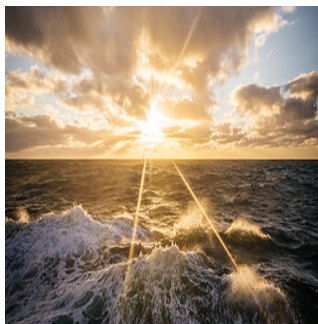
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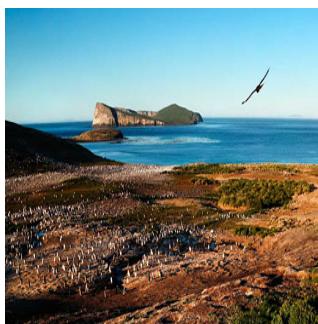
DAY 3: At Sea

During your day at sea, make the most of the many services and activities on board. Treat yourself to a moment of relaxation in the spa or stay in shape in the fitness centre. Depending on the season, let yourself be tempted by the swimming pool or a spot of sunbathing. This day without a port of call will also be an opportunity to enjoy the conferences or shows proposed on board, to do some shopping in the boutique or to meet the PONANT photographers in their dedicated space. As for lovers of the open sea, they will be able to visit the ship's upper deck to admire the spectacle of the waves and perhaps be lucky enough to observe marine species. A truly enchanted interlude, combining comfort, rest and entertainment.



DAY 4: New Island and Grave Cove

Over the next day you will explore the northern and Western points of the Falkland Islands. You will attempt to make landings at New Island and Grave Cove. New Island with its distinctive jagged relief is located on the western edge of the Falkland Islands and is home to a tiny village of two families. Step onto the golden sand of its flower-lined beaches, beside which an old stone house still stands, and you'll feel like you've entered a natural paradise. A narrow pathway weaves around typical Falkland moorlands. Follow it and in under 20 minutes you'll find yourself at the heart of a colony of southern rockhopper penguins, black-browed albatross and imperial shags. It's the perfect opportunity to watch the albatross swoop down from the cliffs and skim the waves that crash against the rocks on the exposed side of the island. Make your way through the turbulent Woolly Gut strait and emerge in the stillness of Grave Cove. Located in the northern edge of the Falkland Islands, this bay owes its name to the vestiges of whalers' graves that overlook the beach. As you step off the boat and onto the white-sand beach, you might find yourself escorted by a few hospitable Commerson's dolphins, elegantly adorned in black and white. A stroll along the grassy dunes will lead you to a vast plain of lush green grass, tended by a few sheep. On the other side of the island you'll find one of the largest gentoo penguin colonies in the area. With some luck, you'll also glimpse a sea lion scouring the waves for his next meal.



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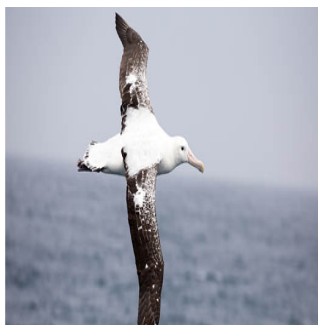
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DAY 5: At Sea - Day 5 to 6

The following days will be spent at sea. Take this time to enjoy the various amenities on board and reflect on your journey so far with your fellow passengers and crew.



DAY 7: South Georgia - Day 7 to 9

Aboard your ship, discover South Georgia, a region formed by an underwater mountain chain that extends from the Andes to the Antarctic Peninsula. All the wildlife of the Far South can be found there: king and Gentoo penguins, elephant seals, fur seals... You might get the chance to discover the majestic glaciers of Gold Harbour and the vast plains of Fortuna Bay. If you are fortunate enough to land at Salisbury Plain, you can expect a wonderful spectacle: more than 300,000 king penguins, which you will recognise by the bright orange mark on their head and neck, have taken up residence there.



DAY 10: At Sea - Day 10 to 11

Enjoy the next days at sea. A truly enchanted interlude, combining comfort, rest and entertainment.



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DAY 12: Antarctic Peninsula - Day 12 to 14

Succumb to the magic of a place unlike any other. To this day, the mythical Antarctic Peninsula still holds real fascination and promises its visitors unforgettable moments. Throughout your adventure in this icy realm, you will find yourself in the heart of a spectacular decor in subtle shades of blue and white, surrounded by exceptional wildlife. Penguins, humpback whales, seals and giant petrels are at home here, as are elephant seals, fur seals, Antarctic minke whales, and orcas. Depending on which sites you will be lucky enough to visit, you may get the chance to observe them and share with them the beauty of these extreme parts. Each day, based on ice conditions, the Captain and the Expedition Leader will suggest Zodiac outings or landings to discover the infinite riches of the Antarctic Peninsula. Glaciers, ice floe, tabletop icebergs, mountain peaks that plunge straight into the sea, volcanic beaches, research stations, enchanting bays, and vestiges of the whaling industry: these are the faces of the Antarctic that will likely reveal themselves to you, in a hushed and surreal atmosphere. You will sail in the wake of Jean-Baptiste Charcot, Adrien de Gerlache and Sir Ernest Shackleton, great Antarctic explorers who, from the 19th century, set out to conquer these remote and uninhabited lands.



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DAY 15: Crossing The Drake - Day 15 to 16

If there is one place, one sea, one waterway dreaded by tourists, researchers and hardened seafarers alike, it is undoubtedly Drake Passage. Situated at the latitude of the infamous Furious Fifties winds, between Cape Horn and the South Shetland Islands, it is the shortest route to connect Antarctica to South America. Seasoned navigators will tell you that you must earn your visit to the White Continent! As the Antarctic convergence zone where cold currents rising up from the South Pole meet warmer equatorial water masses, Drake Passage harbours a very diverse marine fauna. Don't forget to look to the sky to catch a glimpse of elegant albatross and Cape petrels, playfully floating about in the wind around your ship.



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DAY 17: Disembarkation in Ushuaia

Capital of Argentina's Tierra del Fuego province, Ushuaia is considered the gateway to the White Continent and the South Pole. Nicknamed “El fin del mundo” by the Argentinian people, this city at the end of the world nestles in the shelter of mountains surrounded by fertile plains that the wildlife seem to have chosen as the ultimate sanctuary. With its exceptional site, where the Andes plunge straight into the sea, Ushuaia is one of the most fascinating places on earth, its very name evocative of journeys to the unlikely and the inaccessible.



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INCLUSIONS & DETAILS

Accommodation

Cabin on board ship

Inclusions

Accommodation on board L'Austral
All meals whilst on-board including snacks
Open Bar (excluding premium brands)
Room Service
Free Wi-Fi internet access
All shore excursions
Guiding and lectures by expedition team
Free use of rubber boots for shore excursions
Polar jacket
All port taxes

EXCLUSIONS

Airfares to/from embarkation and disembarkation city
Visa fees (if applicable)
Travel Insurance
Personal expenses such as laundry, on-board communication (telephone calls, faxes)
Gratuities for the crew (recommend US\$15 per person per day)
Optional Activities whilst on-board

Difficulty Rating

2 (light adventure)

Single Surcharge

Available upon request, contact us for more details.

Notes

Itinerary is subject to change depending on weather and ice conditions.

Price Dependent upon

Departure date, season, availability and vessel.

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SUSTAINABILITY

As a member of IAATO we follow guidelines appointed by the Antarctic Treaty System to go above and beyond in support of minimizing negative impacts on this pristine landscape. We also encourage clients to look to book pre-and post- accommodation with us, where local businesses will be supported. Our clients also receive restaurant recommendations which support locally owned restaurants

We carefully select all ships we work with and choose smaller sized vessels to create less impact. We use a highly regulated, licensed vessel which is well equipped to operate in the Antarctic's delicate ecosystem. We view the voyage to the Antarctic as an expedition, not a sightseeing trip. Smaller boats such as ours can navigate narrow waterways and are far less polluting than the larger ships in Antarctic waters. By carrying less passengers, we have far less waste. The waste is carried back to the home port to allow for environmentally conscious waste management and disposal.

For more information on our sustainability policies, including how we are striving towards being a paperless organisation, click [HERE](#)

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