

## ANTARCTICA - POLAR CIRCLE QUEST



### INTRODUCTION

Explore the South Shetland Islands and the Antarctic Peninsula and endeavour to cross the Polar Circle which few have ever crossed. Aboard the M/V USHUAIA, you will discover the last pristine region of the world – the White Continent of Antarctica. Set amidst awe-inspiring scenery of imposing mountain ranges, beautifully carved icebergs, ice-filled channels and spectacular glaciers, you will be greeted by vast penguin colonies, seals, whales and an abundance of seabirds.

### ITINERARY

#### DAY 1: Depart from Ushuaia

Embark the USHUAIA in the afternoon and meet your expedition and lecture staff. After you have settled into your cabins we sail along the famous Beagle Channel and the scenic Mackinlay Pass.



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#### DEPARTURE

17/02/2020, 27/01/2021

#### DURATION

12 Days

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### DAY 2: Crossing the Drake Passage Crossing - Day 2 & 3

Named after the renowned explorer, Sir Francis Drake, who sailed these waters in 1578, the Drake Passage also marks the Antarctic Convergence, a biological barrier where cold polar water sinks beneath the warmer northern waters. This creates a great upwelling of nutrients, which sustains the biodiversity of this region. The Drake Passage also marks the northern limit of many Antarctic seabirds. As we sail across the passage, Antarpplly Expeditions' lecturers will be out with you on deck to help with the identification of an amazing variety of seabirds, including many albatrosses, which follow in our wake. The USHUAIA's open bridge policy allows you to join our officers on the bridge and learn about navigation, watch for whales, and enjoy the view. A full program of lectures will be offered as well. The first sightings of icebergs and snow-capped mountains indicate that we have reached the South Shetland Islands, a group of twenty islands and islets first sighted in February 1819 by Capt. William Smith of the brig Williams. With favorable conditions in the Drake Passage our lecturers and naturalists will accompany you ashore as you experience your first encounter with the penguins and seals on Day 3.



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### DAY 4: Antarctic Peninsula - Days 4 to 9

Exquisite beauty and pristine landscapes are waiting for you on the western side of the Antarctic Peninsula. Myriads of icebergs in different shades and shapes float freely in the waterways around the continent. You will have plenty of time to explore the amazing scenery and to learn about the remarkable history of the early explorers. Apart from Adélie, gentoo and chinstrap penguins in their masses, seabirds will follow you as you sail and you may also encounter humpback whales, minke whales and orcas as well as leopard, crabeater, fur and Weddell seals at close range. Weather permitting we will visit some of the most beautiful waterways in the area such as the Gerlache Strait, Errera Channel, Neumayer Channel and the extremely narrow Lemaire Channel. Possible landing sites may include the aptly named Paradise Bay with its impressive glacial fronts and mountains; Cuverville Island, home of the largest gentoo penguin colony in the Peninsula surrounded by glaciers and castellated icebergs, and the British Museum and Post Office at Port Lockroy. Further exploration will lead us south of the Lemaire Channel in quest of the Polar Circle. We might also visit the Ukrainian Station Vernadsky, the former British base Faraday, where the ozone hole was first spotted, the rugged Yalour Islands and Detaille Island, south of the Polar Circle. On our way north we plan to explore the South Shetland Islands. The volcanic island group is a haven for wildlife. Vast penguin rookeries and seals hauling out on the shorelines make every day spent here unforgettable. Sailing through the narrow passage into the flooded caldera of Deception Island is truly amazing, so is visiting the crescent shaped island Half Moon, home to chinstrap penguins in breathtaking surroundings.



### DAY 10: Crossing the Drake Passage - Day 9 & 10

We leave Antarctica and head north across the Drake Passage. Join our lecturers and naturalists on deck as we search for seabirds and whales and enjoy some final lectures. Take the chance to relax and reflect on the fascinating adventures of the past days on the way back to Ushuaia.



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### DAY 12: Arrival in Ushuaia

We arrive at the port of Ushuaia in the early morning and disembark the USHUAIA after breakfast. \*\*\* Important - Please be sure not to book flights out of Ushuaia before 12PM (Noon) on the day of disembarkation from your cruise ship



## INCLUSIONS & DETAILS

<b>Accommodation</b>	Cabin on ship.
<b>Inclusions</b>	<p>Shipboard accommodation All meals onboard All scheduled landings/excursions Guiding and lectures by expedition leader and team English-speaking expedition team All port fees All landing fees Detailed post-expedition log</p> <p><b>EXCLUSIONS:</b> Airmiles to/from embarkation and disembarkation city Visa fees (if applicable) Travel Insurance Beverages (other than coffee and tea) Personal expenses such as laundry, onboard communication (telephone calls, faxes, email service) Gratuities for the crew (recommended US\$15.00 per person per day) Pre or post cruise travel expenses Transfers to/from the pier in Ushuaia</p>
<b>Difficulty Rating</b>	2 (light adventure)
<b>Single Surcharge</b>	Available upon request
<b>Notes</b>	Itinerary is subject to change depending on weather and ice conditions.
<b>Price Dependent upon</b>	Season and availability.

## SUSTAINABILITY

### GUIDANCE FOR VISITORS TO THE ANTARCTIC

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RECOMMENDATION XVIII-1, ADOPTED AT THE ANTARCTIC TREATY MEETING, KYOTO, 1994

Activities in the Antarctic are governed by the Antarctic Treaty of 1959 and associated agreements, referred to collectively as the Antarctic Treaty System. The Treaty established Antarctica as a zone of peace and science.

In 1991, the Antarctic Treaty Consultative Parties adopted the Protocol on Environmental Protection to the Antarctic Treaty, which designates the Antarctic as a natural reserve. The Protocol sets out environmental principles, procedures and obligations for the comprehensive protection of the Antarctic environment, and its dependent and associated ecosystems. The Consultative Parties have agreed that as far as possible and in accordance with their legal system, the provisions of the Protocol should be applied as appropriate. The Environmental Protocol was ratified in January 1998.

The Environmental Protocol applies to tourism and non-governmental activities, as well as governmental activities in the Antarctic Treaty Area. It is intended to ensure that these activities, do not have adverse impacts on the Antarctic environment, or on its scientific and aesthetic values.

This Guidance for Visitors to the Antarctic is intended to ensure that all visitors are aware of, and are therefore able to comply with, the Treaty and the Protocol. Visitors are, of course, bound by national laws and regulations applicable to activities in the Antarctic.

### PROTECT ANTARCTIC WILDLIFE

Taking or harmful interference with Antarctic wildlife is prohibited except in accordance with a permit issued by a national authority.

Do not use aircraft, vessels, small boats, or other means of transport in ways that disturb wildlife, either at sea or on land.

Do not feed, touch, or handle birds or seals, or approach or photograph them in ways that cause them to alter their behavior. Special care is needed when animals are breeding or molting.

Do not damage plants, for example by walking, driving, or landing on extensive moss beds or lichen-covered scree slopes.

Do not use guns or explosives. Keep noise to the minimum to avoid frightening wildlife.

Do not bring non-native plants or animals into the Antarctic, such as live poultry, pet dogs and cats, or house plants.

### RESPECT PROTECTED AREAS

A variety of areas in the Antarctic have been afforded special protection because of their particular ecological, scientific, historic, or other values. Entry into certain areas may be prohibited except in accordance with a permit issued by an appropriate national authority.

Activities in and near designated Historic Sites and Monuments and certain other areas may be subject to special restrictions.

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Know the locations of areas that have been afforded special protection and any restrictions regarding entry and activities that can be carried out in and near them.

Observe applicable restrictions.

Do not damage, remove, or destroy Historic Sites or Monuments or any artifacts associated with them.

### RESPECT SCIENTIFIC RESEARCH

Do not interfere with scientific research, facilities or equipment.

Obtain permission before visiting Antarctic science and support facilities; reconfirm arrangements 24-72 hours before arrival; and comply with the rules regarding such visits.

Do not interfere with, or remove, scientific equipment or marker posts, and do not disturb experimental study sites, field camps, or supplies.

### BE SAFE

Be prepared for severe and changeable weather and ensure that your equipment and clothing meet Antarctic standards. Remember that the Antarctic environment is inhospitable, unpredictable, and potentially dangerous.

Know your capabilities and the dangers posed by the Antarctic environment, and act accordingly. Plan activities with safety in mind at all times.

Keep a safe distance from all wildlife, both on land and at sea.

Take note of, and act on, the advice and instructions from your leaders; do not stray from your group.

Do not walk onto glaciers or large snow fields without the proper equipment and experience; there is a real danger of falling into hidden crevasses.

Do not expect a rescue service. Self-sufficiency is increased and risks reduced by sound planning, quality equipment, and trained personnel.

Do not enter emergency refuges (except in emergencies). If you use equipment or food from a refuge, inform the nearest research station or national authority once the emergency is over.

Respect any smoking restrictions, particularly around buildings, and take great care to safeguard against the danger of fire. This is a real hazard in the dry environment of Antarctica.

### KEEP ANTARCTICA PRISTINE

Antarctica remains relatively pristine, the largest wilderness area on Earth. It has not yet been subjected to large-scale human perturbations. Please keep it that way.

Do not dispose of litter or garbage on land. Open burning is prohibited.

Do not disturb or pollute lakes or streams. Any materials discarded at sea must be

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disposed of properly.

Do not paint or engrave names or graffiti on rocks or buildings.

Do not collect or take away biological or geological specimens or man-made artifacts as a souvenir, including rocks, bones, eggs, fossils, and parts or contents of buildings.

Do not deface or vandalize buildings or emergency refuges, whether occupied, abandoned, or unoccupied.

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