

ANTARCTICA - AKADEMIK SHOKALSKIY: IN THE WAKE OF SCOTT & SHACKLETON



INTRODUCTION

Cruise aboard the Akademik Shokalskiy to the Ross Sea region of Antarctica is one of the most remote places on Planet Earth and one of the most fascinating places in the continent's human history. With shipping restricted by impenetrable pack ice to just two brief months each austral summer, few people have ever visited this strange and beautiful territory, with opportunities for non-scientific personnel limited to a handful of tourist expedition ships. This fully strengthened expedition vessel is crewed by some of the most experienced officers and sailors in the world and staffed by some of the most passionate and knowledgeable Guides. This is a unique opportunity to experience nature on a scale so grand there are no words to describe it.

ITINERARY

DAY 1: Invercargill

Arrive at Invercargill, New Zealand's southernmost city and rich in Scottish history. Established by Scottish settlers, the area's wealth of rich farmland is well suited to the sheep and dairy farms that dot the landscape. Grab your last-minute luxuries before meeting your fellow expeditioners for an informal get-together over dinner.



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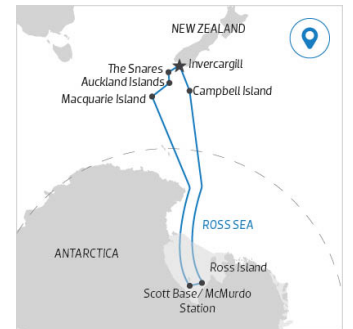
08/01/2020

DURATION

30 Days

LOCATIONS

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DAY 2: Port of Bluff

Enjoy a visit to the Southland Museum to view the Sub-Antarctic display before transferring to the port to embark the Akademik Shokalskiy. You will have the opportunity to settle into your cabin and familiarise yourself with the ship whilst we take the opportunity to conduct a number of safety briefings. You are invited to join the expedition team and captain on the bridge as we set our course to The Snares and our adventure begins.



DAY 3: The Snares - North East Island

The closest Sub-Antarctic Islands to New Zealand, they were appropriately called The Snares because they were probably considered a hazard by their discoverer Lieutenant Broughton in 1795. Comprising of two main islands and a smattering of rocky islets, they are uninhabited and highly protected. North East Island is the largest of The Snares and it is claimed that this one island is home to more nesting seabirds than all of the British Isles together. We will arrive early in the morning and cruise along the sheltered eastern side of the rugged coastline by Zodiac if weather and sea conditions are suitable (landings are not permitted). In the sheltered bays, we should see the endemic Snares crested penguins, Snares Island tomtit and fernbirds. Cape pigeons, Antarctic terns and red-billed gulls are also present in good numbers. There are hundreds of thousands of sooty shearwaters nesting on The Snares; the actual number is much debated. Other nesting seabirds include Cape petrel (or pigeon), mottled petrel, diving petrel and broad-billed prion.



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DAY 4: Auckland Islands - Day 4 & 5

The Auckland Islands group was formed by two volcanoes that erupted some 10-25 million years ago. They have subsequently been eroded and dissected by glaciation creating the archipelago as we know it today. The group is one of the largest in the Sub-Antarctic and has a colourful history of discovery and attempted settlement.

Characterised by towering cliffs and rugged sea stacks, these islands have borne witness to many a shipwreck in days gone by. We spend the day ashore on Enderby Island, a great place to view birds and wildlife and perhaps the most beautiful of all the Sub-Antarctic Islands. Located at the northern end of this cluster of islands, it offers a varying landscape with a low plateau of scrubland and cushion bog. We will enjoy the extensive areas of regenerating patches of megaherbs especially the *Anisotome latifolia* and *Stilbocarpa Polaris*. Introduced cattle, rabbits and mice were removed from this island in the mid-1990's and the plants and birds are responding, increasing in numbers and diversity. The island enjoys a much milder climate than most Sub-Antarctic Islands because of its location. On the island we find parakeets flitting above carpets of red, white and yellow wild flowers and on the beaches beyond, the rare Hooker's or New Zealand sea lion, one of the most threatened sea lions in the world. These sea lion numbers are in a slow decline, for reasons which are not obvious but most probably connected with a nearby squid fishery. We land in Carnley Harbour, once the caldera of the Carnley volcano. The walls of the caldera have been breached on both the eastern and western sides, separating Adams Island to the south. The eastern entrance is navigable for smaller vessels such as ours. The extensive harbour is rich in history and in opportunities. Our activities are totally weather dependent as the wind often funnels down the harbour making anchoring and some landings impossible. We have a number of options including a reasonably difficult scramble to a shy albatross colony on South West Cape. Other options include a relatively easy walk to an abandoned coast watchers hut and lookout used during the Second World War. If landing on the shores on the north arm of Carnley Harbour where the *Grafton* was wrecked in 1865, the remains of the vessel and their castaway hut can still be seen. There are two other sites of interest that if we can't land at the above sites we might consider. They are Camp Cove, site of the official Government Castaway depots constructed in the late 1800's and the 'Erlangen' clearing where the German merchant ship of the same name cut firewood on the eve of the Second World War, allowing it to leave New Zealand undetected.



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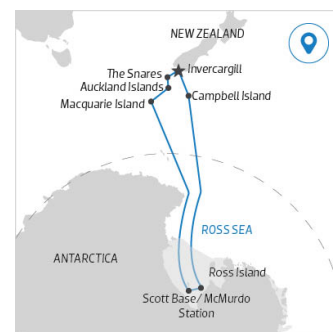
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DAY 6: At Sea

Take the chance to learn more about the biology and history of these islands and the tempestuous Southern Ocean through informal lectures with our experts. This particular stretch of ocean is very productive and we can expect many seabirds, including five or six kinds of albatross and numerous species of petrel.



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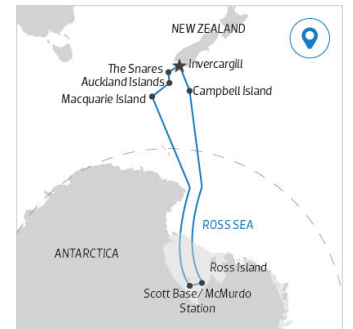
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DAY 7: Macquarie Island - Day 7 & 8

Australia's prized Sub-Antarctic possession, Macquarie Island, a remote, rocky outpost that endures the roaring westerly winds, supports one of the highest concentrations of wildlife in the Southern Ocean. Millions of penguins of four different species - king, rockhopper, gentoo and the endemic royal, all breed here. You will never forget your first experience in a ceaselessly active 'penguin city', where the dapper inhabitants show no fear of their strange visitors. We plan to spend our time divided between the two approved landing sites, Sandy Bay and Buckles Bay. At Sandy Bay a royal penguin rookery teems with feisty little birds trotting back and forth, golden head plumes bobbing as they march to and from the shore. All three million of the world's royal penguins breed on Macquarie Island. There is also a substantial king penguin colony. Some of the best observations will be had by quietly sitting and letting the birds come to you. They are both unafraid and inquisitive - the combination is unique. At Buckles Bay we will have a guided tour of the Australian Antarctic Division Base that was established in the late 1940's and has been manned continuously since then. There is a range of scientific research being undertaken here as well as a very strategically important weather station. Large groups of southern elephant seals slumber on the beaches and in the tussock at both of our landing sites. These giant, blubbery creatures will barely acknowledge our presence, lying in groups of intertwined bodies, undergoing their annual moult. Younger bulls spar in the shallow water, preparing for their mature years when they will look after their own harems. In 2011 the Tasmanian National Parks and Wildlife Service undertook one of the most ambitious eradication projects anywhere in the world. Their plan was to rid the island of all introduced species including rabbits, rats and mice. It looks like it has succeeded and the island and its wildlife are responding. The vegetation is re-establishing and petrel and prion numbers are increasing. It is an amazing island. In addition to the penguins and elephant seals, there are three species of fur seals to be found there and four species of albatross - wandering, black-browed, grey-headed and light-mantled sooty.

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DAY 9: At Sea - Days 9 to 12

Soaring albatross and petrels circle the vessel as we steam south through the Southern Ocean. Lectures now concentrate on the Ross Sea region and beyond the bow of the ship, drifting icebergs of extraordinary shapes begin to appear. Manoeuvring in close for your first ice photographs we pass the Antarctic Circle and into the continent's realm of 24-hour daylight.



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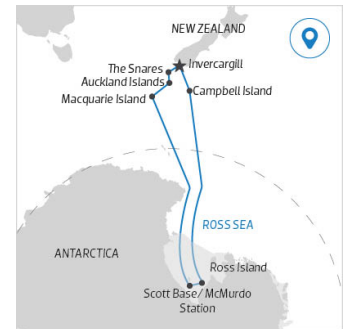
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DAY 13: Antarctica's Ross Sea Region - Days 13 to 22

With unpredictable ice and weather conditions, a day-by-day itinerary is not possible but we assess the conditions daily and take every opportunity to make landings and launch the Zodiacs. You can anticipate wildlife viewing, visits to scientific bases and historic sites, as well as the spectacular white and blue scenery. We hope to visit the following areas: Cape Adare: A large flat spit of land, teeming with the staggering sight of Antarctica's largest Adelie Penguin rookery: a tumult of chattering, feeding chicks; territorial disputes; petty pilfering and courtship displays. Curious penguins often come very close, offering superb photographic opportunities. Among the shifting mass of penguins we will find Carsten Borchgrevink's Hut, the oldest in Antarctica, an overwintering shelter for the first expedition to the Antarctic continent in 1899. Cape Hallett: The enormous Admiralty Range heralds our arrival; wild and extraordinary, the mountains rear up from the sea to over 4,000m, bounded by colossal glaciers. We land at an abandoned base site, now home to large numbers of Adelie Penguins and Weddell Seals. Franklin Island: Desolately beautiful and rugged, this is home to a large Adelie Penguin population and other nesting seabirds. We attempt a landing and explore the coastline. Possession Islands: Rarely-visited, small and rugged, these rocks support tens of thousands of penguins. Observe the birds' busy and humorous activity, with the Admiralty Mountains forming a superb backdrop across the water. Ross Ice Shelf: The world's largest body of floating ice and a natural barrier, at times creating hazardous weather, with sheets of snow blown at gale force by winds off the polar ice cap. Just 800 miles from the South Pole, this daunting spectacle prevented many early explorers from venturing further south. We cruise along its dizzying 30m high ice cliffs, perhaps lucky enough to see icebergs 'calving'. Ross Island: Mount Erebus/Cape Bird/Shackleton's Hut/Scott's Hut(s) and visits to a scientific field station (Scott and McMurdo Stations are high on our wish list but ice, weather and station operational requirements often make them inaccessible). Ross Island was and is the 'hub of activity' in the Ross Sea, dominated by Mt Erebus, a monstrous active volcano named after the ancient Greek God of Darkness. The carefully preserved huts of the 'Heroic Era' help make the history come alive. If we can reach the bases we get a modern perspective on Antarctic Research. Terra Nova Bay: An Italian research station where the scientists are always hospitable and enjoy showing us around their lonely but beautiful home. They share with us their scientific research and also, perhaps, the best 'cafe espresso' in Antarctica!



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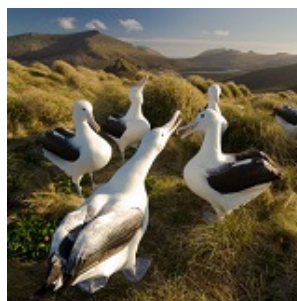
DAY 23: At Sea - Days 23 & 26

Taking time to rest and enjoy shipboard life in the bar or library after the excitement and long daylight hours of the Antarctic, we have time for lectures on our final destination and for some pelagic bird spotting.



DAY 27: Campbell Island/Perseverance Harbour - Days 27 & 28

We drop anchor in Perseverance Harbour, an occasional refuge for Southern Right Whales who come here to calve. Walk to the nesting site of the Southern Royal Albatross and see the strange and beautiful megaherbs growing on the hills. These huge wild flowers that have adapted to the harsh conditions have unusual colourings and weirdly-shaped leaves. We also seek out other wildlife such as Campbell Island Shags, Light-mantled Sooty Albatross and sea lions.



DAY 29: At Sea

Relax and reflect on a remarkable journey as you join our experts for a recap of highlights and enjoy a farewell dinner tonight.



DAY 30: Invercargill

We disembark in the Port of Bluff and this adventure ends as we disperse to begin others. After fond farewells we transfer you to central city hotels or to the airport.



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INCLUSIONS & DETAILS

Accommodation

Standard

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Inclusions	<p>One night hotel accommodation precruise including dinner and breakfast</p> <p>Shipboard accommodation</p> <p>All meals onboard</p> <p>All scheduled landings/shore excursions</p> <p>Pre and post cruise transfers</p>
	<p>Exclusions:</p> <p>Airfares to/from embarkation and disembarkation cities</p> <p>Visas</p> <p>Travel Insurance</p> <p>All items of a personal nature</p> <p>Laundry</p> <p>Beverages onboard</p> <p>Gratuities</p>
Difficulty Rating	2 (light adventure)
Single Surcharge	Available upon request
Notes	Please note the itinerary is subject to change depending on weather and ice conditions
Price Dependent upon	Season and availability

SUSTAINABILITY

GUIDANCE FOR VISITORS TO THE ANTARCTIC

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.

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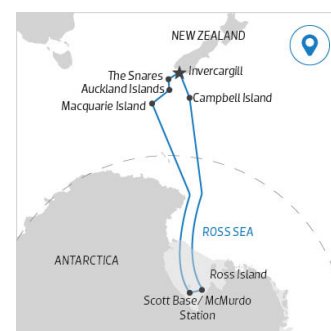
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PROTECT ANTARCTIC WILDLIFE

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.

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

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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 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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