

ANTARCTICA - M/V PLANCIUS: SOLAR ECLIPSE COMPLETE ANTARCTICA



INTRODUCTION

Set sail from Ushuaia aboard the ice-strengthened Plancius, to explore the Falkland Islands, South Georgia and the Antarctic Peninsula, and for the chance to witness one of the most incredible cosmic events in the Earth’s calendar, a total solar eclipse. Be overwhelmed by the plethora of wildlife that the Falkland Islands and South Georgia have to offer, before sailing towards the Weddell Sea, to take up position in the centre of the moon’s shadow in anticipation of this extraordinary event. Then it’s on to Antarctica and into the Weddell Sea, ice permitting, where colossal tabular icebergs herald your arrival to the eastern side of the Antarctic Peninsula.

ITINERARY

DAY 1: Embarkation Ushuaia

Your voyage begins where the world drops off. Ushuaia, Argentina, reputed to be the southernmost city on the planet, is located on the far southern tip of South America. Starting in the afternoon, you embark from this small resort town on Tierra del Fuego, nicknamed “The End of the World,” and sail the mountain-fringed Beagle Channel for the remainder of the evening.

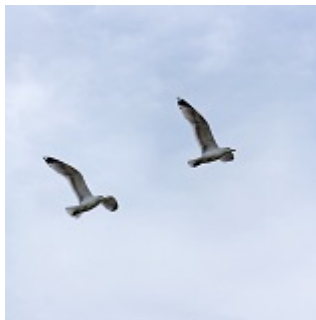


TRIP CODE
ACTSSECA
DEPARTURE
23/11/2021
DURATION
20 Days
LOCATIONS
Antarctic Peninsula, Falkland Islands, South Georgia


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DAY 2: At Sea

Several species of albatross follow the vessel into the westerlies, along with storm petrels, shearwaters, and diving petrels.



DAY 3: Falkland Islands

The Falkland (Malvinas) Islands offer an abundance of wildlife that is easily approachable, though caution is always advised. These islands are largely unknown gems, the site of a 1982 war between the UK and Argentina. Not only do various species of bird live here, but chances are great you'll see both Peale's dolphins and Commerson's dolphins in the surrounding waters. During this part of the voyage, you may visit the following sites: Carcass Island - Despite its name, this island is pleasantly rodent-free and hence bounteous with birdlife. Anything from breeding Magellanic penguins and gentoos to numerous waders and passerine birds (including Cobb's wrens and tussock-birds) live here. Saunders Island - Here you can see the black-browed albatross and its sometimes-clumsy landings, along with breeding imperial shags and rockhopper penguins. King penguins, Magellanic penguins, and gentoos are also found here.



DAY 4: Falkland Islands

The capital of the Falklands and center of its culture, Port Stanley offers a little Victorian-era charm: colorful houses, well tended gardens, and English-style pubs are all to be found here. You can also see several century-old clipper ships nearby, silent witnesses to the hardships of 19th century sailors. The small but interesting museum is also worth a visit, covering the early days of settlement up to the Falklands War. Approximately 2,100 people live in Port Stanley. Feel free to wander at will, though be aware that admission fees to local attractions are not included in the voyage.



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DAY 5: At Sea - Day 5 & 6

On the way to South Georgia, you cross the Antarctic Convergence. The temperature gradually cools, and nutritious water rises to the surface of the sea due to colliding water columns. This phenomenon sometimes attracts a multitude of seabirds near the ship, including several species of albatross, shearwaters, petrels, prions, and skuas.



DAY 7: South Georgia journey - Day 7 to 10

Today you arrive at the first South Georgia activity site. Please keep in mind that weather conditions in this area can be challenging, largely dictating the program. You may visit the following sites over the next few days: Fortuna Bay – Near beaches inhabited by various penguins and seals, you have the chance to follow the final leg of Shackleton’s route to the abandoned whaling village of Stromness. This path cuts across the mountain pass beyond Shackleton’s Waterfall, and as the terrain is partly swampy, be prepared to cross a few small streams. Salisbury Plain, St. Andrews Bay, Gold Harbour – These sites not only house the three largest king penguin colonies in South Georgia, they’re also three of the world’s largest breeding beaches for southern elephant seals. Only during this time of year do they peak in their breeding cycle. Watch the four-ton bulls keep a constant vigil (and occasionally fight) over territories where dozens of females have just given birth or are about to deliver. You can also see a substantial number of Antarctic fur seals here during the breeding season (December – January). Grytviken – In this abandoned whaling station, king penguins walk the streets and elephant seals lie around like they own the place – because they basically do. Here you might be able to see the South Georgia Museum as well as Shackleton’s grave. Cooper Bay – A Zodiac cruise in Cooper Bay offers a great opportunity to see macaroni penguins below a large rookery. Numerous fur and elephant seals are found on the beach, while majestic light-mantled albatrosses can be seen gracefully gliding above.



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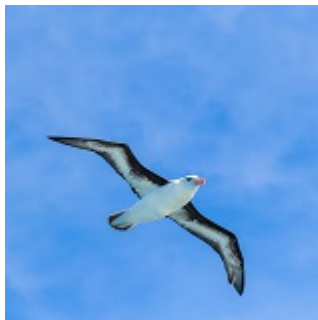
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DAY 11: At Sea

There may be sea ice on this route, and at the edge of the ice some south polar skuas and snow petrels could join the other seabirds trailing the vessel south.



DAY 12: Weddell Sea Pack Ice & Total Solar Eclipse

The ship positions itself in the center of the shadow of the moon, and if possible, some distance into the Scotia Sea drift ice. The ice edge will be about 60°S, 41°W. Some coordinates for the path of the moon's shadow: 7.06 UTC: 58.47.7 S - 42.45.2 W, 1.39 minutes, 8 degrees above horizon 7.08 UTC: 60.42.4 S - 40.59.8 W, 1.42 minutes, 9 degrees above horizon 7.10 UTC: 62.22.3 S - 39.48.0 W, 1.44 minutes, 11 degrees above horizon



DAY 13: At Sea - Day 13 & 14

Enormous icebergs and a fair chance of fin whale sightings ensure there's never a dull moment on this last sea voyage south. Also, your best chance to spot Antarctic petrels is here.



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DAY 15: Antarctica Peninsula - Day 15 to 17

If the ice conditions permit, you now sail into the Weddell Sea. Here colossal tabular icebergs herald your arrival to the Eastern side of the Antarctic Peninsula. Paulet Island, with its large population of Adélie penguins, is a possible stop. You might also visit Brown Bluff, located in the ice-clogged Antarctic Sound, where you could get the chance to set foot on the Antarctic Continent itself. If conditions aren't favorable to enter the Weddell Sea from the east, the ship will set course for Elephant Island and head into the Bransfield Strait, between South Shetland Island and the Antarctic Peninsula. Here you can attempt to access the Antarctic Sound from the northwest. The volcanic islands of the South Shetlands are windswept and often cloaked in mist, but they nonetheless offer many subtle pleasures. A wide variety of flora (mosses, lichens, flowering grasses) and fauna (gentoo penguins, chinstrap penguins, southern giant petrels) live here. On Deception Island, the ship plunges through Neptune's Bellows and into the flooded caldera. If a landing here is possible, you will find hot springs, an abandoned whaling station, and thousands of cape petrels. A number of kelp gulls, brown skuas, south polar skuas, and Antarctic terns can be spotted here too. Your last activities before venturing into the Drake Passage are likely to find you around the northern Gerlache Strait. One option is Cierva Cove and the rugged, ice-gripped mountains of the Davis Coast. Mikkelsen Harbour on the south coast of Trinity Island is another alternative. Here you may enjoy a gentoo penguin rookery as well as some fine scenic cruising. Conditions on the Drake Passage determine the exact time of departure.



DAY 18: At Sea - Day 18 & 19

Your return voyage is far from lonely. While crossing the Drake, you're greeted by a vast array of seabirds. But they seem a little more familiar to you now, and you to them.



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DAY 20: Disembark Ushuaia

Every adventure, no matter how grand, must eventually come to an end. It's now time to disembark in Ushuaia, but with memories that will accompany you wherever your next adventure lies.



INCLUSIONS & DETAILS

Accommodation

Standard

Inclusions

Shipboard accommodation
 All meals including snacks, coffee and tea
 All shore excursions and activities by Zodiac
 Rubber boots and snowshoes on loan
 Program of lectures by noted naturalists and leadership by experienced expedition staff
 Luggage transfer from pick up point to the vessel on the day of embarkation
 Pre-scheduled group transfer from the vessel to the airport in Ushuaia (directly after disembarkation)
 All miscellaneous services taxes and port charges throughout the program
 Comprehensive pre-departure material

Exclusions:

Airfare to/from embarkation and disembarkation city
 Pre and post land arrangements
 Transfers on Day 1 in Ushuaia to the vessel
 Visa and passport fees
 Gratuities to crew

Difficulty Rating

2 (light adventure)

Single Surcharge

Available upon request

Notes

Contact us for more details

Price Dependent upon

Season and availability

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SUSTAINABILITY

GUIDANCE FOR VISITORS TO THE ANTARCTIC

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

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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.

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.

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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 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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