

RUSSIA'S RING OF FIRE



INTRODUCTION

Undertake an incredible expedition to the spectacular coast of the Russian Far East. This is a truly unique corner of the Arctic, where numerous isolated and small islands offer truly incredible landscapes. Comparable to the biodiversity of the Galapagos Islands, the Kuril and Commander Islands are each unique with their own plants and wildlife. Join us on this incredible journey as you search for the unique sites, plants, animals and history that makes this section of the Pacific 'Ring of Fire' so mysterious and unique.

ITINERARY

DAY 1: Petropavlovsk-Kamchatskiy

You will be transferred to the vessel and we will depart for the Commander Islands. You are welcome on the bridge as we sail from what some people consider the best natural harbour in the world. There is also some good birding as we leave the shoreline behind.



DAY 2: At Sea

A day at sea as we cruise towards the Commander Islands. Enjoy several lectures and briefings as we prepare for the days ahead. It is also a good time to be on deck as the birding is good with Fork-tailed Storm-Petrel and Red-legged Kittiwake amongst the likely sightings.



TRIP CODE

ACHERRF

DEPARTURE

01/06/2022

DURATION

13 Days

LOCATIONS

Arctic Circle, Russian
Arctic



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DAY 3: Commander Islands

There are two main islands in the Commander group, Bering and Medny, and during our two days we will explore several sites combining the best of the natural and cultural history. There is an excellent chance of finding Rock Sandpiper, Mongolian Plover, Pechora Pipit and Grey-crowned Rosy-Finch, as well as the endemic subspecies of Arctic Fox. Zodiac cruising can be extremely rewarding here with several species of auklets as well as the Red-legged Kittiwake. The area is also extremely rich in marine mammals. Potential species include Sperm, Humpback, Northern Minke and Baird's Beaked-Whales, as well as Orcas, Steller Sea Lions, Northern Fur Seals and Pacific Sea Otters. We include a visit to the small settlement of Nikolskoye and the local museum.



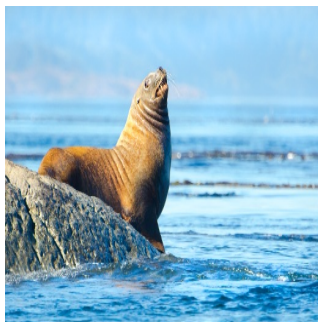
DAY 5: Zhupanova River, Kamchatka

We will spend several hours in the Zodiacs cruising on the scenic Zhupanova River where we should get great looks at Steller's Sea Eagles as the birds often nest in the trees adjacent to the river. Other highlights could include Far Eastern Curlew, Long-toed Stint, Kamchatka Gull and Aleutian Tern. There is also a major salmon fishery on the river which we can visit.



DAY 6: Bukta Russkaya, Kamchatka

In this deep fiord on the Kamchatka Peninsula we will look for the endangered Kittlitz's Murrelet as well as Long-billed Murrelet. We plan a short excursion at the head of the fiord where there is a chance of seeing brown bears. At the entrance to the fiord where we can Zodiac cruise there are almost always Orcas and Steller Sea Lions.



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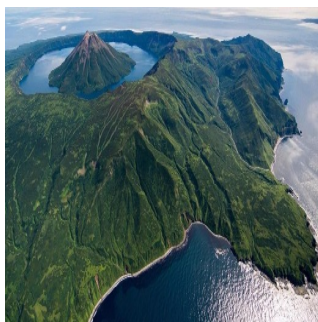
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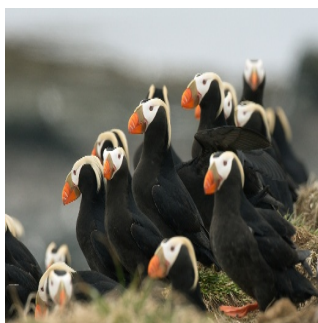
DAY 7: Second Kuril Strait

Very early in the morning we will pass through Second Kuril Strait which has one of the highest densities of Sea Otters in the Kuril Islands. Our landing on Atlasova Island is great for birders and non birders alike. There are the remains of a Gulag to explore and numerous species to see. This evening on Onekotan Island we can stretch our legs through an amazing field of wild flowers as we walk to Black Lake.



DAY 8: Ekarma and Toporkovy Islands

During an early morning Zodiac cruise at Ekarma Island we should see various alcids, with close looks at Tufted Puffin and Whiskered Auklet. This afternoon at Toporkovy Island in the shadow of the active Matua Island volcano we can expect to find Harlequin Ducks, Red-faced Cormorants, Tufted Puffins and Brunnich's Guillemots. Ashore we could encounter Grey-tailed Tattler, Middendorff's Grasshopper Warbler and Black-faced Bunting.



DAY 9: Simushir and Yankicha Islands

We will enter a flooded caldera at the northern end of Simushir Island where a once top secret Soviet submarine base lies abandoned. In the surrounding area look for Siberian Rubythroat, Eurasian Nutcracker, Pine Grosbeak and Japanese Grey Bunting. Our visit to Yankicha Island is likely to be one of the highlights of the voyage as the number of alcids which breed here is incredible, with spectacular concentrations of Crested and Whiskered Auklets.



DAY 10: Chirpoy and Urup Islands

This morning depending on weather we will either Zodiac cruise or land on Chirpoy Island where there are some dramatic volcanic landscapes and headlands covered in breeding seabirds. This afternoon's landing on Urup Island is a chance to stretch your legs on an extended walk, beachcomb and look for Sea Otters or birds in the forest behind the beach.



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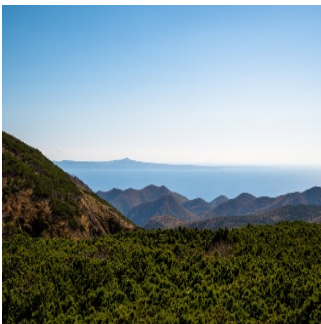
DAY 11: Iturup Island

This morning we land at the small settlement of Kurilsk from where local buses/trucks will take us into the volcanic highlands to thermal hot pools where you can enjoy a soak or go birding. Possible species include Kamchatka Leaf-warbler, Japanese Robin, Siberian Accentor, Pine Grosbeak and Japanese Bush-warbler.



DAY 12: Kunashir Island


Kunashir is the largest island in the Kuril chain. We plan a landing in the Kurilsky Reserve and will explore an extensive area of woodland, where there are some good walks and birding. This afternoon while we are at sea there is a chance for birding and an opportunity to recap and pack.



DAY 13: Sakhalin Island

Arrive at the Port of Korskov on Sakhalin Island. There will be transport to a central hotel and the airport in the town of Yuzhno-Sakhalinsk. Enquire for a full itinerary and/or Bird and Mammal List.




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INCLUSIONS & DETAILS

Accommodation	Cabin on board ship
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Inclusions	Cabin accommodation on board vessel All meals on board Local payments Pre/post cruise transfers All shore expedition by zodiac Guiding and lectures by experienced expedition team EXCLUSIONS International flights Visa and reciprocity fees (if applicable) Travel insurance Items of a personal nature Gratuities for staff and crew
Difficulty Rating	2 (light adventure)
Single Surcharge	Available upon request, contact us for more details.
Notes	Please note this itinerary may be subject to change due to weather conditions.
Price Dependent upon	Departure date, seasonality and availability.

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SUSTAINABILITY

Being environmentally accountable is a crucial part of our organisation. Chimu is currently striving towards using less paper, taking several initiatives to do so and tracking our progress along the way. Our goal: A paperless organisation. For this reason, all information given to you will be sent electronically. We encourage those who choose to travel with us to support our aspirations and actions and ask that you reconsider printing out documentation. To view these documents, you can download them to your iPad or portable computer before and during your trip.

Chimu is passionate and dedicated to sustainability measures and understands the crucial part sustainability plays within the tourism industry.

We use local guides and office staff to both maximise local employment opportunities and minimise carbon footprint. Local guides also ensure you benefit from the intimate knowledge, passion and culture of the country you're visiting. Our guides are all highly qualified (most with university degrees) or equip with many years of experience and are paid above the standard wage. Whether it be our knowledgeable local guides, locally produced meals or the transport on tour, we do not use imported goods when local products are available. We aim to minimise our impact on the environment and give as much back as possible to the communities we work in.

While visiting the many national parks, heritage sites, museums and landmarks our travellers are encouraged to explore whilst remaining culturally aware and sensitive. We further encourage you to buy appropriate souvenirs and discourage the buying of anything wrongfully made or taken from the environment i.e. shells and endangered species products. Information on how you can be environmentally conscious, and travel responsibly will be made available in our Travellers Guides and provided during your

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travels by guides and staff.

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

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