ANTARCTICA - BELLINGSHAUSEN SEA & ELLSWORTH LAND | ORTELIUS



TRIP CODE

ACOWBSPE

DEPARTURE

14/01/2027

DURATION

25 Days

LOCATIONS

Antarctic Peninsula & Antarctic Circle

INTRODUCTION

Embark on an extraordinary Antarctic adventure that takes you to some of the most remote and rarely visited locations on Earth. This expedition offers a unique opportunity to explore the Bellingshausen Sea, have the chance to land on the uninhabited Peter I Island and explore the rugged coastline of Ellsworth Land. The adventure is enhanced by the opportunity to see the Antarctic from above, enjoying the breathtaking views from helicopter flights, providing a unique perspective of the icy wilderness. Witnessing the pristine beauty of the Antarctic landscape where only a few hundred people have ever set foot. Along the way, you'll encounter diverse wildlife including southern fulmars, Arctic terns, AdÃ©lie penguins, chinstrap penguins and various seal species. The journey is filled with awe-inspiring scenery, tabular icebergs and vast ice sheets. This expedition is perfect for those seeking something a bit more than your typical Antarctic peninsula itinerary giving you a sense of how original explorers felt.

Please note: Due to increased fuel costs, a surcharge of USD$29 per passenger, per night, will be applied to voyages departing between 15 November and 31 December 2026. For departures from 6 January 2027 onwards a surcharge of USD$37 per passenger, per night will be applied on top of your voyage cost. The departure on 14 January 2027 is capped at USD$750pp. If you have any questions please Contact Us.

ITINERARY

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DAY 1: Arrive Ushuaia & Embarkation



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.

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



Over the next two days on the Drake Passage, you enjoy some of the same experiences encountered by the great polar explorers who first charted these regions: cool salt breezes, rolling seas, maybe even a fin whale spouting up sea spray. After passing the Antarctic Convergence – Antarctica’s natural boundary, formed when north-flowing cold waters collide with warmer sub-Antarctic seas – you are in the circum-Antarctic upwelling zone. Not only does the marine life change, the avian life changes too. Wandering albatrosses, grey-headed albatrosses, black-browed albatrosses, light-mantled sooty albatrosses, cape pigeons, southern fulmars, Wilson’s storm petrels, blue petrels, and Antarctic petrels are a few of the birds you might see.

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DAY 4: Exploring the Antarctic Peninsula - Day 4 to 6

Following in the footsteps of the famous Belgian explorer Adrien de Gerlache, we hope to land at Auguste Island, which was also the first landing site of the expedition team aboard Belgica during their 1898 expedition. Another possible landing is Hydrurga Rocks, a small group of islets located east of the much larger Two Hummock Island. Hydrurga Rocks offers a chance to spot Adélie and chinstrap penguins, as well as Weddell seals, leopard seals, and southern elephant seals. Occasionally, humpback whales and Antarctic minke whales may also be seen in the surrounding waters. As we continue exploring the Antarctic Peninsula, heading south, we may visit some of the following locations: Charlotte Bay – where we hope to make our first continental landing at Portal Point. Cuverville Island – A small, precipitous island nestled between the mountains of the Antarctic Peninsula and Rongé Island, Cuverville is home to a large colony of gentoo penguins and breeding pairs of brown skuas. Danco Island – Activities here may focus on the gentoo penguins nesting on the island, along with the Weddell and crabeater seals that can be found nearby.



DAY 7: Flandres Bay and Renard Island

We arrive at Flandres Bay, where we hope to land at Renard Island. Renard Island is a steep and rugged island, named after Alphonse Renard, one of the major scientific backers of Adrien de Gerlache's expedition. It was noted as the final landing site of the expedition vessel Belgica along the west coast of the Antarctic Peninsula.



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DAY 8: Crossing the Antarctic Circle - Day 8 to 11

Crossing the Antarctic Circle, we arrive in the stunning area of Crystal Sound, where we hope to see a range of Antarctic wildlife and witness the sheer scale of the Antarctic landscape, with its vast expanses of ice and towering mountains. If conditions allow, we will land on Detaille Island, a listed historic monument and former research station. The station remains as it was left, offering a rare glimpse into the early days of scientific research in Antarctica, set against breathtaking scenery. Pourquoi-Pas Island / Horseshoe Island A visit to one or both of these islands further deepens our appreciation of the pioneering expeditions of the past. Pourquoi-Pas Island, named by the famous explorer and scientist Jean-Baptiste Charcot, is often home to penguins and seals. It offers a hike ashore and the opportunity to see glaciers that shape the island's topography. Horseshoe Island is also home to an abandoned research base, where the "Mary Celeste"-like buildings provide an insight into a bygone era of scientific exploration. This was a site of pioneering research and long-distance expeditions using dog teams, and the remains of the kennels can still be seen. This island is a favorite among our staff and guests, offering breathtaking views of the vast landscapes and harsh conditions that once served as home for researchers. The landscape of Horseshoe Island never disappoints. Stonington Island A site of significant research activity from the 1930s to the 1970s, Stonington Island was home to both American and British research bases. It features a range of historic buildings and artifacts, telling the story of Antarctic exploration. Once connected to the Antarctic mainland by snow and ice, this sobering site now stands as a powerful reminder of Antarctica's remoteness and its delicate balance between human history and untamed wilderness. The wildlife, vast natural beauty, and man-made structures combine to make this an unforgettable place, sure to leave a lasting impression. Red Rock Ridge A landing site on the Antarctic mainland, Red Rock Ridge is visible from some distance, with its striking red-hued rocks standing out against the icy backdrop. If conditions are favorable, we will attempt a landing here. Adélie penguins have a breeding colony in the area, and we also hope to see seals and Antarctic shags, which nest nearby.



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DAY 12: Sailing southward through Marguerite Bay

As the ship heads farther south, we will keep a keen watch for the giants of the sea, as well as some lesser-seen wildlife, such as the elusive Ross seal. We are now entering a region of true exploration, where few have ventured before.



DAY 15: Exploring the Bellingshausen Sea - Day 15 to 18

We hope to enter the Ronne Entrance, an area first recorded during the aerial flights of Lincoln Ellsworth and later charted by the British Graham Land Expedition. This remote region is rarely visited, and we will aim to land in one of the world's most isolated places, using either Zodiacs or helicopters. As ice and weather conditions can vary significantly, our Expedition Leader will determine the best options for activities in this area. Along Ellsworth Land, we will attempt to find a suitable landing site, either by Zodiac or helicopter. As always, this depends on weather conditions and will be decided by the Expedition Leader.



DAY 19: Peter I Island - Day 19 & 20

Known as Peter I Øy in Norwegian, this uninhabited volcanic island lies in the Bellingshausen Sea. It was discovered by Fabian von Bellingshausen in 1821 and named after Peter the Great of Russia. Though the island is claimed by Norway as its own territory, it is rarely visited by passenger vessels due to its remote and exposed nature. Landing here is challenging, but if weather and ice conditions permit, you may have the extraordinary opportunity to land via helicopter on the glaciated northern part of the island. This is a truly unique chance to set foot on one of the most remote islands in the world.



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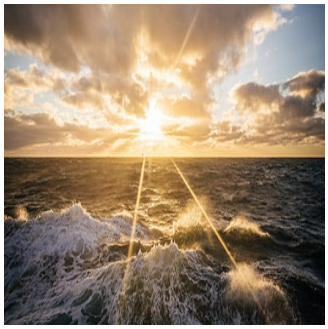
DAY 21: Return accross the Drake Passage

After our unforgettable time exploring the remote and rarely visited Peter I Island, we set our course northward, leaving Antarctica behind as we sail across the Bellingshausen Sea and into the vast Southern Ocean. As the ship pushes through the Antarctic waters, our onboard experts will continue to host engaging lectures, covering topics such as the history of Antarctic exploration and marine ecosystems on this delicate environment. Wildlife remains a constant companion as we sail. Keep an eye out for wandering albatrosses gliding effortlessly above the waves, storm petrels skimming the water's surface, and occasional sightings of whales—including humpbacks and possibly even blue whales—feasting in these nutrient-rich waters. The vast Drake Passage stretches before us, marking our final stretch before reaching South America. Over the following days on the Drake Passage, you enjoy some of the same experiences encountered by the great polar explorers who first charted these regions: cool salt breezes, rolling seas, maybe even a fin whale spouting up sea spray. After passing the Antarctic Convergence – Antarctica's natural boundary, formed when north-flowing cold waters collide with warmer sub-Antarctic seas – you are in the circum-Antarctic upwelling zone. Wandering albatrosses, grey-headed albatrosses, black-browed albatrosses, light-mantled sooty albatrosses, cape pigeons, southern fulmars, Wilson's storm petrels, blue petrels, and Antarctic petrels are a few of the birds you might see.



DAY 25: Disembarkation in Ushuaia

Every adventure, no matter how grand, must eventually come to an end. It's now time to disembark in Ushuaia, reputed to be the southernmost town in the world, and return home with memories that will accompany you wherever your next adventure lies.



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INCLUSIONS & DETAILS

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Accommodation	Cabin on board ship
Inclusions	**INCLUSIONS** Cabin Accommodation on board MV Ortelius All meals throughout the voyage aboard the ship including snacks, coffee and tea All shore excursions and activities throughout the voyage by Zodiac Program of lectures by noted naturalists and leadership by experienced expedition staff Free use of rubber boots and snowshoes Group departure transfers in Ushuaia (directly after disembarkation) All miscellaneous service taxes and port charges throughout the programme Comprehensive pre-departure material Access to 1.5 GB of free internet connectivity per person, which resets every 24 hours. Supplementary vouchers available to purchase on onboard. Subject to satellite coverage **EXCLUSIONS** Airfares to/from disembarkation city Visa & passport fees (if applicable) Travel insurance Beverages (other than tea & coffee) Meals ashore Personal expenses such as laundry & bar Gratuities for the crew (guidelines will be provided) Pre and post land arrangements Government arrival or departure taxes (if applicable) Additional optional activities A fuel surcharge may be applied to all bookings
Difficulty Rating	2 (light adventure)
Single Surcharge	Available upon request. Please contact us for more details. No single supplement will apply if willing to share in selected cabins.

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Notes	Prices are based on per person, and may be based on quad/triple/twin share. Prices are correct at time of publishing but are subject to change at any time. Itinerary is subject to change depending on weather and ice conditions. Please note: Due to increased fuel costs, a surcharge of USD$29 per passenger, per night, will be applied to voyages departing between 15 November and 31 December 2026. For departures from 6 January 2027 onwards a surcharge of USD$37 per passenger, per night will be applied on top of your voyage cost. The departure on 14 January 2027 is capped at USD$750pp. If you have any questions please Contact Us. In rare and unforeseen situations, an operator may apply a fuel surcharge after your booking has been confirmed and paid. This is outside our control and uncommon, but transparency with our travelers is important to us.
Price Dependent upon	Departure Date, Fuel Surcharges, Cabin Category, Currency Fluctuations, Seasonality & Availability.

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SUSTAINABILITY

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