

ANTARCTIC CIRCLE - EMPEROR PENGUINS OF THE BELLINGSHAUSEN SEA | LE COMMANDANT CHARCOT



TRIP CODE

ACPOBES

DURATION

15 Days

LOCATIONS

Antarctic Peninsula,
Antarctic Circle



INTRODUCTION

Take an extraordinary expedition cruise into the heart of the Bellingshuasen Sea. A magnificent spectacle, you will explore the mysterious and less frequently visited Charcot and Peter I Islands. Encounter the legendary emperor Penguin, the largest of all penguin species. As the gradual winter gives way to austral spring you will encounter penguin chicks, a truly incredible moment sure to leave a strong emotional impression. This is truly a unique Antarctic journey.

ITINERARY

DAY 1: Embarkation in Punta Arenas

Embarkation from 4:00 pm to 5:00 pm. Departure at 6:00 pm Capital of the Magallanes Region and of the Chilean Antarctic, this handsome port city will charm you with its history and traditions. Once inhabited by several indigenous tribes, Punta Arenas has maintained an architectural style that remains true to its heritage. *package price includes a pre-night accommodation in Santiago, a flight from Santiago to Punta Arenas on Embarkation day, and a return flight Ushuaia to Santiago on the final day with transfers.




NO IMAGE
AVAILABLE

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DAY 2: At Sea - Day 2 and 3

Spend exceptional moments sailing aboard Le Commandant Charcot, the world’s first luxury polar exploration vessel and the first PC2-class polar cruise ship capable of sailing into the very heart of the ice, on seas and oceans which the frozen conditions render inaccessible to ordinary ships. Le Commandant Charcot is fitted with oceanographic and scientific equipment selected by a committee of experts. Take advantage of the on-board lectures and opportunities for discussion with these specialists to learn more about the poles. Participate in furthering scientific research with PONANT and let us discover together what these fascinating destinations have yet to reveal to us.



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DAY 4: Crossing The Antarctic Circle

Weather permitting, we'll cross the mythic line of the Antarctic Polar Circle, located along 66°33’ south of the Equator. This iconic area demarcates the point from which it is possible to view the midnight sun during the December solstice. Within this circle, the sun remains above the horizon for 24 consecutive hours at least once a year. Crossing this line, an experience known to few people, is sure to be an unforgettable highlight of your cruise through the polar regions.



DAY 5: Expedition to Charcot Island

When he discovered this island surrounded by sea ice in 1910 from aboard the Pourquoi Pas ? as he mapped Alexander Island, Jean-Baptiste Charcot had not be able to get less than 40 miles away from it. Situated in a zone that experiences frequent low-pressure systems and regular cloud cover, the island remains in many ways an enigma. It is entirely covered in ice and sheer cliffs, with the exception of the rocky outcrops extending over a dozen kilometres in the far north-west. The ice in the narrowest part of Wilkins Sound has been cracking in recent times, thus officially detaching this island from its neighbour, Alexander Island, lying 50 km away. Very few people have landed on this largely untouched island, whose waters attract numerous seabirds, such as petrels, Antarctic terns and skuas.




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DAY 6: At Sea

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DAY 7: Expedition to Peter I Island

You will then head for the legendary Peter I Island. Located 450 km away from the Atlantic coast, it was discovered in 1821 by the Russian explorer Fabian Gottlieb von Bellingshausen, who named it in honour of the Russian tsar Peter the Great. In 1909, Captain Charcot sighted it for the first time from aboard the Pourquoi Pas ?, but was unable to land there: “In the parting mists, one or two miles away, an enormous black mass shrouded in clouds appears suddenly before us: it is Peter I Island.” Surrounded by pack ice and with about 95% of its surface covered by ice, this volcanic island, whose highest peak reaches 1,640 metres, is protected by ice cliffs some 40 metres tall, making any approach difficult.



DAY 8: English Coast - Day 8 and 9

Along the English Coast, head off in search of emperor penguin. Brave the magnificent, quasi-unexplored desert of ice to be among the lucky few to observe these majestic penguins and enjoy this rare and intense experience. Emperor penguins are the largest of all living penguin species and they are champions at adapting to the harsh Antarctic climate. They live inland, where they protect their eggs between their feet and their abdomen during winter, and cover long distances in search of food.




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DAY 10: Marguerite Bay

The icebergs are each more majestic than the next and scattered around the deep and intense blue waters of Marguerite Bay, one of the most beautiful regions in the Antarctic. It is delimited in the north by the mountainous Adelaide Island, in the south by George VI Sound and Alexander Island, and in the east by the Fallières Coast. Charcot named it after his wife during his second expedition to the Antarctic between 1908 and 1910. In 1909, in the southern summer when the skies are at their clearest, he led an important scientific mission to map and study this region. The bay is home to a number of cetaceans and you may get the chance to observe leopard seals or Adelie penguins.



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DAY 11: Stonington Island & Pourquoi Pas Island

In the northeastern part of Marguerite Bay, along Graham Land, you will discover the small island of Stonington. The island was a British research station from 1946 to 1950 and later from 1960 to 1975. Numerous expeditions setting off from this station on dog sledges enabled the mapping of a significant portion of the Antarctic Peninsula. The two-storey steel-framed buildings, whose vestiges are still visible, could accommodate 6 to 17 people. Equipment and facilities from that time can still be found there: the generator, the dog pens, radio equipment and weather instruments, the water reservoir and a storage space. The island is now an important breeding ground for Antarctic terns and south polar skuas. Le Commandant Charcot will land on the coast of Pourquoi Pas Island, so named in the 1930s by John Riddoch Rymill in honour of Jean-Baptiste Charcot, who discovered it from aboard his ship Le Pourquoi Pas ? during his second expedition to Antarctica between 1908 and 1910. This mountainous island, situated in the north of Marguerite Bay between Graham Land and Adelaide Island, is 28 km long and 14 km large. It is scattered with narrow fjords and snow-covered mountains. You will go to shore in a zodiac dinghy with your expedition team and you could get the chance to observe Adelie penguins going about their business on the island's rocky shores.




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DAY 12: The Gullet & Detaille Island

The sumptuous landscapes of this narrow channel between Adelaide Island and Graham Land attract all visitors sailing towards Marguerite Bay. It is like an ice palace, its immaculate white walls reflected in the frozen mirror formed by the waters of the Southern Ocean, scattered with icebergs and gleaming blocks of ice. This passage was explored for the first time by the Jean-Baptiste Charcot expedition in 1909, which sketched its position. It was then surveyed in 1936 by the British expedition under John Rymill. It is here in this magical setting that some of the first subaquatic images of the Antarctic were shot during Philippe Cousteau’s four-month expedition to Antarctica between 1972 and 1973. Detaille Island is a small island situated off the Loubet Coast in the Crystal Sound, a magnificent region surrounded by snow-covered peaks. A British research station was set up there in 1956, ahead of the International Geophysical Year 1957-58. Like the International Polar Years, organised for the first time in 1882-83, the purpose of this event was to take a coordinated approach to the geophysical research conducted by the different nations. With the island difficult to access, this station was shut down in 1959. The vestiges of the buildings and sledge dog pens that made it possible to map more than 4,000 miles around the island are now maintained by the United Kingdom Heritage Trust.



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DAY 13: Crossing the Drake - Days 13 and 14

If there is one place, one sea, one waterway dreaded by tourists, researchers and hardened seafarers alike, it is undoubtedly Drake Passage. Situated at the latitude of the infamous Furious Fifties winds, between Cape Horn and the South Shetland Islands, it is the shortest route to connect Antarctica to South America. Seasoned navigators will tell you that you must earn your visit to the White Continent! As the Antarctic convergence zone where cold currents rising up from the South Pole meet warmer equatorial water masses, Drake Passage harbours a very diverse marine fauna. Don't forget to look to the sky to catch a glimpse of elegant albatross and Cape petrels, playfully floating about in the wind around your ship




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DAY 15: Disembark in Ushuaia

Today your expedition comes to an end. You will disembark in Ushuaia around 8am and transfer to the airport for your flight to Santiago.



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INCLUSIONS & DETAILS	
Accommodation	Standard
Inclusions	Cabin accommodation whilst on board Le Commandant All meals whilst on board All scheduled landings and excursions Guiding and lectures by expedition team Complimentary Polar expedition jacket Free use of rubber boots for shore excursions All port taxes Kayaking Activities Comprehensive pre and post voyage informational material Flight from Buenos Aires to Ushuaia on embarkation day Flight from Ushuaia to Buenos Aires on disembarkation day Exclusions Airfares to and from embarkation/disembarkation city Visa fees (if applicable) Travel insurance Beverages (other than tea and coffee) Personal expenses such as laundry, on board communication (telephone calls, faxes, email) Gratuities for the crew Pre or post cruise travel expenses Optional activities
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 depending on weather and ice conditions.
Price Dependent upon	Departure date, seasonality and availability

SUSTAINABILITY

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

A trip to the Antarctic is a completely different experience and quite unlike any other trip you have probably been on. We use a highly regulated, licensed vessel which is well equipped to operate in this vulnerable ecosystem. We are fully compliant with all rules set down by the IAATO and all activities are governed by the Antarctic Treaty System. We carefully select all ships we work with and choose them for their small size as this creates far less impact on shore landings with wildlife. We view the voyage to the Antarctic as an expedition, not a sightseeing trip. Smaller boats such as ours can navigate narrow waterways and are far less polluting than the larger ships in Antarctic waters. By carrying less passengers, we have far less waste, and all waste is carried back to the home port to allow for environmentally conscious waste management and disposal, unlike some of the larger ships which do not facilitate this. This trip begins in Ushuaia where you will have time to sample local food and shop at local boutiques which we encourage individuals to take part in for experience and in support of the local community. We also try to create opportunity to see research and historical sites including the former research station/now museum of Port Lockroy and engage with local history. We discourage the buying of souvenirs made from endangered species or wrongfully taken from the environment i.e. shells. Our pre-departure pack provides you with all the information required for your tour, from what to take with you to practical advice about how to minimise your impact on the Antarctic environment. This pack highlights initiatives such as waste reduction, and how to appropriately engage with wildlife and the environment around you.

For more information visit our [sustainability page](#).

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