

SOUTH GEORGIA & ANTARCTIC ODYSSEY 22/23 | GREG MORTIMER



INTRODUCTION


Set sail from Ushuaia, across the infamous Drake Passage to explore and step foot on the stunningly beautiful ice wilderness of Antarctica, where penguins, seals, whales, historic sites, scientific stations and breathtaking scenery await. Take a Zodiac cruise amongst incredible sculpted icebergs and if possible explore the ice-choked Weddell Sea region. Visit Elephant Island before retracing Shackleton's epic journey across the Scotia Sea to South Georgia. Remote, untamed, ruggedly beautiful and wildlife-rich, South Georgia is home to millions of fur seals and elephant seals, nesting albatross, the world's largest king penguin rookeries, abandoned whaling stations and the grave of Sir Ernest Shackleton himself.

ITINERARY

DAY 1: Arrival in Ushuaia

Arrive in Ushuaia, where you will be met by a representative of Aurora Expeditions and transferred to our group hotel. Upon arrival at your included hotel, kindly remind hotel check-in staff to provide you with Aurora Expeditions cabin tags. Please clearly label the tags with your name and ship cabin number. At approximately 6.00 pm this evening, meet your fellow expeditioners at a voyage briefing. Afterwards, there's free time to enjoy the local cuisine at one of Ushuaia's many restaurants. (Dinner not included).
Accommodation: Las Hayas Hotel (or similar)




TRIP CODE
ACAUSG
DEPARTURE
27/12/2022
DURATION
21 Days
LOCATIONS
South Georgia, Falklands and Antarctic Peninsula


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DAY 2: Embarkation in Ushuaia

This morning, please ensure your cabin luggage is fitted with cabin tags clearly labelled with your name and cabin number. Please take your cabin luggage down to hotel reception by 8.00 am. Your luggage will be collected from your hotel and transferred directly to the port for clearance and delivered to your cabin ahead of your arrival on board. Please keep any valuables or personal items with you throughout the day. Once you have checked out of your hotel by 11.00 am, you have free time before meeting back in the hotel lobby at 2.00 pm to commence a short sightseeing tour of Ushuaia. Alternatively, enjoy time at leisure and make your own way to the Prison Museum carpark by 3.45 pm to re-join the group to be transferred to the pier for embarkation. Ushuaia, capital of Tierra del Fuego is located at the shores of the Beagle Channel and surrounded by the Martial Mountains giving you a unique landscape in Argentina, which is the combination of mountains, sea, glaciers and forests. On this brief introductory tour, you will visit “La Mision” neighbourhood, the old Government House, and the upper area of the city, which offers beautiful panoramic views of Ushuaia and the Beagle Channel. During the excursion you will see the antique houses that belonged to the first families settled in Ushuaia. The excursion ends with a visit to the Old Prison Museum before transferring to the pier for embarkation at approximately 4.00 pm. After embarkation, you’ll have time to settle into your cabin before our important mandatory briefings. As the ship pulls away from port, we’ll gather on the deck to commence our adventure with spectacular views over Ushuaia and Tierra del Fuego. This evening get to know your fellow expeditioners and friendly expedition team and crew at a welcome dinner to celebrate the start of a thrilling adventure to Antarctica.

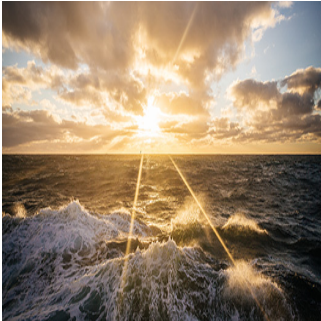


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DAY 3: At Sea

As we commence our trip across the South Atlantic Ocean towards the Falklands~Malvinas, we make the most of our time getting comfortable with the motions of the sea. Our expedition team prepare you for our first landing with important wildlife guidelines, biosecurity procedures, and start our lecture program to help you learn more about the region’s history, wildlife and environment. Our wildlife experiences begin as we enjoy watching and photographing the many seabirds, including majestic albatrosses and giant petrels following in our wake. They rise and fall skilfully, using air currents created by the ship to gain momentum.



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DAY 4: Falklands (Malvinas)

The Falklands~Malvinas comprises two large islands (East and West Falkland), with over 700 islands scattered off the coast. All but seven of these are uninhabited, with windswept coastlines, white sand beaches and crystal-clear water. These beautifully barren islands are true wildlife havens, sheltering an impressive diversity of birdlife, including the largest black-browed albatross colony on earth. The cold, nutrient-rich waters surrounding the islands make this a prime location for spotting marine life. There are many beautiful areas to explore across the Falklands~Malvinas, each offering a unique perspective on this magnificent archipelago. Your experienced expedition team, who have made countless journeys to this area, will use their expertise to design your voyage from day to day, choosing the best options based on the prevailing winds, weather and wildlife opportunities. We generally make landings or Zodiac excursions twice a day. Even though we're north of the Antarctic Convergence it can be quite chilly here, so you'll want to layer up before joining Zodiac cruises into rocky coves or along sea cliffs, keeping watch for seals, sea lions, dolphins and penguins. Zodiacs will also transport you from the ship to land, where you may be able to visit albatross colonies, penguin rookeries and perhaps even have a traditional English 'tea and scones' at a local cottage. We also aim to land in historic Stanley, the capital of the Falklands~Malvinas. This charming town has a distinctly British character, with terraced town houses, pioneer cottages and even an iconic red telephone box! Colourful buildings house cosy cafes, English pubs, souvenir shops, a post office and the fascinating Historic Dockyard Museum, with displays on the maritime history of the Falkland Islands, natural history and links to Antarctica.



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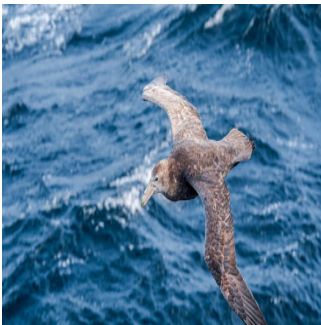
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DAY 5: At Sea - Day 5 to 7

Between the Falklands~Malvinas and South Georgia, you will be entranced by the ceaseless flight of the many seabirds that follow our wake, skilfully using the air currents created by the ship to gain momentum. On this leg, we are usually travelling into the prevailing weather, so it is difficult to estimate our precise arrival time in South Georgia. Our lecture program will continue highlighting all the incredible sights we have witnessed over the past few days. You will have ample time to enjoy observing the sea birds, whale-watching from the observation areas, or simply relaxing with a book. If time and weather conditions permit, we could pass close to Shag Rocks, a fascinating group of jagged rocky islets protruding from the sea, in the proximity of South Georgia.



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DAY 8: South Georgia - Day 8 to 12

As you near the rugged island of South Georgia, spare a thought for Captain James Cook, who arrived here in 1775 and believed it to be the northern tip of a great southern continent! In fact, it is a small island only 176 km (110 mi) long, but with a 3,000 m (9,842 ft) snow-capped mountain range, some of the world’s largest congregations of wildlife and a truly fascinating human history, South Georgia is an island of incredible riches. On approach, jagged mountain peaks rise steeply, while seabirds are often spotted soaring around the ship. You’ll sail down the east coast, taking in the spectacular glaciated scenery and enjoying a little shelter from the prevailing westerly winds. This enchanting coastline is yours to explore! Your experienced expedition team will use their local knowledge to plan your voyage from day to day, choosing the best options based on the prevailing weather, sea state and wildlife opportunities. We generally make landings or Zodiac excursions twice a day. Make sure you layer up before joining Zodiac cruises around craggy coves and along the rocky coastline in search of nesting penguins, seal haul-outs and bird cliffs. Remember to keep an eye out for South Georgia’s kelp forests as well - these remarkable underwater ecosystems are quite mesmerising as their fronds sway back and forth on the water’s surface. Zodiacs will also transport you from ship to shore, where you can visit some of the largest king penguin colonies on earth, take a guided walk among fur seals and elephant seals (making sure you listen to your guides and keep your distance!) and wander along pebbled streams and grassy glacial outwash plains. We also hope to visit the remnants of South Georgia’s thriving whaling stations and pay our respects to Sir Ernest Shackleton, whose incredible voyage of survival is synonymous with this island. If you have chosen an optional activity, you’ll have the option to do that whenever conditions allow. In addition to Zodiac cruises and shore excursions, we may ship cruise through fjords with towering cliffs of ancient stone, or into deeply indented bays towards dramatic glacier fronts. This is a great time to find a comfy spot in the observation lounge or make your way to the bridge to enjoy uninterrupted views of South Georgia’s majestic coast.



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DAY 13: At Sea - Day 13 to 14

Attend informative lectures to learn about Antarctica as we sail across the Scotia Sea towards the white continent. Treat yourself to a massage in the wellness centre or stay active in the gym; the choice is yours on how you want to enjoy days at sea.



DAY 15: Elephant Island

Today, if weather permits, we set course for Elephant Island, a half-submerged mountain cloaked with an ice sheet at the outer limits of the South Shetlands. We'll learn the story of Shackleton and hear how his ship, the Endurance, was crushed in pack ice in the Weddell Sea, before him and his men climbed into three open boats, spending 16 months at sea, before finally making landfall on this tiny toe of rock and ice in the vastness of the Southern Ocean on 14 April, 1916. We plan to sail past Cape Valentine to see the beach where the men first put ashore over 100 years ago. Weather permitting; we hope to follow the coastline six miles west to Point Wild, where the men eventually set up camp under two of their upturned open boats and some old tents. If weather permits, we'll attempt to make a landing on historic Point Wild, Elephant Island.



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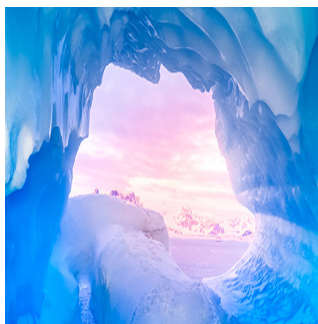
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DAY 16: Antarctic Peninsula - Day 16 to 18

It's almost impossible to describe the feeling of arriving in Antarctica. Spotting your first iceberg and taking a deep breath of some of the most fresh, crisp air on earth is an experience that will stay with you forever. Once we arrive, the western side of the Antarctic Peninsula and the South Shetland Islands are ours to explore, and we have a host of choices available to us. Because we are so far south, we will experience nearly 24 hours of daylight and the days can be as busy as you wish. Your experienced expedition team will again use their expertise to design your voyage from day to day, choosing the best options based on the prevailing weather, ice conditions and wildlife opportunities. Rug up before joining Zodiac cruises along spectacular ice cliffs or among grounded icebergs, keeping watch for whales, seals and porpoising penguins. Zodiacs will also transport you from the ship to land, where you can visit penguin rookeries, discover historic huts and explore some of our favourite spots along the peninsula. While ashore we aim to stretch our legs, wandering along pebbly beaches or perhaps up snow-covered ridgelines to vantage points with mountains towering overhead and ice-speckled oceans below. If you have chosen an optional activity, you'll have the option to do that whenever conditions allow, and of course keen polar plungers will have the chance to fully immerse themselves in polar waters - conditions permitting! In addition to Zodiac cruises and shore excursions, we may ship cruise some of the narrow, dramatic straits separating offshore islands from the mainland, or linger in scenic bays to watch whales travelling or feeding. This is a great time to enjoy the observation lounge or make your way to the bridge for uninterrupted views of Antarctica in all its splendour. Keep an ear out for the creak and deep rumble of glaciers as they carve their way from summit to sea, and take a quiet moment to experience the wonder of this incredible white continent.



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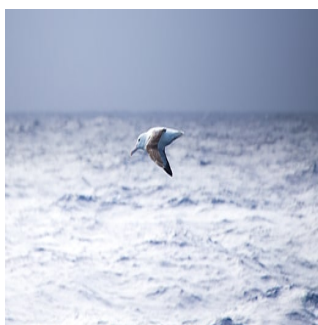
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DAY 19: At Sea - Day 19 to 20

You may choose to spend the sea days returning to Ushuaia editing your photos, enjoying the onboard facilities, or listening to an informative lecture. Celebrate the end of an unforgettable voyage with newfound friends at a special Captain's farewell dinner.



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DAY 21: Disembarkation in Ushuaia

During the early morning, we cruise up the Beagle Channel, before quietly slipping into dock in Ushuaia, where we will be free to disembark around 8.00 am. Farewell your expedition team and fellow passengers as we all continue our onward journeys, hopefully with a newfound sense of the immense power of nature. A transfer to Ushuaia airport or to your hotel is included in the voyage fare. Note: At the conclusion of the voyage, we do not recommend booking flights departing Ushuaia prior to 12.00 pm on the day of disembarkation in case of delays.



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INCLUSIONS & DETAILS

Accommodation	Cabin on board ship
Inclusions	<p>Cabin accommodation on board ship All meals whilst on board All airport transfers Comprehensive pre-departure information Complimentary use of muck boots during the course of the voyage All scheduled landings and excursions Guiding and lectures by experienced expedition crew</p> <p>EXCLUSIONS International Flight Visa and reciprocity fees (if applicable) Travel Insurance Optional activities not mentioned in itinerary Personal expenses such as on board communications Any pre cruise packages or accommodation stays</p>
Difficulty Rating	2 (light adventure)
Single Surcharge	Available upon request. Contact us for more information.
Notes	Please note this itinerary is subject to change depending on weather and ice conditions.
Price Dependent upon	Departure date, seasonality and availability.

SUSTAINABILITY

As a member of IAATO we follow guidelines appointed by the Antarctic Treaty System to go above and beyond in support of minimizing negative impacts on this pristine landscape. We also encourage clients to look to book pre-and post- accommodation with us, where local businesses will be supported. Our clients also receive restaurant recommendations which support locally owned restaurants

We carefully select all ships we work with and choose smaller sized vessels to create less impact. We use a highly regulated, licensed vessel which is well equipped to operate in the Antarctic's delicate ecosystem. 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. The waste is carried back to the home port to allow for environmentally conscious waste management and disposal.

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

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