

ANTARCTIC PENINSULA - WILD ANTARCTICA: PUNTA ARENAS TO USHUAIA | GREG MORTIMER



INTRODUCTION

Famed for its tremendous tabular icebergs, year-round sea ice, fascinating fossils, and the pivotal role it played in Shackleton's Endurance expedition, the Weddell Sea offers unsurpassed opportunities for exploration. Begin your journey by flying from Punta Arenas to King George Island, Antarctica, saving you time as you'll only need to cross the Drake Passage in one direction.

On this 14 day cruise, embark on a true Antarctic expedition as we not only explore the west Antarctic Peninsula, but also attempt to venture east towards the icy perimeter of the Weddell Sea, often guarded by impenetrable pack ice and home to awe-inspiring icebergs, a large AdÃ©lie penguin colony, and mazes of sea ice. It's a photographer's dream, but also the perfect place for anyone who wants to be inspired by one of the planet's most extreme landscapes.

PLEASE NOTE: Pricing is subject to change and availability at the time of booking. [Contact us](#) for more information.

ITINERARY

DAY 1: Arrive Punta Arenas

Having made your way to Punta Arenas, you will be met by a representative of Aurora Expeditions and transferred to our group hotel. This evening, enjoy a light refreshment as you meet your fellow expeditioners at a Welcome Reception and Pre-Voyage Briefing. Afterwards, dine at your leisure (dinner not included).



TRIP CODE

ACAEPWA

DEPARTURE

01/03/2024

DURATION

14 Days

LOCATIONS

Antarctic Peninsula



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DAY 2: Fly to King George Island & Embark

This morning we will be transferred to Punta Arenas airport for our charter flight to King George Island, Antarctica (weather permitting). The flight will take approximately one hour and forty-five minutes. On arrival into King George Island our expedition team is on hand to greet you and to prepare you for your Zodiac transfer to the vessel. You will have time to settle into your cabin before our important safety briefings. Note: King George Island is located at the northern part of the Antarctic Peninsula in the South Shetland Islands and is one of the most remote places on Earth. A clear sky with perfect visibility is required for safe take-off and landing. We apologise in advance for any delays.



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DAY 3: Antarctic Peninsula & Weddell Sea: Days 3-11

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 approximately 18-24 hours of daylight and the days can be as busy as you wish. 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 weather, ice conditions and wildlife opportunities. We generally make landings or Zodiac excursions twice a day. You will want to 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 will 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. Take a quiet moment to experience the wonder of this incredible white continent. Central to the story of where Sir Ernest Shackleton's ship, the Endurance became trapped in formidable sea ice, the Weddell Sea certainly is high on the list for many polar adventurers. A small set of islands standing off to the east of the Antarctic Peninsula collectively form the Antarctic Sound - the gateway to the Weddell Sea. With a well-deserved reputation as being an iceberg alley where large icebergs try to escape the Weddell Sea through Antarctic Sound, often making navigation difficult. However, the rewards can be great. Fossils are a reminder of a more temperate era - gastropods, large clams, and spiral-shaped ammonites, all turned to stone. We hope to experience memorable wildlife encounters as the Weddell boasts a large Adélie penguin colony just outside of Antarctic Sound, some of which breed on the rocky slopes of a small volcanic island, where a large colony of Antarctic blue-eyed shags jostle for space with nest-building Wilson's storm petrels. On thrilling Zodiac excursions or slicing a path through the maze of sea ice in your kayak, keep watch for chinstrap and gentoo penguins in and out of the water, as well as humpback, minke and orca whales. Your camera is sure to get a solid workout during your time in the Weddell Sea.



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DAY 12: At Sea Drake Passage: Days 12-13

Enjoy a final morning landing in the South Shetland Islands before we re-enter the Drake Passage for our return journey to South America. With lectures and film presentations to complete our Antarctic experience, there is still plenty of time to enjoy the magic of the Southern Ocean and the life that calls it home. There is time for reflection and discussion about what we have seen and experienced. We hope you become ambassadors for Antarctica telling your family, friends and colleagues about your journey to this magical place, advocating for its conservation and preservation so that they might one day visit the region to experience what you have been lucky to see and do here. As we approach the tip of South America, our Captain may sail close to legendary Cape Horn, weather and time permitting.



DAY 14: Disembark in Ushuaia

During the early morning, we cruise up the Beagle Channel, before quietly slipping into dock in Ushuaia, where we disembark from approximately 8.00 am. Farewell your attentive crew, 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 there are delays.



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INCLUSIONS & DETAILS

Accommodation

Cabin on board ship

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Inclusions

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- All airport transfers mentioned in the itinerary.
- One night's hotel accommodation including breakfast, in Punta Arenas on Day 1.
- Charter flight from Punta Arenas to King George Island.
- Onboard accommodation during voyage, including daily cabin service.
- All meals, snacks, tea and coffee during voyage.
- Beer, house wine and soft drinks with dinner.
- Captain's Welcome and Farewell receptions including four-course dinner, house cocktails, house beer and wine, non-alcoholic beverages.
- All shore excursions and Zodiac cruises.
- Educational lectures and guiding services provided by Expedition Team.
- Complimentary access to onboard expedition doctor and medical clinic (initial consultation).
- One 3-in-1 waterproof, polar expedition jacket.
- Complimentary use of Muck Boots during the voyage.
- Comprehensive pre-departure information.
- Port surcharges, permits and landing fees.
- Gratuities for ship's crew.

Exclusions

- International or domestic flights - unless specified in the itinerary.
- Transfers - unless specified in the itinerary.
- Airport arrival or departure taxes.
- Passport, visa, reciprocity and vaccination fees and charges.
- Travel insurance or emergency evacuation charges.
- Hotel accommodation and meals - unless specified in the itinerary.
- Optional excursions and optional activity surcharges.
- All items of a personal nature, including but not limited to alcoholic beverages and soft drinks (outside of dinner service), laundry services, personal clothing, medical expenses, wi-fi, email or phone charges.

Difficulty Rating

2 (light adventure)

Single Surcharge

Available upon request, contact us for more details.

Notes

Prices are based on per person, twin share* (unless otherwise stated for triple/quadruple cabins)
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

Price Dependent upon

Departure date, fuel surcharges, cabin category, currency fluctuations, seasonality and availability.

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SUSTAINABILITY

Chimu Adventures 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.

We ensure that we have as little negative impact on the wildlife as possible and minimise disturbances. We also encourage the education and visitation of protection and conservation services, specifically associated with the area. You will also find that we visit many locations and landmarks of which we encourage you to explore yet advise you to remain 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 pre-departure information and en-route by guides and staff. Furthermore, in our further efforts of supporting the communities, a percentage of the funds generated from your tour (10%) will go back to our charities and assist us supporting the next generation and the environment they live in.

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.

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

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