

## ANTARCTIC PENINSULA - DEEP WEDDELL | SYLVIA EARLE



### INTRODUCTION

On this exciting new Weddell Sea cruise, we'll immerse ourselves into the Weddell Sea region and spend more time here than any other of our voyages. The Weddell Sea region is renowned for vast amounts of ice – sea ice, pack ice and gigantic icebergs. On this 14 day voyage, we hope to see ice seals such as crabeater and leopard seals hauled out on ice floes, and while ashore, you can scour for ancient fossils of gastropods, large clams and spiral-shaped ammonites. The area is rich in geology and paleontology, both fascinating and ancient.

For adventurous expeditioners, a visit to the area can be rewarding, not least for its historical associations. In 1902, Swedish explorer Otto Nordenskjöld was forced to spend two winters in the Weddell Sea, and the main expedition hut built on Snow Hill Island still stands. The area is also central to Ernest Shackleton's story. It was in the Weddell Sea that Shackleton's crew had to abandon their ship, the Endurance, after it became trapped in the ice.

Departing from Ushuaia, your Weddell Sea adventure allows for plenty of time in both the Antarctic Peninsula and the Weddell Sea region.

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

### ITINERARY

#### TRIP CODE

ACAEDW

#### DEPARTURE

24/03/2024

#### DURATION

14 Days

#### LOCATIONS

Antarctic Peninsula



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## DAY 1: Arrive Ushuaia

Having made your way to Ushuaia, 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.



## DAY 2: Embarkation

This morning, enjoy breakfast and check-out. Please ensure your cabin luggage is fitted with cabin tags clearly labelled with your name and cabin number. Take your cabin luggage to hotel reception, prior to, or at check-out. Your luggage will be stored and transferred directly to the port for clearance, to be placed in your cabin ahead of your arrival on board. Please keep any valuables or personal items with you throughout the day. Your morning is at leisure to explore Ushuaia. Those wishing to join our afternoon catamaran cruise, meet back at the hotel lobby at 12.45 pm ready to transfer to the port at 1.00 pm. Here we board our catamaran and sail the Beagle Channel, towards the city's iconic Les Eclaireurs Lighthouse. Crossing the Bridges Archipelago we'll slow down to watch colonies of sea lions and imperial cormorants sun themselves on the rocky outcrops, while gulls, rock cormorants, skuas, petrels, albatrosses and cauquenes are often sighted. Our cruise offers panoramic views of the city and the surrounding mountain range, in addition to hearing tales of the people and communities of the region. Alternatively, enjoy your day at leisure and meet at your hotel lobby at 3.45 pm to be transferred to the pier for embarkation. Once onboard, 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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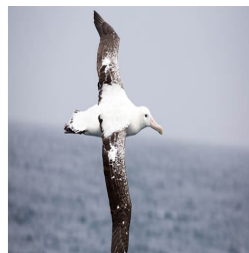
Antarctic Peninsula



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### DAY 3: Drake Passage Days 3 & 4

As we commence the Drake Passage crossing, 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 and biosecurity procedures and start our lecture program to help you learn more about Antarctica'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 our vessel. On sea days, you may can enjoy the facilities on board the vessel including the gym, wellness centre or the relaxing in one of the observation lounges. Nearing the South Shetland Islands and the tip of the Antarctic Peninsula on the afternoon of day four, the excitement is palpable with everyone converging on one of the observation decks watching for our first iceberg. The ocean takes on a whole new perspective once we are below the Antarctic Convergence and are surrounded by the surreal presence of floating ice sculptures. The memory of your first big iceberg sighting is likely to remain with you for a lifetime. Time and weather permitting, we may attempt our first landing in Antarctica by late afternoon.



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DAY 5: Antarctic Peninsula & Weddell Sea Days 5 to 11

It is 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. A voyage to the Antarctic Peninsula is by its very nature a genuine adventure, but to venture to the Weddell Sea region located on the wild eastern side of the peninsula is turning up the dial a few notches. A considerable aspect of a voyage to the Weddell Sea is the thrill of not knowing if the ice will allow us to enter its frozen realm. The Weddell Gyre pushes enormous amounts of ice from the Filchner-Ronne Ice Shelf up towards the area near Antarctic Sound, blocking the entrance to the Weddell Sea, but a visit to the region has numerous rewards. 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, many large tabular bergs escape the Weddell Sea through the Antarctic Sound, often making navigation difficult. Gigantic icebergs, the size of skyscrapers, dwarf our Zodiacs as we attempt to push through seemingly impenetrable sea ice to land on remote beaches where ancient fossils can be found. The wildlife we may encounter in the Weddell Sea region makes the attempt worthwhile. The abundant ice attracts ice seals such as crabeater, leopard and Weddell seals, which all breed and birth on sea ice. The Weddell Sea boasts a large Adélie penguin colony just outside of the 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. We generally make landings or Zodiac excursions twice a day. You’ll 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 and in the Weddell Sea region. On thrilling Zodiac cruises 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. In the Weddell region, fossils are a reminder of a more temperate era - gastropods, large clams, and spiral-shaped ammonites, all turned to stone. Your camera is sure to get a solid workout during your time in the Weddell Sea. 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!



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## DAY 12: Drake Passage Days 12 & 13

Enjoy a final morning landing 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 Ushuaia on Day 1.  
 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/quad 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