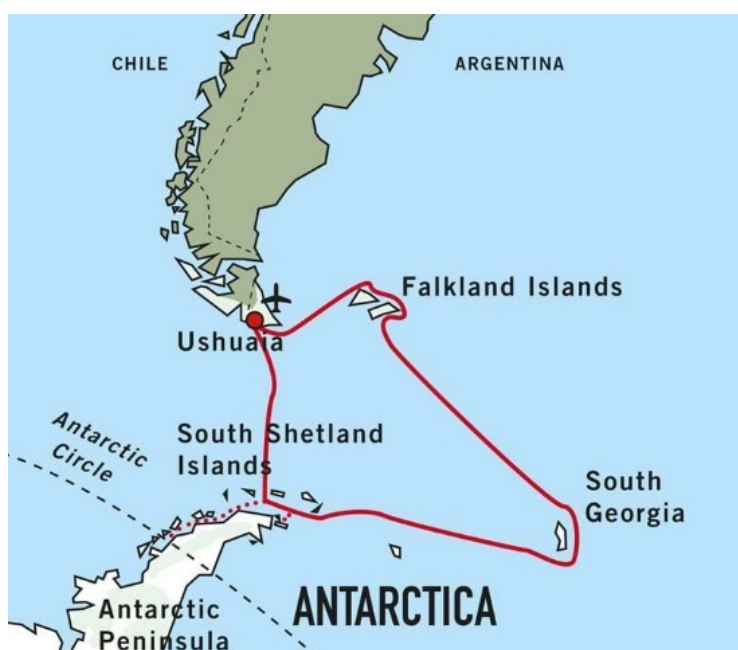




EXPEDITION ANTARCTICA - THE GREAT PENGUIN ADVENTURE

Join PolarQuest on a magnificent Antarctica cruise with the possibility of sighting seven different species of penguins! We are proud to once again sail off to Antarctica on board the small and comfortable expedition ship, Ocean Nova, carrying a maximum of only 78 passengers. We sail from Ushuaia in Argentina, to the Falkland Islands, home to charming rockhopper penguins and graceful albatrosses. Our next stop is the remote island of South Georgia, a wildlife haven said to have more wildlife per square meter than any other place on the planet. Watching the huge elephant seals fight for their harems and being greeted by hundreds of thousands of breeding king penguins is a truly unbelievable experience. We then continue to the most remote and isolated continent - Antarctica. Here, we explore the dramatic landscapes with gigantic icebergs, scenic channels, and bustling penguin colonies. Welcome on board!



ITINERARY

Day 1: Ushuaia, Argentina

Our great Antarctic adventure starts in Ushuaia, beautifully surrounded by snow-covered mountains, where we stay one night at a centrally located hotel. This little town is also referred to as the "End of the World".

Day 2: The expedition cruise begins



nesting black-browed albatross. You can sit on the white sand beach watching the penguins come and go while the striated caracaras patrol overhead.

Day 5: Stanley, East Falklands

We visit Stanley, the capital of the Falkland Islands. As we wander through the charming streets with small houses and learn how this quiet harbour was once a major port in the 19th century for ships attempting to round the waters of Cape Horn. We also make a stop in Stanley's famed philatelic museum with its impressive collection of historic stamps.

Day 6 - 7: Southern Ocean

We sail southeast, South Georgia bound. The anticipation grows especially when we cross the Antarctic Convergence and notice a dramatic drop in temperature. Shipboard presentations will continue, featuring the exciting history and abundant wildlife of South Georgia. Wildlife will guide us into the island; keep a lookout in the ocean for whales, seals and penguins swimming and diving.

Day 8 - 11: South Georgia

In the morning, you will have the opportunity to explore Ushuaia on your own before meeting your guides and fellow travellers for lunch. In the afternoon, we board the Ocean Nova and sail out through the Beagle Channel - our great Antarctic expedition has begun! If we're lucky, we might even see penguins - keep an eye out for swimming Magellanic penguins in the Beagle Channel!

Day 3: At sea

We spend a day at sea followed by a range of sea birds such as petrels, fulmars and albatrosses that gracefully follow our ship. Whales and dolphins may also be seen in the surrounding waters and our polar experts start their exciting lecture program.

Day 4: West Falkland

Our plan is to explore the western islands of the archipelago, which are isolated and windswept but home to many seabirds and migratory birds including the black-browed albatross. Weather permitting, we go ashore and explore Saunders Island a penguin hotspot that is one of the only places on earth where 4 penguin species nest side by side. Here we can find gentoo, rockhopper, king and Magellanic penguin rookeries as well as



Majestic mountains, mighty glaciers and beaches full of king penguins greet us on the island of South Georgia. We arrive in the beginning of summer when there are few ships in the vicinity and the peaks of the dramatic mountain ranges are still snow-covered. If you are interested in wildlife, South Georgia is a true oasis. Hundreds of thousands of penguins greet us at places like St. Andrew's Bay and Salisbury Plain. Huge elephant seals lounge on sandy beaches and this time of the year we may see dramatic fights for a position as the king of a harem. The island is also home to several other species of penguin such as macaroni, gentoo and chinstrap penguin, along with the playful and feisty fur seals. South Georgia played a significant role in Shackleton's epic adventure. After his ship *Endurance* sank, he crossed the treacherous ocean in an open lifeboat to reach the islands. We hope to visit Shackleton's grave at Grytviken, once an active whaling station, which now houses a charming small museum.

Day 12 - 14: At sea

We now set sails towards the world's most remote continent - Antarctica, faithfully accompanied by many seabirds. Our polar experts continue to fill our minds with heroic stories of some of the earliest daredevils to explore Antarctica. We also keep our eyes open for the first iceberg, which may appear on the horizon at any time now!

Day 15 - 18: The South Shetland Islands & the Antarctic Peninsula

This is a true Antarctic expedition cruise and our exact route the following days is subject to weather and ice conditions. Below are examples of places we may visit.

We hope to go ashore at Elephant Island, where we will learn more about the famous Antarctic adventures of Sir Ernest Shackleton. This island was a place of refuge in 1916 for Shackleton and his crew after his ship was destroyed by pack ice in the Weddell Sea more than 100 years ago. Following the loss of their ship the men reached Elephant Island after a harrowing ordeal on drifting ice floes. They established a camp at a place they called Point Wild, named after Shackleton's commander Frank Wild and now the home of nesting chinstrap penguins.

We will spend some time cruising among the South Shetland Islands just off the Antarctic Peninsula. Dazzling wildlife sightings await us on our excursions to some of the islands including King George, Half Moon, Barrientos or Livingston. Adelie, chinstrap and gentoo penguins thrive here, as do several species of seal. Hopefully, we will also have chance to visit the flooded volcanic caldera of Deception Island. Along the coastline of the South Shetlands we keep our eyes open for humpback whales foraging for krill.

We continue south along the Antarctic Peninsula, where pack ice still covers large parts of the bays, and we watch the experienced officers navigate our ice-strengthened ship. We



cruise through labyrinths of icebergs some of which may have resting penguins looking curiously back at us. In good ice conditions, we hope to set foot on the Antarctic continent in Hope Bay or Paradise Harbour. The scenery here, from the colossal icebergs to the seemingly endless Antarctic ice sheet, is truly breath-taking.

to a successful expedition!

Day 19 - 20: Drake Passage

As we leave this magical place, heading across the Drake Passage, time will be spent sharing and reflecting on the wonderful experiences of the last few days. As we approach the South American continent its possible to see whales, dolphins and seals. We celebrate the conclusion of our Antarctic expedition with a farewell dinner on board.

Day 21: Ushuaia, Argentina

In the early morning we disembark in Ushuaia and explore this quaint little town on our own.

Please note:

Our exact route will depend on ice and weather conditions. The planned itinerary will be updated throughout the voyage in order to take advantage of favourable conditions. Flexibility is the key



YOUR SHIP: OCEAN NOVA

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VESSEL TYPE:

LENGTH:

PASSENGER CAPACITY:

BUILT/REFURBISHED:

The ice-strengthened 73 metre long expedition ship Ocean Nova was built in Denmark in 1992 with high ice class to serve Greenland's west coast. In 2004 to 2005 she was completely refurbished and has now a career as a small and comfortable expedition ship. The Ocean Nova accommodates 86 passengers in single, double and triple cabins, all with sea-view and private facilities. The double cabins have either twin beds. The triple cabins have upper and lower beds. In your cabin you will also find a desk with chair and ample storage space for clothes and equipment. In the dining room you are treated to delicious meals in between landings and in the panorama lounge you can enjoy a drink with a breathtaking view of the surrounding polar landscape. This is where on board specialists entertain and educate you with lectures on polar biology, history, geology and conservation. There is also a library with panoramic views and a good selection of polar books. On board there is a satellite phone, gym and medical doctor. Passengers are welcome on the bridge around the clock and there is always something to see or search for from the spacious observation decks. The ship has North European officers and there is a friendly and informal atmosphere on board. Travelling with this small expedition ship

offers an entirely different experience and perspective than you can get on a larger and more conventional cruise ship. Cabins are spread over two decks and include cabins for the single traveller, double and triple cabins, all with sea-view and private facilities. The comfortable dining room located on the Upper deck seats all passengers in a single sitting and offers delicious meals with a mixture of table service and buffet. The informal dining arrangement adds to the friendly atmosphere onboard and meals are a great chance to discuss all you have seen with your fellow travellers, and for the expedition team to share their knowledge. With one of the highest ice classes (1B) and a 2000 hp diesel engine, Ocean Nova is a small but sturdy expedition vessel just as at home in the icy waters of Svalbard as she is in a tranquil Scottish loch. The ship has a crew of 34, including North European officers, whose prime concern is your safety as well as ensuring wildlife sightings and weather conditions are maximised. For your safety there are two fully enclosed lifeboats and a medical

clinic onboard.



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