

Antarctica

FLY & CRUISE TO ANTARCTICA

Why join this Voyage?

- Access Antarctica in just over 1.5 hours by plane from the toe of Chile, instead of +2 days by ship across the infamous Drake Passage - ideal for those either short of time or poor sailors!
- Visits all the key points of interest on the Antarctic Peninsula in a unique 10 day door-to-door trip from the UK - the shortest Antarctic expedition available
- In Antarctica, travel aboard a small ice-strengthened expeditionary vessel (max 52), which offers excellent guides, ease of access to all areas of interest and a very personal overall experience



Trip Summary

This is a totally unique concept offering travellers the safe and fast option of flying to Antarctica from the toe of Chile in under 2 hours in a specially designed plane, rather than the conventional approach by ship taking 2 days across the idiosyncratic waters of the Drake Passage.

You fly to King George Island in the South Shetland islands where your small expeditionary boat awaits you. Once aboard on boat, your exploration of the Antarctica peninsula will follow a similar programme to conventional cruises from Ushuaia and will cover all the main areas of interest. This trip will appeal particularly to travellers either short on time, who would like to spend the days saved by flying exploring the mainland, or those who aren't the most confident of sailors!

Itinerary



Day 1 London Heathrow/ Santiago
Depart UK for Santiago in Chile, flying overnight

Day 2 Santiago/ Punta Arenas
Arrive into Santiago and connect to the LAN flight down to Punta Arenas in Chilean Patagonia. On arrival you will be met and transferred to your hotel in the centre of town. Evening pre-expedition dinner to meet your expeditionary crew and travelling companions.

***Option to add an extra night or two's stay, if you wish, in Santiago or on a vineyard in the nearby Maipo Valley outside the city*



Day 3 Punta Arenas/ South Shetlands (Antarctica)
Morning transfer to the airport to board your charter flight to King George Island in the South Shetland Islands where your ship is waiting for you. Estimated flying time between 1.5 - 2 hours.

The plane you will be flying is a BAe 146 high-wing plane with short runway requirements, making it perfect for this type of operation.



Upon arrival in Antarctica you will be transferred from the plane to visit the Chilean Base Frei and then onwards to your boat, the *Ocean Nova*, by zodiac, for the beginning of your Antarctica voyage. Afternoon visit to Hannah Point on Livingston Island, home to Gentoo Penguins, with the possibility of also seeing the Macaroni Penguin, Southern Elephant and Antarctic Fur Seal.

Day 4 Antarctic Peninsula
Morning visit to Aitcho Island and its Gentoo Penguin colonies and then onto Deception Island in the afternoon. This beautiful island was formed by volcanic activity that resulted in a sea-flooded crater, still active today. Your ship will carefully navigate through the narrow gateway, called Neptune's Bellow.



Visit to the ruins of the Norwegian Whaling Station and BAS (British Antarctica Survey) shelter, evacuated in 1967 after a volcanic eruption. Guided tour to Neptune's Bellows, a nesting site of the Cape Petrel. If the weather is suitable there will be a dip in hot volcanic waters at Pendulum Cove's hot geothermal springs.

Days 5 Antarctic Peninsula
Morning visit to Port Lockroy on Wiencke Island. Located among beautiful narrow channels and steep snow-capped mountains, Port Lockroy provides a sheltered port that was first used by whalers nearly 100 years ago, where you can still see the decayed remains of whale skeletons. During World War II the British set up a base here to establish a firm presence in Antarctic. Research activities such as surveying, geology, and meteorology continued at the base until 1962, when it was abandoned. Whales and other animals are frequently seen around the island, including Gentoo Penguins, King Cormorants, Minke and Humpback Whales.



In the afternoon you visit beautiful Paradise Bay, a perfect spot to explore with our Zodiacs, if the weather allows it. The stillness of the water creates a perfect mirror-like reflection of the surrounding mountains and blue glaciers, an image only broken by the floating icebergs and the Zodiacs.



Day 6 Antarctic Peninsula
Early cruise through the Lemaire Channel. As the ship approaches the Lemaire Channel the steep cliffs become so narrow that you will not believe there is a passage through which the ship can sail. Once we enter the channel, weather permitting, you will view one of the most scenic areas in Antarctic, nicknamed the 'Kodak Gap'. Look out for humpback whales that frequent this area. Landing and sighting of Petermann Island, the southernmost spot in the trip, a



snow covered and domed island that rises moderately steeply to a rocky summit, more than 650 ft. above sea level. Adelie and Gentoo penguins, Blue-eyed Shags and South Polar Skuas are confirmed breeders in this area. In the afternoon you explore Cuverville island, a small rocky island, a great nesting place of the Gentoo Penguin.

Day 7 Antarctic Peninsula

Morning landing at Half Moon Island, a small island in between Greenwich and Livingstone Islands which often boasts a large Antarctic Penguin colony. Visit to the Arctowski Polish Academy of Science Antarctic Base where you will be warmly welcomed by the scientific personnel.



Day 8 Antarctic Peninsula/ Punta Arenas

Return to the Eduardo Frei Chilean Air Force Antarctica Base on King George Island for the flight back to Punta Arenas. Depending upon the weather it is anticipated that you are likely to get back to Punta Arenas sometime in the afternoon. Overnight in Punta Arenas.



Day 9 Punta Arenas/ Santiago/ Madrid

Depart Punta Arenas on the LAN flight back to Santiago to connect with the overnight flight back to the UK, via Madrid

Day 10 Madrid/ Heathrow

Arrive back into the UK

Important: Please be aware that all expeditions carried out in the Antarctic territory are absolutely subject to weather conditions. Antarctic weather is highly unpredictable, with swift changes occurring from one minute to another and bears directly on travel in the Continent, despite the advantages of modern technology and advanced forecasting systems. As such, with your safety in mind, please be aware that schedules may have to be suddenly altered and without notice, potentially resulting in delays that may shorten your cruise. Please bear this in mind at all times. A large part of the astonishing mystique of Antarctica lies in the very fact that it is fascinating and never the same, from one instant to the next.



The Boat



Ocean Nova

- Carrying a maximum of only 68 passengers
- A clean, airy, modern ship with crisp Scandinavian styling
- Uniquely, all cabins have twin lower berths (no bunks) with en suite bathrooms
- Spectacular glassed in observation lounge on top deck

The Ocean Nova is a modern ship built in 1992 at the Orskov Shipyard in Frederikshavn in Denmark. She was built to navigate the ice-choked waters off Western Greenland. The 73-metre vessel, offering comfortable travel for just 68 passengers is the perfect expedition ship for discovering Antarctica, combining the intimacy of a small ship with the stability and spaciousness of a larger vessel.

The Plane



BAe 146

The plane, a BAe 146, was manufactured in the UK and is specially chartered for each of our departures. It is a high wing aircraft with very short runway requirements making it particularly well-suited for this kind of destination. It is operated by *Aerovias DAP*, who are a reputable operator, highly experienced in Antarctic operations with more than 20 years of experience of flying in Patagonia & Antarctica.

The estimated flying time from Punta Arenas to Frei Base on King George island in the South Shetlands, is just under two hours.

Chile Extension Ideas



For those travellers wishing to take the opportunity to explore Chile, either pre or post Antarctica, we would be delighted to help. Here are some extension ideas to consider:

- Trekking in Chile's renowned Torres Del Paine National Park
- Vineyards of the Central Valley
- The Atacama Desert, the world's driest desert, for stark desertscapes
- Easter Island and its enigmatic *moais* and unique culture

Please don't hesitate to contact Alex who's travelled extensively through much of South America to explore your extension ideas

Expedition Dates for 2010/ 11



13th - 19th December
18th - 24th December
23rd - 29th December
28th December - 3rd January
2nd - 8th January
7th - 13th January
12th - 18th January

These are the Fly & Cruise dates only to which travel dates to/from the UK need to be added



Guide Prices for 2010/11 Departures

Cabin Type

(from guide price quoted per person)

Triple Cabin	£6,915
Twin Cabin	£7,545
Single Cabin	£10,095

Includes

- All international and domestic flights
- Fly & Cruise programme based on full board
- All drinks, lectures and guide services on board
- All guided zodiac and shore-based excursions
- Airport-hotel private arrival transfer
- Accommodation in Chile

Excludes

- Any additional accommodation, excursions and services not mentioned in the itinerary
- Travel insurance & vaccinations
- Visas & gratuities
- Items of a personal nature, including laundry
- Addition fuel surcharge, if levied

Notes

Please note that these prices are a **guide only** and are subject to exchange rate fluctuations and fuel surcharges.

Single Supplements

Quote available upon request and typically calculated on a multiplier of 1.85 that of a single berth in a shared cabin. Please contact the office for a quotation

Want to discuss this trip?



Please call **Alex or Sue** on **01285 880981** for more details or to check boat availability

Fostered by a childhood in the West Indies, the travel bug bit Alex early. Propelled by his enthusiasm for diverse cultures and hot food, he's travelled to over 50 countries across 7 continents, including both poles. Some of his most memorable recent experiences include dog sledding in The Arctic, kayaking in Alaska, snorkelling with whale sharks off Mexico and piranha fishing in The Amazon.

Alex is General Manager of Steppes Voyages
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Having spent the best part of 5 years on her "gap year" working in travel seemed the natural progression. Sue is most at home travelling to remote wilderness areas of the globe including the polar regions, Patagonia & the Yukon. Having travelled to both Antarctica & the Canadian High Arctic, Spitsbergen is the next trip on her long list. Sue is passionate about wildlife & loves to get up close either by kayak or on foot.

Sue is Country Director for Steppes Voyages
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