Australis Reading List



A few suggestions to make your trip more enjoyable! There are hundreds of books about our remote and captivating area of the world. This list includes some of our expedition team favorites. Most of these books are available on Amazon.com or BarnesAndNoble.com in paper and/or e-book formats. Please contact: jbehrend@australis.com if you have new any suggestions!

* Unless otherwise stated, book descriptions are from Amazon.com

Nonfiction

Cape Horn: The Story of the Cape Horn Region

by Felix Riesenberg and William A. Briesemeister

Originally published in 1939, this book is really a good companion for any reader who loves history and exploration.

Darwin Slept Here: Discovery, Adventure, and Swimming Iguanas in Charles Darwin's South America

by Eric Simons

Simons trekked to as many of the locations Darwin wrote about as he could find, to see if he could view these places through Darwin's eyes, and to learn what South Americans know about Darwin. Innovative and amusing, Darwin Slept Here offers a new look at a familiar subject, by a fresh, compelling writer to watch.

Early Spanish Voyages to the Strait of Magellan

by Clements Markham

Published 1911 by the Hakluyt Society in London, this book contains English translations of a number of historical documents including a narrative of the Loaysa Expedition by Captain Andres de Urdaneta, a description of the Strait of Magellan by the pilot Martin de Uriarte, and a list of survivors of the Magellan expedition brought back by Juan Sebastian del Cano in the Victoria. (review from OpenLibrary.org)

Evolution's Captain: NF abt Capt. FitzRoy & Chas Darwin

by Peter Nichols

This is the remarkable story of how a misguided decision by Robert FitzRoy, captain of HMS Beagle, precipitated his employment of a young naturalist named Charles Darwin, and how the clash between FitzRoy's fundamentalist views and Darwin's discoveries led to FitzRoy's descent into the abyss. (from BarnesAndNoble.com)

The First Voyage Around the World (1519-1522)

by Antonio Pigafetta and Theodore J. Cachey

Expertly presented and handsomely illustrated, this volume includes an extensive introduction to Pigafetta's original work and generous annotations by Cachey, who discusses elements of the story through allusions to Magellan's travels made by writers as diverse as Shakespeare and Gabriel García Márquez. However, Cachey is careful to point out that Pigafetta's book is also a remarkably accurate ethnographic and geographical account of the circumnavigation, and one that has earned its reputation among modern historiographers and students of the early contacts between Europe and the East Indies.

From Here to Tierra del Fuego

By Paul Magee

When asked why they have come to Tierra del Fuego most visitors say, "I just wanted to be able to say I'd been here." Magee, the anthropologist among them, seizes upon this absurd nonreason to investigate the West's complex relationship to an island synonymous with the word elsewhere. Beginning with Darwin, who saw the Fuegian Indians as the world's most primitive inhabitants, Magee interweaves the offhand anecdotes of nineteenth-century colonial adventurers with the primitivist jokes of the travelers he encounters.

Here Be Giants

by John Woram

Patagonia, Tierra del Fuego, Cape Horn; this terra incognita has drawn voyagers ever since Magellan found his way into the great south sea. In Here Be Giants, John Woram looks at the captain-general, at some who followed him, at the people and places they found here, and at a few exploration possibilities for today's voyager.

The Indians of Tierra Del Fuego: An Account of the Ona, Yahgan, Alacaluf and Haush Natives of the Fuegian Archipelago

by Samuel Kirkland Lothrop

First published in 1928, this highly illustrative book is the result of an expedition to Tierra del Fuego, where the author made his research with the collaboration of the Bridges and Lawrence families, the first white settlers in the island.

In Patagonia

by Bruce Chatwin

An exhilarating look at a place that still retains the exotic mystery of a far-off, unseen land, Chatwin's 1977 account of his journey through Patagonia teems with evocative descriptions, remarkable bits of history, and unforgettable anecdotes.

Chatwin treks through the southern tip of South America in search of the descendants of Welsh immigrants, and the log cabin built by Butch Cassidy. In Patagonia is a masterpiece that has cast a long shadow upon the literary world. Although if you ask Punta Arenas residents about the book, you are likely to get a much different story.

Lives and voyages of Drake, Cavendish, and Dampier: including a view of the history of the buccaneer

by Christian Isobel Johnstone

This is a pre-1923 historical reproduction that was curated for quality.

Magellan

by Stefan Zweig and Cedar Paul (translator) and Eden Paul (Translator)

Austrian author Stefan Zweig brings to life the Age of Discovery by telling the tale of one of the era's most daring adventurers. In typically flowing and elegant prose he takes us on a fascinating journey of discovery ourselves. Originally published in 1938.

Narrative of a Voyage to Patagonia and Terra del Fuego: Through the Straits of Magellan, in HMS Adventure and Beagle, in 1826 and 1827

by John Macdouall

Originally published in 1833, this is a first-hand account of 19 months aboard HMS Beagle on her maiden voyage. The author writes amusingly, if at times caustically, preferring anecdotes and observations about the peoples encountered en route to "the trouble of detailing the monotonous course of a long sea voyage."

Narratives of the Voyages of Pedro Sarmiento de Gambóa to the Straits of Magellan by Pedro Sarmiento de Gamboa and Clements Robert Markham

The Hakluyt Society made available edited (and sometimes translated) early accounts of exploration like this 1895 volume which contains Pedro Sarmiento de Gambóa's account of his voyages down the Pacific coast of South America and through the Straits of Magellan in the sixteenth-century.

On the Origin of Species

by Charles Darwin

It took Darwin more than 20 years to publish this book, in part because he realized that it would ignite a firestorm of controversy. First published in 1859, it remains a continuing source of conflict to this day. But the work's impact is undeniable. In science, philosophy, and theology, this is a book that changed the world.

Over the Edge of the World

by Laurence Bergreen

Ferdinand Magellan's daring circumnavigation of the globe in the 16th century was a three-year odyssey filled with sex, violence, and amazing adventure. Now in Over the Edge of the World, prize-winning biographer and journalist Laurence Bergreen entwines a variety of candid, firsthand accounts, bringing to life this groundbreaking and majestic tale of discovery that changed both the way explorers would henceforth navigate the oceans and history itself.

Patagonia: A Cultural History (Landscapes of the Imagination)

by Chris Moss

From the empty plans to the crashing seas, from the giant dinosaur fossils to the massive glacial sculptures, Moss introduces readers to Patagonia's dramatic landscape -- a land that, like Siberia and the Sahara, has become a metaphor for nothingness and extremity. A vivid and accessible introduction to Patagonia's history and culture, this book follows a colorful cast of characters -- from Magellan and Darwin to mad kings, gauchos, and Nazi fugitives -- as it evokes Patagonia's grip on the imagination.

Patagonia Through the Eyes of Darwin

by Amanda Glickman, Gerardo Bartolome, Sergio Zagier, and Barry Glickman

This coffee table book views Patagonia, Tierra del Fuego and the Falkland Islands as seen by Charles Darwin in his epic expedition aboard the Beagle, as well as the same places the conventional traveler can visit today. 300 old and new pictures. Full color and bilingual text (English/Spanish).

Rounding the Horn: Being the Story of Williwaws and Windjammers, Drake, Darwin, Murdered Missionaries and Naked Natives - -a Deck's-eye View of Cape Horn

by Dallas Murphy

Murphy, a mystery writer and nautical journalist, sailed there from Ushuaia, Argentina, in a 53-foot sloop and carefully points out that he only visited the island rather than sailing around it. He revels in the tales of those who made the entire trip, however, and spends much time vividly recounting their adventures.

The Spanish Lake

by O.H.K. Spate

"Strictly speaking, there was no such thing as 'the Pacific' until in 1520-21 Fernao de Magalhãis, better known as Magellan, traversed the huge expanse of waters, which then received its name." With these opening words, Spate launches his account of the process by which the greatest blank on the map became a focus of global relations. The Spanish Lake describes the essentially European and American achievement of turning this emptiness into a nexus of economic and military power. This work is a history of the Pacific, the ocean that became a theatre of power and conflict shaped by the politics of Europe and the economic background of Spanish America.

Travels in a Thin Country: A Journey Through Chile

by Sara Wheeler

Squeezed between a vast ocean and the longest mountain range on earth, Chile is 2,600 miles long and never more than 110 miles wide--not a country that lends itself to maps, as Sara Wheeler discovered when she traveled alone from the top to the bottom, from the driest desert in the world to the sepulchral wastes of Antarctica. Eloquent, astute, nimble with history and deftly amusing, Travels in a Thin Country established Sara Wheeler as one of the very best travel writers in the world.

Uttermost Part of the Earth

by E. Lucas Bridges

Rapturous praise met the publication of Bridges' marvelous chronicle when it first came out in 1947, and that praise has hardly abated these past 60 years, nor has a book been written which supplants Uttermost Part of the Earth as the classic work on Tierra del Fuego and the little-known culture of the now-almost-extinct Fuegian Indians.

The Voyage of the Beagle

by Charles Darwin

In 1831, Darwin embarked on the HMS Beagle for his second expedition surveying the world's remarkable biological diversity. Not only would the expedition last five years and take the biologist to the farthest reaches of the globe, it would also inspire Darwin's celebrated theory of evolution by natural selection. The Voyage of the Beagle details and catalogues Darwin's incredible observations and theories and affords the reader the unique opportunity to witness the natural world unfold through his eyes.

The Voyage of Sir Francis Drake Around the Whole Globe (Little Black Classics) by Richard Hakluyt

Scholar, spy, diplomat and supreme propagandist for Elizabethan sea power, Richard Hakluyt's accounts of famed explorers like Drake mythologized a nation (England) growing rapidly aware of the size and strangeness of the world . . . and determined to dominate it.

A Wildlife Guide to Chile: Continental Chile, Chilean Antarctica, Easter Island, Juan Fernández Archipelago

by Sharon Chester

This is the first comprehensive English-language field guide to the wildlife of Chile and its territories. From bats, butterflies and lizards to llamas, ferns and flamingos, A Wildlife Guide to Chile covers the country's common plants and animals. The combination of detailed illustrations and engaging, succinct, authoritative text make field identification quick, easy and accurate. Maps, charts, and diagrams provide information about landforms, submarine topography, marine environment, climate, vegetation zones, and the best places to view wildlife. This is an essential guide to Chile's remarkable biodiversity.

A World Lit Only by Fire: The Medieval Mind and the Renaissance - Portrait of an Age by William Manchester

From tales of chivalry and valor to the barbarity of the Inquisition and the devastation of the plague, no era has been a greater source of fascination and horror than the Middle Ages. With extraordinarily crafted prose, acclaimed historian William Manchester takes us on a vividly painted journey into the medieval mind. For Manchester, the man who best epitomized this new quest for knowledge in a changing world was Ferdinand Magellan, the great circumnavigator, whose inspiring story Manchester dramatically recounts, along with the stories of countless medieval men and women from every walk of life who influenced and changed the course of history.

Fiction

Cape Horn and Other Stories from the End of the World (Discoveries)

by Francisco Coloane and David A. Petreman (Translator)

These stories, well translated from the Spanish, describe the severe beauty and cruelty of southern Chile -- cold, inhospitable, full of craggy, treacherous channels. As in Jack London's stories, the environment forms a crucible in which man's true -- or perhaps worst -- nature is revealed. The collection would be worth reading just for the spectacular scenery from the tip of the world (review from Publishers Weekly)

Darwin's Betrayal

by Gerardo Bartolome, Juan Carlos Cattaneo (Translator), and Lely Bartolome (Translator)

To write this book, Argentine author Gerardo Bartolomé thoroughly studied the facts, traveled to most of the places visited by the famous naturalist to succeed in giving life to characters and describing the events in an absolutely convincing way. He presents a truly different vision of events that were not considered to be related, but they all fit perfectly well to explain what happened. History readers, adventure readers and followers of the Father of Evolution will find that this novel will catch their interest.

This Thing of Darkness

by Harry Thompson

This massive and engaging novel entwines the real-life stories of the HMS Beagle's famous passenger, the naturalist Charles Darwin, and its unfairly forgotten captain, Robert FitzRoy.

Tierra del Fuego

by Francisco Coloane and Howard Curtis (translator)

These spellbinding short stories of adventure and discovery are populated with explorers, fortune hunters, revolutionaries, seafarers, ship captains, and smugglers. But the undeniable protagonist in all nine stories is nature itself. Southern Chile, the world's end, with its severe beauty and cold, treacherous desolation, finds its ideal poet in Chilean author Francisco Coloane.

Tierra del Fuego

by Sylvia Iparraguirre and Hardie St. Martin (translator)

Tierra del Fuego is more than a suspenseful seafaring tale in the tradition of Captain Hornblower; it's also a chilling psychological and cultural tale, reminiscent of Heart of Darkness or Lord of the Flies, that probes deeply into human nature. Based on the true story of Jemmy Button, the novel explores Captain Robert Fitzroy's abduction of Button and his attempt to "civilize" him in England and return him to his country as a bearer of "enlightened society.

