

ANTARCTICA: THE ULTIMATE TRAVEL GUIDE



© Sergey Frolov

Thirty million years ago, Antarctica broke away from South America and became the world's fifth largest continent. As the oceans flowed freely around the isolated land mass, and temperate and polar waters mixed, the Antarctic continent cooled and ice sheets blanketed the land. The result—a vast white desert which holds over 70 percent of the world's fresh water. In these pages, you'll learn all you need to know about visiting this legendary continent.

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Antarctica 101

With remarkable scenery, unique wildlife, and a history rich with heroic exploits of famed explorers, it is no wonder that exploring Antarctica tops many travelers' trip-of-a-lifetime lists. But, traveling to this remarkable destination takes careful planning and consideration. Read on to learn the ins and outs of exploring the Great White Continent.

Where to Go

Landing on the Continent – For most people, setting foot on the Antarctic Continent is the primary goal. While Antarctic cruises will take you there, there's so much more...

Penguin Colonies – Vast colonies of breeding gentoo, Adelie, and chinstrap penguins form on coastal beaches and offshore islands from November to February (austral summer), while colonies of emperor penguins congregate on fast ice in the coastal regions during the depths of winter.

Glaciers – Antarctica boasts thousands of glaciers, many of which can easily be observed from the ship, on foot, while kayaking, or by Zodiac. Witnessing the huge chunks of ice as they calve and crash into the surrounding water is an unforgettable experience.

Research Stations – There are many research stations scattered throughout Antarctica, with most located along the coastline or on the offshore islands. Visits include an opportunity to see and learn about the research being undertaken, as well as life on an Antarctic base.

Historic Huts – Voyages to the Ross Sea region often include the historic huts of British explorers Sir Ernest Shackleton and Robert Falcon Scott.

Port Lockroy – This Historic Site and Monument, run by the UK Antarctic Heritage Trust, features a small museum, working post office, and gift shop. The Trust is also collecting data on the resident gentoo population to determine the impact of visitors on penguin population dynamics.

Dry Valleys – A series of snow-free valleys in Antarctica that experience very low humidity, the Dry Valleys are the world's most extreme deserts.

South Pole – Visiting the South Pole, the lowest point on earth, is a feat few people have achieved! A four- to five-hour flight aboard a ski plane can take you into the interior, or you can choose to travel overland on skis.

South Georgia – When traveling literally to the ends of the earth, it is well worth including this sub-Antarctic island. You will be rewarded with stunning mountainous scenery, vast colonies of king, gentoo, and macaroni penguins, and beaches covered with elephant and fur seals. South Georgia is also a great place to find two species of nesting albatross—wandering and light-mantled sooty.

Falkland Islands – These lovely windswept islands are home to large colonies of black-browed albatross, as well as rockhopper and Magellanic penguins.

Elephant Island – This island is famous as the desolate refuge of Ernest Shackleton's crew in 1916. The crew spent 137 days on the island before being rescued.

Lemaire Channel – This scenic strait off the Antarctic Peninsula is nicknamed "Kodak Gap." Extremely photogenic, steep cliffs hem in the iceberg-filled passage, making this one of the most popular destinations in Antarctica.

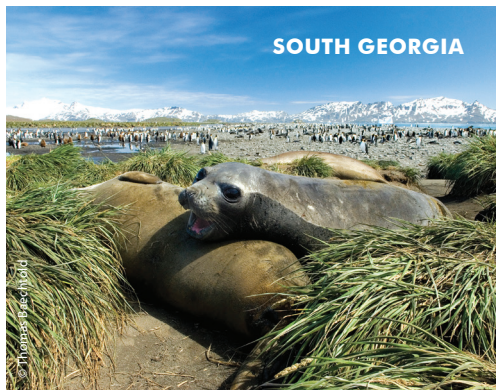


© Giovanna Fasanelli



PORT LOCKROY

© Mike Moore



SOUTH GEORGIA

© Thomas Braschi



LEMAIRE CHANNEL

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What to Do
There's a lot more to Antarctica than just ticking off a list for bragging rights. There's a lot of amazing things to do in Antarctica, making it one of world's best adventure travel destinations.

Observing Nature – While ashore or from the deck of the ship, wildlife enthusiasts will revel in the vast penguin colonies, seals resting on the shore or ice floes, and waters that support healthy populations of whales.

Cruising by Zodiac – These inflatable rubber boats are the best way to explore this rugged environment. Land on remote, otherwise inaccessible shores, search for wildlife, cruise amongst a huge array of wind- and sea-sculpted ice, and enjoy ever-changing views of the amazing scenery.

Hiking – From short strolls to multi-day treks, there are many options for exploration on foot.

Whale Watching – Humpback, right, blue, sei, fin, sperm, minke, and killer whales all congregate around Antarctica during the austral summer, with numbers peaking in February and March.

Kayaking – Whether you're gliding through the smooth waters of a protected bay, coming face-to-face with wildlife, or simply soaking in the stunning scenery, exploring by kayak offers travelers a truly unique perspective.

How to Get There

There are more options for exploring Antarctica than ever before! When choosing a tour, consider what you'd like to see and experience you're looking for; which is just as important as how you get there.

Small sailing or motor yachts carry less than 12 passengers, offering an intimate experience with access to areas that larger vessels can't go. Disadvantages include longer transit times and more movement during rough weather.

Expedition ships carry 13 - 500 passengers, though vessels that carry less than 200 passengers have access to a broader range of landing sites and typically offer more landings. An icebreaker with a helicopter is needed to access emperor penguin colonies and the Dry Valleys.

Cruise-only ships carry 500 or more passengers and are not allowed to land any passengers while in Antarctic waters. The advantages of larger ships include a shorter Drake Passage crossing, smoother rides in rough weather, and more public spaces.

Specialty Aircraft are used by several operators offering flights to temporary, inland summer camps. Some icebreakers carry helicopters for flight-seeing tours, reaching the Dry Valleys, and visiting emperor penguin colonies.



© Leslie Kim

Photography – Whether you are an avid photographer or a casual point-and-shooter, photographic opportunities abound! The long hours of daylight offer endless moments to get up-close shots of wildlife, intriguing photos of icebergs, and stunning scenic vistas.

Camping – Spend the night surrounded by penguins, seals, and the solitude of pure wilderness. Far from city lights, be sure to spend some time star-gazing.

Mountain Climbing – This is an exciting option for experienced mountaineers with some technical abilities and a good level of fitness. Though there are options for every skill level, be prepared for harsh conditions, extreme cold, and sometimes ferocious winds.

Learning More – Most cruises offer a lecture program, or other educational component, to help you understand the wonders you will witness. Topics range from natural history and geology, to the Historic Age of Exploration.



The Best Time to Visit

Weather and ice conditions are at their most friendly/most visitable during the austral summer, November – March. January is considered by many to be the best month to visit, as the temperatures are usually mild and the vast penguin colonies are busy with parents tending to downy chicks.

November & Early December (Late Spring / Early Summer)

During this time, you'll experience:

- Courting season for penguins and seabirds—see spectacular courtship rituals
- Seals visible on fast ice
- Spring wildflowers in the Falklands and South Georgia
- Elephant and fur seals establish their breeding territories
- Winter pack ice is starting to melt and break up and the scenery is white, clean and pristine with pack ice and giant icebergs

Mid-December and January (Mid-Summer)

During this time, you'll experience:

- Antarctic penguin chicks begin to hatch
- South Georgia and the Falklands—first penguin chicks emerge and fur seals are breeding
- Elephant and fur seal pups on South Georgia and the Falklands
- Longer days create great light conditions and fabulous photo opportunities
- Receding ice allows for more exploration

February and March (Late Summer)

During this time, you'll experience:

- Penguin chicks start to fledge, most penguin colonies are nearly vacated by late February to early March
- More fur seals on the Antarctic Peninsula
- Whale sightings are at their best on the Peninsula
- Blooming snow algae prevalent
- Receding pack ice allows ships to explore further south



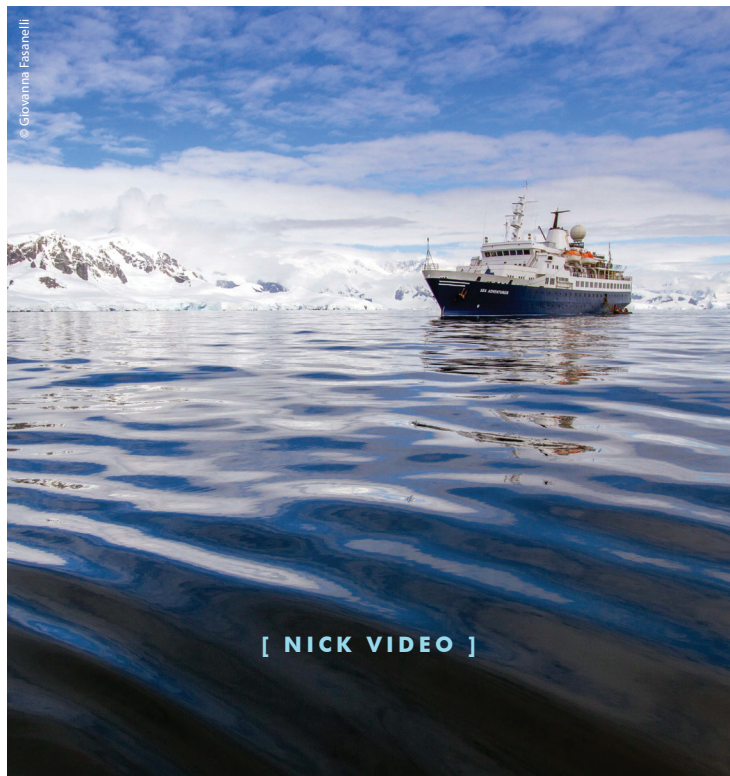
Essential Packing List

Packing for Antarctica is certainly part of the excitement in preparing for this trip of a lifetime. But, it's also essential that you get it just right to ensure you are able to stay comfortable, warm, and dry—for hours on end—while out exploring in the elements. Below, please find the essential packing list for an Antarctic expedition.

Expedition Clothing:

- **Knee-high, insulated, waterproof boots**
We recommend Arctic Sport Muckboots or similar
- **Complimentary waterproof jacket** ●●●●●●●●●●
- **Wool or fleece sweater or vest**
To layer under your jacket
- **Waterproof gloves or mittens, and liners**
Photographers: Consider fingerless liners for snapping photos
- **Hat or cap**
Be sure it covers your ears!
- **Scarf or neck gaiter**
- **Warm, thermal socks**
Bring extras; there's nothing worse than wet feet
- **Thin socks for layering**
Silk or polypropylene sock liners are recommended
- **Full set of thermal long underwear**
No cotton; silk, wool, or polypropylene are best
- **Hiking shoes or boots**
Sturdy, non-skid
- **Warm, waterproof pants**
To fit over your other layers
- **Fleece pants**
- **Swimsuit**
For possible Polar Plunge
- **Casual clothing**
For onboard the ship; choose items that can be layered
- **Rubber-soled deck shoes**

Learn the best way to pack your parka from Expedition Advisor, Nick Phillips



Other Antarctic Essentials:

- Sunglasses
- Sunscreen / lip balm with SPF
- Backpack / daypack
- Photography equipment
- Waterproof, or "dry," bags for camera equipment
- Water bottle

Get the scoop from our pros on what to bring at:
www.zegrahm.com/photo

Optional:

- Trekking poles
- Binoculars
- Travel alarm clock, or water-resistant sports watch
- Ski goggles for windy conditions
- Motion sickness medication
- Moisturizer; the air can be very dry and cold

Read how to find the perfect pair on our blog:
www.zegrahm.com/binoculars



Recommended Gear

With incredibly changeable weather, having the right gear will ensure your enjoyment, whether onboard the ship, taking a hike, or cruising by Zodiac. Here are our favorite, tried-and-true items that will help you stay warm and dry, no matter the conditions.



Complimentary Parka: Provides superior waterproof/breathable protection and warmth.



Bamboo Half-zip: Made by Storm Creek, of 40% bamboo, it's a natural fiber that is soft as silk!



Neoplume Pants: Made by Outdoor Research, these pants are what to wear when temperatures drop and intense cold sets in.



Arete GORETEX Waterproof Glove Set: Outdoor Research best sellers, these gloves come in men's and ladies' sizes and are among the most versatile cold weather gloves available.



Fleece Toque: Traditional, comfortable, and warm—it even helps keep you dry in a 'mist.'



Julbo Colorado Glacier Glasses: Whether your plans include traversing a glacier or viewing humpbacks from the deck, these glasses provide the protection you need.

Visit Zegrahm's Gear Shop for full details.

The albatross and penguin are certainly the most iconic species of the Antarctic, but there so much more wildlife to see! [Click here to view the wildlife list from Zegrahm's 2016 Antarctica, South Georgia, & the Falkland Islands.](#)

High-flying facts about the **ALBATROSS**

To the casual observer, an albatross may appear to merely be an oversized gull. Oh contraire—these magnificent birds are masters of the wind, world-travelers a thousand times over; their grace and stamina is unmatched in the natural world. Writing home from the South Atlantic in 1912, American ornithologist Robert Cushman Murphy exulted, *I now belong to a higher cult of mortals, for I have seen the albatross!*

With a surprisingly keen sense of smell, albatross can use scent to find food over 12 miles away.

Young albatross spend 5 – 7 years on the ocean before coming ashore to breed. They do not touch the ground once during this time!

There are 21 species of albatross, mostly living in the Southern Hemisphere.

The wandering albatross boasts the longest wingspan of any bird, up to 11 feet!

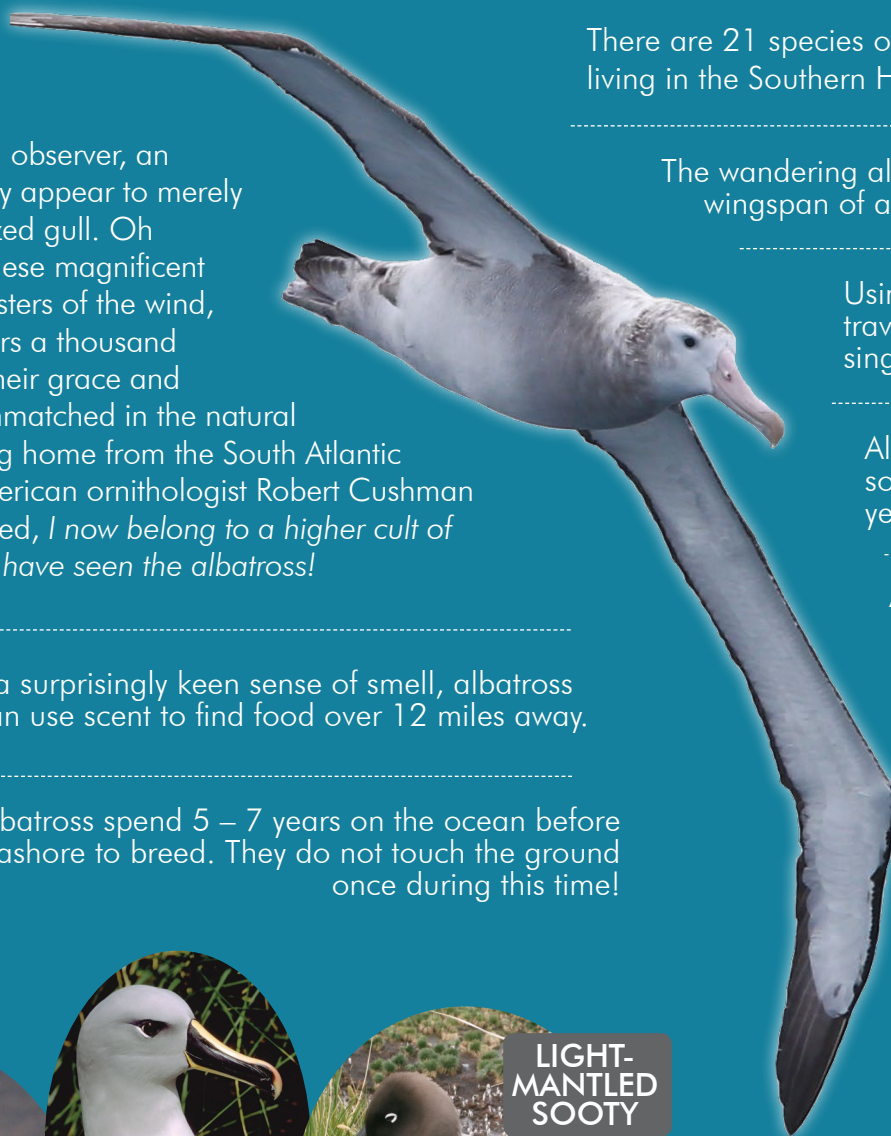
Using “dynamic soaring” they can travel hundreds of miles without a single flap of their wings.

Albatross are very long-lived birds, some live up to 60 years of age.

A 50-year-old albatross will have flown, at least, 3.7 million miles in its lifetime.

Some birds have been recorded traveling at speeds of 40 miles per hour.

Albatross spend most of their lives on the ocean, only coming to land to breed and raise chicks.



ROYAL



GRAY-HEADED



LIGHT-MANTLED SOOTY



BLACK-BROWED



WANDERING

You can see five species of albatross on Zegrahm's Antarctica, South Georgia & the Falkland Islands expedition.

THE ANATOMY OF PENGUINS

There are 17 species of penguins in the world, all of which live in the southern hemisphere. These adorable ambassadors of the Antarctic are uniquely suited to a life at sea. While most birds have hollow bones, making them lighter for flying, penguins have solid bones, making it easier to dive underwater for food. Here are some more evolutionary adaptations that help these extraordinary birds survive in one of the world's harshest environments.

BEAK

Penguins do not need to drink fresh water—they have special glands behind their eyes that help them filter out salt from the ocean. The excess salt water drips down their beak and they are able to “sneeze” or shake it off.

FEATHERS

Penguins have more feathers than most other birds, with 80-100 feathers per square inch. Stiff feathers uniformly overlap to form a waterproof layer, while the downy under-portion traps air against the skin for warmth.

COUNTERSHADING

Their tuxedo-like black and white coloring isn't just fashionable; it is extremely effective camouflage, known as countershading. White undersides blend into bright sunlight from above, and black backs merge into the murky depths.

EYES

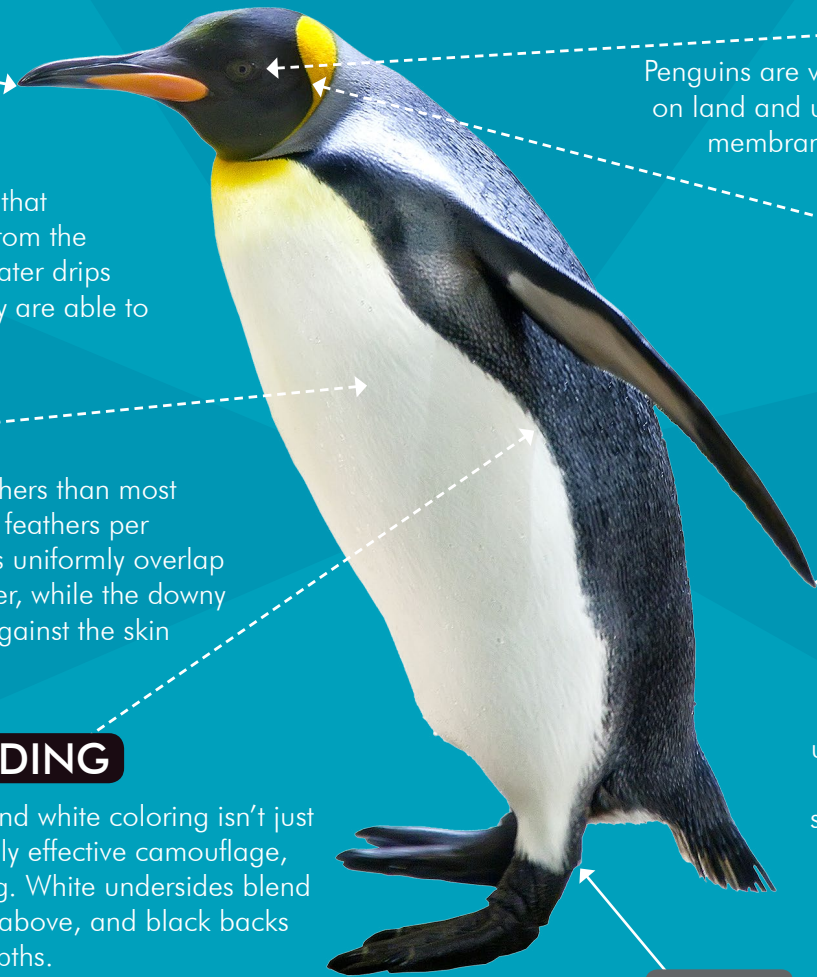
Penguins are visual hunters and can see well on land and underwater—a clear nictitating membrane (a third eyelid) protects their eyes while diving.

EARS

Though their ears are not visible, penguins have excellent hearing. Penguins are able to locate their chicks and mates within huge colonies by listening for their unique calls.

WINGS

Wings are modified into paddle-like flippers. Penguins use their torpedo-shaped body to shoot through water at speeds of 15 miles per hour or more—wings are used for propulsion, feet for steering.



KING



GENTOO



ROCKHOPPER



ADELIE



CHINSTRAP



MAGELLANIC



MACARONI

You can tally a grand total of seven penguin species on Zegrahm's annual Antarctica, South Georgia & the Falkland Islands expedition.



Antarctic Environment

Antarctica is the highest, driest, windiest, and coldest continent in the world. With all of its islands and ice shelves, Antarctica covers 8.5 million square miles; nearly 1½ times the size of the USA and twice the size of Australia! Mount Vinson is the highest mountain in Antarctica at 16,050 feet, and peaks in the Transantarctic Mountains commonly exceed 13,000 feet. These lofty mountains help contribute to the extreme cold, as well as unpredictable weather patterns. Due to these harsh conditions, very few species can survive here.

Polar Desert

A Primer on Antarctica's Landscape

The words “polar” and “desert” may seem contradictory, but that’s only because most of us associate the latter with sun-drenched, sand-covered landscapes. Yet desert actually describes any desolate stretch of land that is waterless and without vegetation—and by that definition, Africa’s Sahara doesn’t hold a dowsing rod to the polar deserts of Antarctica and the Arctic.

In sheer land mass alone, Antarctica’s polar deserts scorch the competition—covering more than 5.5 million square miles, they comprise an area larger than the Sahara, Arabian, Gobi, and Kalahari combined. (The Arctic comes in a close second at 5.4 million.) While a desert landscape is defined as an arid region that receives less than 10 inches of precipitation a year, Antarctica gets only about two inches annually. Its aptly named Dry Valleys haven’t seen rain for at least 2 million years!

Made up primarily of bedrock, large boulders, and gravel plains, Antarctica’s Dry Valleys are dotted by a number of frozen, hyper-saline lakes including Don Juan Pond, the world’s largest. (With a saline level over 40 percent, it is also the saltiest body of water on Earth, beating the Dead Sea by nearly 10 percent.) That’s not exactly the picture you think of when you hear “White Continent,” yet the effect is caused by the snow-covered Transantarctic Mountains. This mile-high range, which divides the continent, serves as a natural barrier for the East Antarctic Ice Sheet. Given the valleys’ arid environment, any ice that does break off the surrounding glaciers immediately turns into vapor, totally bypassing the liquid stage.

The average winter temperature in Antarctica’s polar deserts is around -20 degrees Fahrenheit, and can drop as low as -90; during summer months, it can warm up to a balmy 30 degrees,

producing short-lived streams that link the lakes. Also during warmer months, there is nearly 24 hours of daylight, while the reverse is true during the cold season.

While explorers long believed that these Dry Valleys could not sustain life (Robert Scott, who discovered the region in 1903, called it “a valley of death”), scientists in the 1970s unearthed a number of microorganisms in the area. Since then, nearly 350 vascular species have been found, and it is estimated that nearly 5 percent of Antarctica’s polar deserts are covered in some flora, although the tallest shrubs reach no more than three feet in height.

FUN FACTS ABOUT ANTARCTIC ICE

- The surface of Antarctica is more than 99% ice.
- Almost 70% of Earth’s fresh water is in the Antarctic ice cap.
- If Antarctica’s ice sheets melted, the world’s oceans would rise by 200 – 210 feet.
- The Antarctic ice sheet is up to 15,000 feet thick, averaging about 6,000 feet—the weight of this great mass, bearing down on the South Pole, makes the earth slightly pear-shaped.
- Every year, Antarctica shrugs off some 2,014 billion tons of ice.

Ice Vocabulary

Learn the lingo before setting out for the world's southernmost realm.

Sea Ice – Ecologists call the annual formation of sea ice in the South the greatest seasonal event on Earth. In the late fall, it expands at the rate of 30 square miles per minute—effectively doubling the size of the continent by winter.

Glacier Ice – The ice in a glacier is not just frozen water; it is compressed snowflakes. It results from snow falling and falling—and not melting—for uncounted millennia, until the sheer weight of the mass crushes and metamorphoses the snow at the bottom. The crystals merge and re-form, and a new kind of ice is born—and it starts to move.

Ice Shelves – Amalgamations of glaciers that carry so much force, they do not stop when they reach the edge of land, but thrust out over the ocean and bury the land under a vast expanse of frozen freshwater.

Iceberg – A large piece of freshwater ice that has broken off an ice shelf or glacier and is floating freely in open water.

Tabular Bergs – Flat-topped icebergs formed by breaking off the ice shelf. Some can be hundreds of miles long and rise several hundred feet above the surface. Early explorers often mistook them for islands, because they defy belief that such enormous objects could be floating.

Iceberg – Pieces of ice that measure more than 1,100 square feet in area, and stand more than 16 feet above sea level.

Bergy Bits – Smaller icebergs that rise 3 – 16 feet above sea level, with an area around 1 – 3,000 square feet.

Growler – Smaller chunks of floating ice that rise less than three feet out of the water, roughly the size of a grand piano.

Fast Ice – Sea ice that has “fastened” to the coastline, sea floors, or grounded icebergs.

Drift (Pack) Ice – Sea ice that is carried along by winds and sea currents.





© Giovanna Fasanello

Exploration Timeline

Though the ancient Greeks first hypothesized the existence of a southern landmass, Antarctica remained undiscovered throughout most of human history. It wasn't until the late 1800s that the existence of this mythic land was finally confirmed.

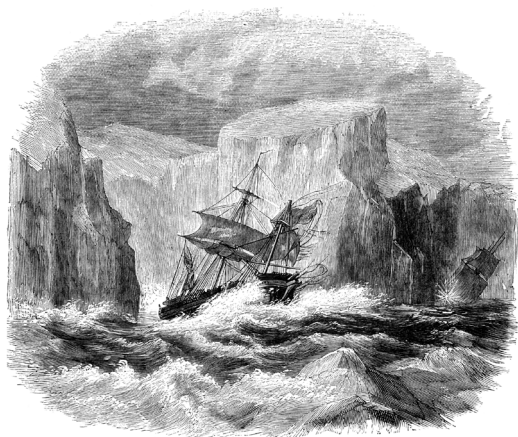
1773 Captain James Cook crosses the Antarctic Circle and circumnavigates Antarctica, though he never actually sights land.

1820 First sighting of the Antarctic Peninsula by Palmer, Bransfield, and Smith. On a separate journey, Thaddeus von Bellingshausen sights an icefield at 69 degrees south and lays claim to being the first person to set eyes on the Antarctic continent.

1821 American sealer Captain John Davis makes the first known landing on continental Antarctica. (This is disputed by some historians.)

1823 British whaler James Weddell discovers the sea named after him, then reaches the most southerly point at that time: 74° 15' S. No one else manages to penetrate the Weddell Sea again for 80 years!

1840 British naval officer and scientist, James Clark Ross, takes two ships, the *Erebus* and the *Terror*, to within 80 miles of the coast until stopped by a massive ice barrier—now called the Ross Ice Shelf.



Ernest Shackleton

1898 Adrien de Gerlache and the crew of the *Belgica* become trapped in pack ice off the Antarctic Peninsula, in the first scientific expedition to the continent. They also become the first to survive an Antarctic winter (involuntarily!) as their ship drifts with the ice.

1899 Carsten Borchgrevink leads a British expedition that landed men at Cape Adare and became the first confirmed team to overwinter on the Antarctic landmass.

1901 British captain, Robert Falcon Scott, leads his first Antarctic expedition to try to reach the South Pole, with Ernest Shackleton and Edward Wilson. They are forced to turn back two months later having reached 82 degrees south, suffering from snow blindness and scurvy.

1907 – 1909 Shackleton leads an expedition to within 97 miles of the South Pole, but turns back after supplies are exhausted.

1909 Australian Douglas Mawson reaches the South Magnetic Pole in January.

1911 Norwegian Roald Amundsen leads a five-man expedition that reaches the South Pole for the first time on December 14.

1912 On January 18, Scott reaches the South Pole with his own five-man team to discover he has been beaten by Amundsen; they perish on the return journey, only 11 miles from the supply depot.

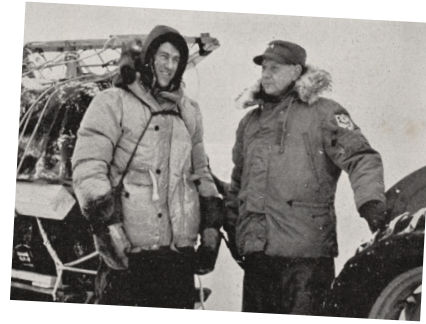
1915 Shackleton returns to Antarctica in an attempt to complete the first crossing of the continent. The goal is not attained, but one of the greatest adventures of all time follows. Their ship, the *Endurance*, is crushed in the sea ice and a small party sets out for South Georgia and the whaling station. The party is eventually rescued in 1917.



1947 The US sends the largest-ever expedition of over 4,000 men, 13 ships, and 23 airplanes to Antarctica in Operation Highjump. Large areas of the coastline and hinterland are mapped—with some 70,000 aerial photographs.

1956 US aircraft lands at the South Pole. This is the first visit since Scott and his team in 1912.

July 1, 1957 – December 31, 1958 In the International Geophysical Year (IGY), 12 nations establish over 60 stations in Antarctica. This marks the beginning of international cooperation in Antarctica and the start of the process by which Antarctica becomes “non-national.”



Edmund Hillary (left) with Rear Admiral George Dufek

1958 The first successful land crossing via the South Pole is led by British geologist Vivian Fuchs with New Zealander Edmund Hillary leading the back-up party, over 40 years after Shackleton’s expedition set out with the same aim.

1929 Richard Byrd and three others take off in a Ford monoplane from his base at the Bay of Whales and head for the South Pole. They become the first to fly over either pole in an airplane.

1961 The Antarctic Treaty System comes into effect and guarantees freedom of access and scientific investigation in all areas south of 60 degrees latitude.



Traveling with Zegrahm

Each year, Zegrahm offers one special Antarctic expedition. This singular voyage is ideally timed during austral summer, offering unparalleled opportunities to explore, and is always much anticipated by our field staff—in fact their passion for this magical corner of the world is infectious as soon as you step on board! Here is a sample of what you can look forward to on a Zegrahm itinerary:

Days 1 & 2

DEPART USA / BUENOS AIRES, ARGENTINA / USHUAIA

Board your independent flight via Buenos Aires, arriving in Ushuaia the next day. Gather at the hotel this evening for a welcome dinner and overnight.

Day 3

USHUAIA / EMBARK

Today, enjoy a boat trip on the Beagle Channel and disembark in Tierra del Fuego National Park for nature hikes surrounded by dramatic scenery. Or, visit Martial Glacier, followed by a city tour and lunch in Ushuaia. Board the ship this afternoon and set sail for the Falkland Islands.

Day 4

AT SEA

Attend lectures on the natural and historical highlights ahead during a day at sea.

Day 5

STEEPLE JASON ISLAND, FALKLAND ISLANDS / SAUNDERS ISLAND

On Steeple Jason Island visit a large black-browed albatross colony and stroll along beautiful beaches to search for seabirds. On Saunders Island, you will find colonies of gentoo, rockhopper, and Magellanic penguins.

Days 6 & 7

CRUISING THE SOUTH SCOTIA SEA

Lecturers recap your experiences and prepare you for your visit to South Georgia. On deck, join naturalists in search of the seabirds and marine mammals that flourish in these nutrient-rich waters.

Days 8 – 10

SOUTH GEORGIA

Flexibility in this area is a must. Call at some of the many islands, bays, and coves where you will see outstanding birdlife, as well as elephant and fur seals close at hand. The following is a list of places you may experience on a visit South Georgia.

Elsahul Bay – This beautiful bay is home to thousands of fur seals as well as macaroni penguins, the most numerous of all penguin species. Listen for the high-pitched trumpeting of king penguins amid the magnificent sounds of marine mammals that echo in the bay.

Salisbury Plain – Two glaciers flank Salisbury Plain on South Georgia's north coast. Here, more than 200,000 king penguins congregate and breed, and you are greeted by one of the more remarkable sights—and sounds—on Earth.

Stromness Bay – This former whaling station is the site of Sir Ernest Shackleton and his party's arrival after their harrowing crossing of the island's glaciers on foot. A short hike inland offers views of cliffs and a glacier from which the adventurer and his companions descended.

Grytviken – Go ashore to discover the ruins of this once-active whaling station, making stops at the small museum and well-preserved Norwegian church. The cemetery holds a special fascination, as it is here that Shackleton is buried. Seabirds, penguins, and marine mammals can also be found here.

Gold Harbour – At the foot of the Bertrab Glacier, Gold Harbour is often referred to as the "jewel in the island's crown." In addition to a large king penguin colony, you are likely to see elephant and fur seals, gentoo penguins, giant petrels, and with luck, light-mantled albatross.

Days 11 & 12

AT SEA

Naturalists recap your memorable visit to South Georgia and introduce you to the history, geology, and wildlife of the Antarctic Peninsula and its surrounding islands.

Day 13

ELEPHANT ISLAND

Today arrive at Elephant Island, made famous by the Shackleton expedition. Weather permitting, enjoy a Zodiac cruise around the island and the opportunity to view a thriving chinstrap penguin colony.

Days 14 – 18

ANTARCTIC PENINSULA

As you cruise the waters of the Antarctic Peninsula and its adjacent islands, landings are dependent upon weather and ice conditions. There is the possibility that you may visit a research station and witness the scientific activities conducted by the multi-national community of scientists working there. The expeditionary nature of this voyage precludes guaranteeing specific stops; in the past we have visited the following locations. This list serves as a guideline only of the places you may experience.

Brown Bluff – Located on the Antarctic continent, Brown Bluff rises 2,450 feet above an ash beach littered with bizarrely shaped boulders. Some 20,000 pairs of Adelie, and hundreds of gentoo penguins, make their home here. Skuas and pintado petrels nest near the top of the cliff and kelp gulls fill the air with perpetual sound and motion.

Deception Island – As you approach Deception through Neptune’s Bellows, a channel just wide enough for the ship to navigate, southern fulmars and pintado petrels soar overhead. Weigh anchor inside a volcano whose collapsed cone was filled by rushing seawater. Conditions permitting, make a landing on the outside of the caldera to visit a colony of more than 100,000 nesting chinstrap penguins.

Lemaire Channel and Pleneau Island – Cruising the beautiful Lemaire Channel, keep watch for the humpback and minke whales frequently spotted here. This narrow channel is one of the most visually impressive areas of the Antarctic Peninsula. Steep mountain peaks jut out of the sea on both sides, and the waters are often choked with icebergs. A stunning labyrinth of grounded icebergs lies in the shallow waters west of Pleneau

Island, presenting a superb Zodiac cruising experience. Crabearer and leopard seals haul out on the ice, and elephant seals and gentoo penguins occupy the island itself.

Days 19 & 20

DRAKE PASSAGE

During two days navigating this legendary body of water, lecturers recap your Antarctic adventure. You will have the opportunity to observe wandering and black-browed albatross, as well as sooty shearwaters, and white-chinned petrels. And, keep a lookout for the whales that are often found here.

Days 21 & 22

USHUAIA, ARGENTINA / DISEMBARK / BUENOS AIRES / USA

Disembark in Ushuaia and transfer to the airport for your flight to Buenos Aires, connecting with your independent overnight flight.

EXPLORE WITH ZEGRAHM

Antarctica, South Georgia & the Falkland Islands

January 5, 2017 | 22 Days

Aboard the 175-guest *Ocean Diamond*



© Sam Grimmin



Zegrahm Expeditions is a founding member of the International Association of Antarctic Tour Operators (IAATO), which promotes responsible tourism in the world’s most pristine habitat.