



Antarctica

WEDDELL SEA

In Search of the Emperor Penguins, Helicopter Included

Helicopter Tours, Zodiac Cruising and shore program, Deception Island

BEST SEASON

November to December

PRICE

From US \$12,900 pp excluding local flights

HOW LONG

11 Days/10 Nights



ITINERARY OVERVIEW

A true expedition, our Weddell Sea cruise sets out to explore the range of the Emperor Penguins near Snow Hill Island. We will visit the area via helicopter and see a variety of other birds and penguins including Adélies and Gentoos. Experience the bird's-eye-view of Antarctica! Our helicopter capability on m/v Ortelius gives you the rare chance to see the famed emperor penguin rookery south of Snow Hill Island, numbering around 4,000 breeding pairs. Heavy ice may prevent entrance to this area from the Weddell Sea, and ice at the rookery itself might break up and start to melt earlier than expected. With this in mind, the aim is to stop the vessel between the Antarctic Sound and James Clark Ross Island, close to the ice

edge, and find emperor penguins on their way to open water. The thrilling helicopter flights make this search possible, enabling you to land in locations otherwise inaccessible this early in the season. If ice conditions are favorable and the route to Snow Hill Island is free of multi-year pack ice, you have the chance for ship-to-shore helicopter transfers to Snow Hill Island (roughly 45 minutes walking distance from the emperor penguin rookery). If successful, this is a once-in-a-lifetime experience. But please remember that nature writes the final itinerary out here.

Important: *At Green Planet Expeditions, we are deeply committed to preserving the pristine environment and wildlife of Antarctica. While helicopters are essential for accessing remote areas, we strictly adhere to regulations that prohibit any disturbance to wildlife. Helicopters maintain a safe distance from all animals and land only on designated pack-ice locations, far enough away to ensure no disruption to their natural behavior. A short walk from the landing site to the rookery is required, allowing us to observe wildlife responsibly and minimize our impact. We prioritize the protection of Antarctica's unique ecosystem and ask for your cooperation in respecting these guidelines. Together, we can enjoy this incredible continent while safeguarding its wildlife for future generations.*

ITINERARY IN DETAIL



Day 1 | End of the world, start of a journey

Your voyage begins where the world drops off. Ushuaia, Argentina, reputed to be the southernmost city on the planet, is located on the far southern tip of South America. Starting in the afternoon, you embark from this small resort town on Tierra del Fuego, nicknamed “The End of the World,” and sail the mountain-fringed Beagle Channel for the remainder of the evening.



Day 2-3 | Path of the polar explorers

Over the next two days on the Drake Passage, you enjoy some of the same experiences encountered by the great polar explorers who first charted these regions: cool salt breezes, rolling seas, maybe even a fin whale spouting up sea spray. After passing the Antarctic Convergence – Antarctica’s natural boundary, formed when north-flowing cold waters collide with warmer sub-Antarctic seas – you are in the circum-Antarctic upwelling zone. Not only does the marine life change, the avian life changes too. Wandering albatrosses, grey-headed albatrosses, black-browed albatrosses, light-mantled sooty albatrosses, cape pigeons, southern fulmars, Wilson’s storm petrels, blue petrels, and Antarctic petrels are a few of the birds you might see.



Day 4-7 | Entering Antarctica

You may sail into the Weddell Sea via the Antarctic Sound. Here huge tabular icebergs herald your arrival to the eastern side of the Antarctic Peninsula. During this part of the cruise, the search is on for emperor penguins. Using both the vessel and helicopters, there's a good chance you'll find them. You might also enjoy

scenic flights, and if conditions allow, helicopter landings in locations otherwise out of reach this time of year.

Helicopter flights are a true trip changer, and may include:

The west slopes of the Antarctic Sound – The western side of this area is only rarely seen from the air, though the landscape is truly worth the flight: Layered sandstones, lava flows, glaciers, icebergs, and pack-ice extend as far as the eye can see. There are often individual emperor penguins and Adélie penguins on the ice floes, as well as kelp gulls, skuas, and various breeds of petrel. Jagged mountain peaks stab through the snow, and enormous walls of ice lie shattered on the slopes below.

Duse Bay – A soaring helicopter flight may deposit you on a rocky hillock close to an old refuge hut overlooking this bay. There's still a lot of snow and ice this time of year, but much of the walk in this location is over frost-shattered rock covered with lichen of all shapes and colors.

Seymour Island – This is where the Swedish Antarctic Expedition of 1901 – 4 wintered under harrowing polar conditions. Sedimentary rock, fossils, and expansive views define this location.

If conditions allow for deeper ventures into the Weddell Sea, Zodiac trips may include:

Devil Island – Home to a large colony of Adélie penguins, this island offers a magnificent vantage point for hikers willing to foot it to the top of the hill. Melting ice sometimes forms a waterfall dropping from the cliffs close to Cape Well-met.

Brown Bluff – Maybe the most scenic location in the entire northern tip of the Antarctic Continent: sheer canyon walls, fallen boulders, beautiful volcanic creations capped with ice. A large Adélie penguin rookery lives here, with gentoo penguins and nesting snow petrels also to be found.

Courdin Island – Chinstrap, gentoo, and Adélie penguins love this island, which is yet another landing option for your continuing Antarctic adventure.

Esperanza Base – This Argentine research station, which operates year-round and is one of only two civilian settlements in Antarctica, could serve as an alternative landing site.



Day 8 | Drake via Deception Island

In the morning, you sail to Deception Island for the last landing of the voyage, either at Pendulum Cove or Whalers Bay. Conditions on the Drake Passage determine the exact time of departure.



Day 9-10 | Familiar seas, familiar friends

Your return voyage is far from lonely. While crossing the Drake, you're again greeted by the vast array of seabirds remembered from the passage south. But they seem a little more familiar to you now, and you to them.



Day 11 | There and back again

Every adventure, no matter how grand, must eventually come to an end. It's now time to disembark in Ushuaia, but with memories that will accompany you wherever your next adventure lies.



Days 5 and 6 | (Alternate program if the route to Snow Hill Island is free of multi-year pack ice – less than 50 % probability)

Helicopters provide an advantage in reaching the emperor penguin colony, but our ability to use them depends entirely on ice, sea, and weather conditions. If conditions are favorable, we will visit the colony. If conditions are exceptionally favorable, we will attempt to visit more than once. Helicopter operations take a full day, and flight duration

depends on local conditions. Each helicopter can accommodate 4 – 5 passengers per flight. The landing site is carefully chosen so that the penguins are not disturbed. Upon arrival to the site, we will walk to the colony. This may take up to 45 minutes and can be challenging in places. Please keep in mind that you are in the world's most remote region, so there are no guarantees: conditions may change rapidly, which can impact on helicopter operations. It is important to understand and respect this fact. Safety is our greatest concern, so no compromises can be made. We aim for all groups to spend an equal amount of time at the colony. The time at the colony (and the time to get there from landing site) will often vary, however, due to local conditions and flight times.

Pricing	2025	2026
Quadruple Porthole	From \$12,900	From \$13,400
Triple Porthole	From \$14,750	From \$15,350
Twin Porthole	From \$14,750	From \$15,350
Twin with window	From \$15,300	From \$15,900
Twin deluxe	From \$16,350	From \$17,350
Superior	From \$17,150	From \$17,850
Junior Suite	Inquire	Inquire
Grand Suite with Private balcony	Inquire	Inquire

Start	End	Ship
11/11/2025	11/21/2025	Ortelius
21/11/2025	01/12/2025	Ortelius
01/12/2025	11/12/2025	Ortelius
15/11/2026	25/11/2026	Ortelius
25/11/2026	05/12/2026	Ortelius
05/12/2026	15/12/2026	Ortelius

SINGLE TRAVELLER | CHILDREN Single travelers can choose between “single occupancy” at a supplement of 1,7 x the Twin or Superior cabin rate, or “sharing basis” in the Twin, Triple, or Quadruple category at no additional cost. Children under 16 with parents may receive 40% discount in Grand Suite, Superior, Triple (sharing with 2 parents/adults), and Quadruple Cabins (sharing with 3 parents/adults).

RATES All rates are quoted per person, based on twin occupancy. Please note that all dates & rates are subject to change. All voyages will operate subject to a minimum of 70 participants on Plancius and Ortelius and 90 participants on Hondius.

Embarkation and Disembarkation Location: Ushuaia

Antarctica 2025 Legend and Notes (Subject to change)

All itineraries are for guidance only. Programs may vary depending on ice, weather, and wildlife conditions. Landings are subject to site availabilities, permissions, and environmental concerns per IAATO regulations (International Association of Antarctica Tour Operators). Official sailing plans and landing slots are scheduled with IAATO prior to the start of the season, but the expedition leader determines the final plan. Flexibility is paramount for expedition cruises. The average cruising speed of our vessel is 10.5 knots.

Included

- Voyage aboard the indicated vessel as indicated in the itinerary
- All meals throughout the voyage aboard the ship including snacks, coffee, and tea.
- All shore excursions and activities throughout the voyage by Zodiac.
- Program of lectures by noted naturalists and leadership by experienced expedition staff.
- Free use of rubber boots and snowshoes. Very Comfortable!
- Ship-to-shore helicopter transfers (with no specific amount of helicopter time guaranteed)
- Luggage transfer from pick-up point to the vessel on the day of embarkation, in Ushuaia.
- Pre-scheduled group transfer from the vessel to the airport in Ushuaia (directly after disembarkation).
- All miscellaneous service taxes and port charges throughout the program.
- Comprehensive pre-departure material.
- Permanent assistance during the trip
- Green Planet Expeditions travel consultation and pre-departure services

Not Included

- International and domestic airfares
- Pre- and post-land arrangements.
- Meals or any other item not described in the itinerary
- Early check-in, late check-out services.

- Excess baggage charges and all items of a personal nature such as laundry, bar, beverage charges, and telecommunication charges.
- Government arrival and departure taxes.
- The customary gratuity at the end of the voyages for stewards and other service personnel aboard (guidelines will be provided).
- **Mandatory Travel Insurance:** To ensure a smooth travel experience, all participants are required to have a comprehensive travel insurance policy. This policy should include trip cancellation, medical services, and coverage for active adventures or evacuations. "Cancel For Any Reason" (CFAR) coverage is highly recommended to protect your investment in case of unforeseen circumstances. For Antarctica Baggage, cancellation and personal insurance are mandatory as well as evacuation insurance.
- Any other items not mentioned above

ACCOMMODATIONS



Ship Details

Ortelius was originally the Marina Svetaeva. Built in Gdynia, Poland in 1989, it served as a special-purpose vessel for the Russian Academy of Science. Later it was re-flagged and renamed after the Dutch/Flemish cartographer Abraham Ortelius (1527 – 1598), who in 1570 published the first modern world atlas: Theatrum Orbis Terrarum or Theater of the World. At that time his

atlas was the most expensive book ever printed. Ortelius is classed by Lloyd's Register in London and flies the Dutch flag. Find the PDF with Ship Details below.

Booking your Green Planet Expedition

How to reserve a trip

To secure your spot on a trip, you can conveniently book online using our [Reserve a Trip form](#) or by calling **1-800-430-9498**. Your reservation is confirmed upon receipt of the reservation form and the initial 50% trip deposit.

Please note that we are unable to hold space until the deposit is received. If the requested space is unavailable, we will promptly provide alternative options for your consideration (if an upgrade is necessary, higher rates may apply).

Pre departure service

Upon receipt of your deposit and completed reservation form, we will email you a comprehensive Predeparture Dossier. This contains important information to help you prepare including immunizations, visas, trip insurance, packing checklist, reading list, maps, cross-cultural information, optional trip extensions, and more. You will receive a final trip email including Final Reminders and local contact information in your destination 2-3 weeks before departure.

Terms and Conditions

Green Planet Expeditions has arranged your trip utilizing the travel services of local in-country ground operators who are independent contractors. These local outfitters, lodges, hotels, and other suppliers of your travel services will make every effort to conduct this trip as described in the itinerary; however, it is possible that due to transportation schedule changes, weather, delays, and unforeseeable acts of God, humans or nature, this itinerary may vary from what is described. Participants must assume all risks whether identified in advance or unforeseen. All optional activities are at your own risk. Extra costs due to unexpected changes in your itinerary for reasons beyond our control are not included.

Caring for our planet is integral to our ethos. In alignment with our commitment to sustainability, a carbon emissions mitigation fee is incorporated into all our trips. This fee contributes to environmental initiatives that offset the carbon footprint associated with our journeys, ensuring a positive impact on the destinations we explore. Your safety and peace of mind during the journey is our top priorities. **The purchase of traveler's insurance is mandatory for all participants, and it must cover trip delays, trip cancellations, baggage, accident, or sickness. In some specific cases like Antarctica, it must cover evacuation.**

All information and services provided are subject to our [Terms and Conditions](#).

At Green Planet Expeditions, we craft strategically curated journeys that immerse travelers in the finest of nature, culture, and local traditions, always seeking out opportunities for exceptional dining experiences. Our expertise lies in tailor-made trips to destinations where we maintain close relationships with local partners, ensuring flawless execution with the assistance of passionate guides deeply connected to their heritage and committed to its preservation.

We believe that tourism, when harnessed thoughtfully, becomes a powerful catalyst for conservation and community upliftment in the destinations we visit.

As with any good recipe, our trips are infused with the following flavors:

- Positive impact on the areas you choose to visit, directly or indirectly.
- Amazing private local guides.
- Lovely small boutique hotels according to your budget.
- Good food, no matter how remote the destination is, we strive to offer good cuisine.
- Our trips frequently include surprises, which often turn out to be the highlight of the journey.
- When open to it, visits to less-known destinations, reserved for the daring few, and engages in intimate and meaningful encounters with locals—a cherished treasure highly valued by discerning travelers, as we have discovered through our years of experience in the industry.

Still haven't found what you're looking for?

We offer a wide range of amazing trips that may not all be listed on our website. Plus, we can custom-build pretty much whatever your heart desires, so let us know what we can do for you. If you have any questions about our expedition cruises, private trips, or just want to talk travel, give us a call at + 1 800- 430 9498 or contact us via email at travel@greenplanetexpeditions.com