

ANTARCTIC PENINSULA: A RARE EXPLORATION OF THE WEDDELL SEA

Spend more time in the remote, ice-laden Weddell Sea--home to massive Adelie penguin colonies and colossal tabular icebergs--than you ever imagined possible. While many Antarctic itineraries attempt to include the Weddell, they typically spend just a day here, two at most. Our 12-day Antarctic Peninsula: A Rare Exploration of the Weddell Sea devotes three to four days in the farthest reaches of the Weddell Sea and Antarctic Sound. In fact, our arrival in Antarctica coincides with the Winter Solstice, December 21, 2027. Guided by our seasoned Expedition Team, this route is designed with maximum flexibility to adapt to shifting conditions and reach rarely visited sites few travelers ever see.



ITINERARY

Day 1 - Arrive in Ushuaia, Argentina

You may arrive in Ushuaia at any time on Day 1. Many guests choose to arrive a day or two before embarkation day to explore this quaint port city at the bottom of South America, and the surrounding region. Based on the arrival information you send in advance, we will arrange for a transfer from the airport



to your hotel.

Day 2 - Embarkation

Embarkation will occur in the late afternoon, after which your vessel will sail down the historic Beagle Channel, transecting the Tierra del Fuego archipelago in the extreme south of South America. Expect an air of anticipation as you depart--the next time you see land, you'll be at the world's most southern continent.

Days 3 and 4 - At Sea: Crossing the Drake Passage

You have many options of activities during the 800-km (500 mile) Drake crossing. As you gain your sea legs, our Expedition Team will begin their series of presentations to help prepare you for your upcoming Zodiac and land excursions. You officially enter Antarctica when your ship crosses the Antarctic Convergence, a boundary that f luctuates around 60° south. This is also a great opportunity to meet your fellow travelers--many of whom will become friends by the voyage end.

Days 5 to 9 - Antarctic Sound and the Weddell Sea

One word best describes the Weddell Sea and Antarctic Sound: immense. That applies equally to the ice formations, penguin colonies, and vast stretches of sea. In Antarctic Sound and the Weddell Sea, we will encounter massive tabular icebergs. These bergs don't calve from tidewater glaciers but from ice shelves-- and many will dwarf Ocean Explorer. Some in the Weddell Sea reach the size of a football field or larger. Their smooth, tabletop-flat surfaces reflect the ocean beneath: flat seas yield flat ice. Ice shelves stretch from land into the sea. In the northwest corner of the Weddell Sea, penguin colonies can number in the tens of thousands. For travelers seeking Adelie penguins, Antarctic Sound and the Weddell Sea offer prime viewing of this iconic species--the most southerly breeding penguin, and possibly bird, on Earth (though snow petrels, prevalent here, are also a contender for that crown). Gentoo penguins are found here too, and you'll have chances to spot chinstraps. The legendary Snow Hill Emperor colony lies in this region; while we won't reach it, we may encounter individual members on the ice. The Weddell Sea is less visited than the Gerlache Strait, not for lack of beauty, but due to its ever-shifting ice. On this voyage, we've added an extra day in this area--time enough for a true adventure into this endless wilderness, and to ensure we can fully embrace the dance with the ice. In the Weddell Sea, penguins are our priority--but ice will guide our course. Alongside towering tabular icebergs, we'll likely encounter vast stretches of sea ice, more than on the Peninsula's west side. Your Expedition Team and bridge officers will track charts and forecasts, seeking openings to navigate toward the region's highlights, and intentionally visiting the ice edge to maximize our time in this remarkable environment. Our route will be shaped by sea ice and weather, but every destination-- whichever we visit first or last--will be exceptional, evoking words like profound, humbling, and surreal. We'll make every effort to visit large Adelie penguin colonies--at Brown Bluff, Paulet Island, or Tay Head--ranging from 20,000 to several hundred thousand penguins, including gentoo. Photos and documentaries can't match the experience of standing before tens of thousands of penguins. The sounds alone--partners calling, chicks crying for parents, wind and waves against the shore, and the distant crack of calving glaciers--create an acoustic landscape of pure wildness. Add the sight of a penguin-covered landscape, and you have an encounter that's impossible to replicate. The currents of Antarctic and Active sounds are mesmerizing. While you're in a Zodiac, you may observe ice--large and small--flowing through narrow straits at several kilometers per hour, a raw display of the power of water. From shore, you may glimpse or sense the ice's movement. Your Zodiac may pass through open water, while your return ride could weave among drifting floes, crackling brash, and scattered bergy bits. The Weddell Sea is known for superb birdwatching--especially cape, snow, and southern giant petrels--and the chance to spot Weddell, crabeater, or leopard seals onshore or catching rides on the drifting ice. Sightings may occur near Adelie colonies or at sites like Kinnes Cove and Active Sound. When ice opens in the Weddell Sea's northwest, whales follow--lured by the feeding opportunities. Humpbacks and minkes are most common, with occasional killer whales. Conditions may also allow us to explore areas frequented by fin whales, and possibly southern rights. For historians, the Weddell Sea brims with stories--from Shackleton's legendary Endurance survival and Nordenskjold's gallows-humored ordeal on Antarctic to far older histories told by the 60-million-year-old fossils on The Naze, Vega Island, and Cockburn Island. Fossils are discovered here partly because large areas remain relatively snow-free. Volcanic activity has painted these sites--as well as Brown Bluff on the Peninsula's mainland--in rich reds, burnt oranges, and chocolate browns. In a landscape dominated by white, gray, and blue, these colors add a vivid layer to a region steeped in both human and ancient geological history. This itinerary offers the best of a polar expedition--soak in the vastness of the Weddell Sea and Antarctic Sound from your ship, then get up close to stunning geological formations by Zodiac or kayak.

Days 10 and 11 - At Sea: Homeward-bound across the Drake Passage



The journey back across the 800-km (500 mile) Drake Passage provides final opportunities to enjoy the crisp Antarctic air, spend time on the outer deck watching for seabirds and whales, or attending one of our team's expert-led polar presentations.

Day 12 - Disembark in Ushuaia

Your ship is scheduled to arrive in Ushuaia between 7 a.m. and 8 a.m. Once the ship has docked, you will bid farewell to your Expedition Team and shipmates before completing your disembarkation. You are then free to take advantage of the included transfer to the airport or, depending on the time of your flight, explore the town on your own and take a taxi to the airport later.

Please note:

Itineraries are subject to change.



YOUR SHIP: OCEAN EXPLORER

YOUR SHIP:	**Ocean Explorer**
VESSEL TYPE:	**Polar Expedition**
LENGTH:	**342 ft (104.4 m)**
PASSENGER CAPACITY:	**138**
BUILT/REFURBISHED:	**2021**

The Ocean Explorer is a modern, purpose-built expedition vessel combining contemporary elegance with advanced polar exploration technology. Accommodating up to 138 guests, this state-of-the-art ship features the innovative ULSTEIN X-BOW® design, which ensures smooth, stable sailing even in rough seas. A highlight of the vessel is its stunning two-story, glass-walled library located at the bow--perfect for quiet reflection with panoramic views of the polar landscapes. Almost all spacious cabins include private verandas, while the ship's sleek Scandinavian-inspired interiors create a sense of understated luxury. Guests can unwind in the fitness centre, sauna with large windows overlooking the ice, or one of two outdoor Jacuzzis while taking in the surrounding scenery.

Designed with both exploration and comfort in mind, Ocean Explorer offers generous outdoor viewing spaces and elevated observation decks for exceptional photography and wildlife watching. A fleet of 15 Zodiacs ensures quick, safe embarkation for off-ship adventures. Social spaces such as the elegant Main Dining Room, Latitude Bar, and Observation Lounge provide a refined yet relaxed atmosphere, complemented by fuel-efficient Rolls-Royce engines and cutting-edge sustainability systems, including waste-to-energy technology. Every detail of the Ocean Explorer reflects innovation, comfort, and environmental consciousness--setting a new standard for luxury expedition cruising.



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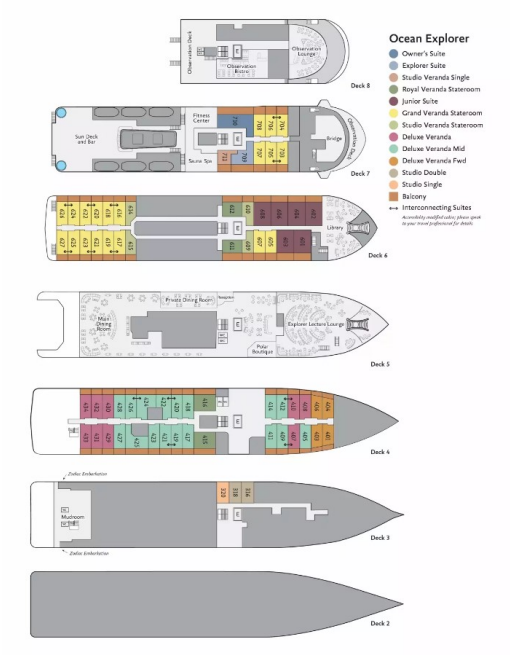
INSIDE YOUR SHIP



Deluxe Veranda Forward



Junior Suite



Owners Suite



Penthouse Suite



Studio Single



Studio Veranda Single





PRICING

18-Dec-2027 to 29-Dec-2027

Triple Suite	**29295 AUD pp**
Junior Suite	**32357 AUD pp**
Deluxe Veranda Forward	**32695 AUD pp**
Veranda Stateroom	**34495 AUD pp**
Veranda Suite	**36595 AUD pp**
Studio Single	**47395 AUD pp**
Penthouse Suite	**49995 AUD pp**
Studio Veranda Single	**51195 AUD pp**
Owners Suite	**53395 AUD pp**

Optional extras & upgrades

Paddling Excursion

Glide through the pristine polar waters in a sit-on-top, two-person, inflatable kayak for an unforgettable experience in the Arctic and Antarctic wilderness. These stable, rugged and comfortable crafts are an ideal way to see the polar regions from a different perspective. Experienced guides will lead you safely throughout the paddling excursion. Your group will always be escorted by an additional safety driver who will stay close by to provide additional support.

Sea Kayaking

The kayak adventure option is open to all levels of experience. However, it is highly recommended that you have some sea kayaking related experience prior to kayaking in the polar regions with Quark Expeditions. Our sea kayaks are the ideal means by which to slow down and connect with the pristine natural environments and surroundings.