

## **GIANTS OF THE SOUTHERN OCEAN: WHALE VOYAGE WITH SOUTH SHETLANDS AND THE ANTARCTIC PENINSULA**

### **DAY 1**

#### **ARRIVAL USHUAIA, EMBARKATION**

Arrive in Ushuaia, Argentina - the world's southernmost town. Explore the quaint city or local countryside. Alternatively, consider a day trip off the beaten path to the raw, natural archipelago of Tierra del Fuego. It's a hiker's paradise with rugged snow-capped mountains, glaciers, flower-filled meadows and boggy quagmires. In the afternoon, we board our ship.

Our journey begins as we navigate through the calms of Beagle Channel, a strait in the Tierra del Fuego Archipelago

### **DAY 2-3**

#### **AT SEA - CROSS DRAKE PASSAGE, SOUTH SHETLAND ISLANDS**

Sailing onward, we cross the famed Drake Passage - a body of water that marks the intersection of the cold Antarctic with the warmer Atlantic and Pacific Oceans. Drake Passage is known for rollicking conditions and strong westerly winds, called the Roaring Fifties. While this passage may be challenging, you can rest confidently aboard our expedition vessel, which is purpose-built with stabilizers, powerful engines and a highly-qualified crew. The most spirited sailors consider Drake Passage a lifetime achievement, and you will complete the crossing twice!

In the Drake, the excitement builds as Antarctic wildlife comes into view. Weather permitting, we will catch our first sight of seals and penguins! The area is also well known for its abundance of birds.

With the patented X-BOW design, the Ocean Victory will offer you a smoother sailing across the Drake passage, and due to the speed of the vessel, we might be able to do a first landing or activity in the South Shetland Islands on the afternoon of day 3, weather permitting.

### **DAY 4**

#### **SOUTH SHETLAND ISLANDS**

Over the day, we will begin the exciting Antarctic experience our ancestors only dreamed of. We will explore the sub-Antarctic islands of the South Shetland chain and be marveled by the captivating landscapes we will encounter along the way.

Weather permitting, our projected landfalls include: Deception Island, an extinct volcano with waters warm enough for a polar swim; and Half Moon Island with nesting Wilson's storm petrels.

The itinerary and activities depend on weather and ice conditions. The route and shore landings will be determined by the captain and expedition leader and communicated to guests through regularly scheduled briefings.

## **DAY 5-6**

### **ANTARCTIC PENINSULA**

As the white shimmer of Antarctica looms on our horizon, wildlife abounds along our projected route along the Antarctic Peninsula, with especially Antarctic fur seals, gentoo penguins and humpback whales being active in these wonderful waters.

We aim to take our time at these outings, allowing us to deploy kayaks and arrange wonderful hikes in the pristine nature. The late season solitude creates unique memories as the sun sets and as we leave these isolated areas that most probably won't welcome any visitors until next spring. The projected landings include: Wilhelmina bay with plenty of humpback whales; Neko harbour with its gentoo penguins and seals; Brown station and Paradise harbour with wonderful views and on our way back north, a wonderful walk at Hannah Point awaits us.

The itinerary and activities over the next days depend on weather and ice conditions. The route and shore landings will be determined by the captain and expedition leader and communicated to guests through regularly scheduled briefings.

Please note that all the outings and landings rely on weather, sea and ice conditions being favorable both for the ship to access the areas, as for the zodiacs and kayaks to maneuver under adequate conditions, ensuring the safety of all our passengers and staff.

For this reason, during moments of harsh weather and throughout the entire trip, our ships offer excellent public areas such as wellness/sauna, restaurant, bar and a library for our passengers to spend their spare time. Our ships are staffed by experts in the field who will also share great lectures along the way, ranging from exploration history to biology, geology, ice and wildlife.

Visitors to these far southern reaches in mid to late March/beginning of April will experience large amounts of whales, wonderful sunsets, crisp fresh air, dustings of snow and other telltale signs of the seasonal change. Some penguin colonies will be near deserted whilst others will be very busy. Many say that this is the time to visit the real Antarctic, and have it all for yourselves. It is safe to say that there will be fewer other ships around as we wrap up the season.

## **DAY 7-8**

### **DEPART ANTARCTICA - AT SEA**

We depart Antarctica and spend two days at sea on our way back to the calms of Beagle Channel and Ushuaia, Argentina. En route, we will cross Drake Passage and cruise past Cape Horn, a legendary maritime landmark and the southern tip of South America.

During our time at sea, a variety of activities will be arranged on board which will provide the perfect opportunity to socialize with fellow travelers equally passionate for discovering the world, enjoy the lectures by our expedition on board, visit our shop or relax at leisure on our ship's facilities, designed to provide a comfortable, relaxing time.

## **DAY 9**

### **BACK IN USHUAIA AND DISEMBARKATION**

This morning, we arrive back in Ushuaia for the conclusion of our tour, where you can continue your adventures or begin your return home.