

## Chilean Fjords, Antarctica, Malvinas- **Great Explorers and Wildlife**

Travel in harmony with the elements to the White Continent. En route, you will experience the wild natural wonders of the Chilean fjords. Once in Antarctica, the sight of mighty glaciers calving into the ocean, and flocks of penguins and whales in the icy seas will create indelible memories. On board there is so much to do: learn and discover in the Activity Center, attend exciting lectures, and more, all of which are designed to enhance your trip.



## Day 1

Punta Arenas

### **Embarking the Expedition**

You fly to Punta Arenas where MS Roald Amundsen is ready for this expedition to Antarctica.

## Day 2

Chilean Fjords

### **The Astounding Fjords of Chile**

Enjoy cruising through the Beagle Channel, with channels, fjords, and mountains plunging straight into the icy water. This wild and remote area seems almost undisturbed by humans. The ice has scoured its way between the mountains, leaving the isolated islands and hidden bays that create the unique fjord landscape of Chile.

## Day 3-4

Drake Passage

### **Cape Horn and the Famed Drake Passage**

When ranking the most iconic places on Earth, Cape Horn is high on the list. At almost 56° South, it is the southernmost point of South America. Before the Panama Canal, seafarers had to pass this infamous rocky island in order to cross from one side of the Americas to the other. We will do our best to make a landing on Cape Horn – however, this is an area known for high seas and challenging conditions.

Then MS Roald Amundsen will take 1 ½ to 2 days to cross the [Drake Passage](#), depending on the weather conditions. This enormous churn of water is funnelled by western wind drift from the Pacific through the Drake Passage and into the Scotia Sea to the east. The Drake

Passage is part of the Antarctic Circumpolar Current, the most voluminous current in the world, and about 25 to 40 billion gallons of water per second are transported from west to east. As you cross the Drake, you sail over the mid-ocean West Scotia Ridge and over the nearly 20,000 foot deep South Shetland Trench. The weather can be terrible on the Drake, but it can also be placid. Usually, it's somewhere in between.

## Day 5-11

Antarctica is isolated from the rest of the world by ocean currents. 90% of the world's ice is here, 13,000 feet thick, covering the landmass. In winter Antarctica is further cut off by sea ice forming off the coast – virtually doubling the size of the continent. In summer, it is a breeding ground for millions of penguins, whales, and seals that, for the rest of the year, simply spend their time at sea. Most of the wildlife found here thrives on a cornerstone species: krill. The krill population in the Southern Ocean represents the largest biomass of a single species on Earth – including human beings!

As outlined in the Antarctic Treaty, this is a continent dedicated to peace, science, and tourism. No human activity is allowed to alter the perfect natural balance. We are visiting a place that has evolved through millennia without human interference. Therefore, we adhere to very strict environmental guidelines and rules: We want to leave nothing but footprints and take nothing but pictures! Antarctica's location makes every cruise to the continent an expedition. Even the most sophisticated technology cannot override some of the climatic challenges that are a part of this environment. Weather, wind, and ice conditions have a great influence on our program and schedule. Therefore, we need to be pragmatic: we change landings, re-route, and shift plans as we go along. This also means that we will take advantage of the often ideal conditions – we might spend hours ashore hiking or on the water with kayaks, or simply cruising among huge pods of whales.

We will attempt to land several places, including Deception Island, Half Moon Island, Brown Bluff, Cuverville Island, and Neko Harbor. All of these places are serene and offer untouched nature, opportunities to observe penguin colonies, seals, glaciers, icebergs in every shape and colour, and old whaling stations. It's hard to sum up all the impressions you will gain. As a well-known quote from veteran Antarctic travellers puts it:

“If you can describe Antarctica with words, you have probably never been there.”

## Day 12

### At Sea

#### **Lectures and Wildlife-Watching from the Deck**

After exploring this superlative and unique continent, we set course to the Falkland Islands. The Falklands consist of two large islands and around 700 smaller ones. Captain John Strong of the HMS Welfare made the first recorded landing here in 1690. We will continue our lecture series, which focuses on the dramatic history and diverse wildlife of the islands as we keep a watch out for wandering albatross.

## Day 13-15

### Malvinas Islands

Having just been in Antarctica, it might seem a bit surreal to arrive in a town that looks like a miniature England, with red phone boxes, red buses, and English pubs. Stanley is the capital of the Falkland Islands. Roam the city streets – the town is easy enough to discover in a day on foot – or join one of the excursions to explore the wilderness and wildlife in the surrounding areas. The Falklands are teeming with wonders of wildlife and nature. This is an unpolluted environment with fantastically clear blue skies, seamless horizons, vast open spaces, and stunning white-sand beaches. As we reach the westernmost-settled outposts in the Falklands you will see remote farms that have been family-owned for six or seven generations. The sheep graze alongside immense colonies of albatross and rockhopper penguins, while predatory striated caracaras patrol overhead and upland geese forage at the water's edge. Bird lovers will rejoice if we are able to go ashore on Carcass Island. This is a bird paradise with several ducks, geese, penguins, albatrosses, caracaras, and wrens. It is also one of few islands down here with trees. We use our small boats to go ashore for exploring, hiking, and taking a closer look at all the birds.

## Day 16

At Sea

### **The Magellan Strait**

As we complete the loop of the Magellan Strait, we will have a recap of everything we have experienced on this expedition. Make sure you spend some time on deck looking for wildlife.

## Day 17

Punta Arenas

### **The End of the Expedition**

We arrive back in Punta Arenas in the morning.