

ANTARCTICA

Aboard PONANT's deluxe expedition ships

Various dates November - March



Adeline penguins



Visiting Antarctica is almost like stepping back in time, to the era when the world was new. There are no human sounds in this land of primeval beauty, only the wild cries of birds, seals, and whales echoing across a vast expanse of land and sea. Travel with us to this magical land during the austral summer, when the days are long and relatively mild, when seabirds are courting, and massive icebergs thaw into sculptures of brilliant form and color. We are privileged guests in these extreme lands where we are at the mercy of weather and ice conditions. Landings on certain sites and the observation of certain wildlife cannot be guaranteed. They vary from day to day, making each PONANT expedition a unique experience.

DAY ITINERARY

1	Buenos Aires, Argentina Ushuaia
2	Ushuaia—Embark
3-4	Crossing the Drake Passage
5-9	Antarctic Peninsula
10-11	Crossing the Drake Passage
12	Ushuaia—Disembark Buenos Aires

See reverse for detailed itinerary. Subject to change.



Exploring by Zodiac

HIGHLIGHTS OF A PONANT ANTARCTICA EXPEDITION

- Humpback whales are very focused on feasting on krill after their long commute from the tropics
- December and January bring you face-to-face with newborn wildlife, now strong enough to be inquisitive and seek you out
- It's the height of summer on the Peninsula with temperatures rising to 60 F / 15 C and the weather is generally stable



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The deluxe, five-star *L'Austral* is one of the most beautifully conceived and technologically sophisticated small ships afloat. Designed in France and built in Italy specifically for expedition cruising, *L'Austral* is staffed by experienced officers and crew and features the latest in navigational technology. The ship provides the finest in luxury expedition cruising through its commitment to environmental preservation and passenger safety, combined with attentive, personalized service, gourmet cuisine, and a relaxed, congenial ambiance. Our seasoned Expedition Leader and naturalists ensure an enriching educational experience on board and ashore. The PONANT ships are certified as “Clean Ships,” and meet the highest environmental standards for energy and fuel consumption, materials, and resource management.

ITINERARY

Day 1

BUENOS AIRES, ARGENTINA | USHUAIA

Meet fellow travelers at the Buenos Aires airport check-in desk for your included flight to Ushuaia. On arrival in Ushuaia, transfer to the *Hotel Arakur*, overlooking the Beagle Channel and one of the newest and most elegant hotels in the city. Join fellow travelers and our lecturers for dinner this evening. (D)

Day 2

USHUAIA | EMBARK

After breakfast at the hotel, join an excursion to Tierra del Fuego National Park. Created in 1960, the park is famous for its mountainous landscapes, lagoons, bogs, and rivers. If we are lucky we may encounter beaver dams, birds, wild orchids, and more. Lunch will be in a restaurant within the Park. Continue to the pier in Ushuaia to embark *L'Austral* in late afternoon. (B,L,D)

Day 3

CROSSING THE DRAKE PASSAGE

Our days crossing the Drake Passage on the way to the Antarctic Peninsula will allow for getting to know the ship and learning about Zodiac® operations as well as rules of conduct ashore and bio-security protocols to prevent the introduction of non-native species to Antarctica. This will also be a time for lectures and discussions with the Expedition Staff about the history, geology, flora and fauna of the Antarctic. From the ship's bridge, you will experience exceptional sailing moments before joining the naturalist-guides on your ship's exterior decks to look out for albatrosses, Cape petrels, and other seabirds flying over the Drake Passage. (B,L,D)

Day 4

ANTARCTIC PENINSULA

Succumb to the magic of a world unlike any other. The Antarctic Peninsula is a place of wonder and fascination, promising visitors unforgettable moments. Throughout your adventure in this icy realm, you will find yourself in the heart of a spectacular environment of subtle shades of blue and white, surrounded by exceptional wildlife. Penguins, humpback whales, seals and giant petrels are at home here, as are elephant seals, fur seals, Antarctic minke whales, and orcas.

Each day, based on ice conditions, the Captain and the Expedition Leader will suggest Zodiac® outings or landings to discover the infinite riches of the Antarctic Peninsula. Glaciers, ice floe, tabletop icebergs, mountain peaks that plunge straight into the sea, volcanic beaches, research stations, enchanting bays, and vestiges of the whaling industry: these are the faces of the Antarctic that will reveal themselves. In this hushed and surreal atmosphere, we will sail in the wake of Jean-Baptiste Charcot, Adrien de Gerlache, and Sir Ernest Shackleton, the great Antarctic explorers who first explored these remote and uninhabited lands. (B,L,D)

Day 5

CROSSING THE DRAKE PASSAGE

If there is one sea, one waterway dreaded by tourists, researchers and hardened seafarers alike, it is the Drake Passage. Situated at the latitude of the infamous Furious Fifties winds, between Cape Horn and the South Shetland Islands, it is the shortest route between Antarctica and South America. At the Antarctic convergence, where cold currents rising up from the South Pole meet warmer equatorial water masses, the Drake is home to a very diverse marine fauna, including the albatross and Cape petrels that will follow our ship as we head north. (B,L,D)

Day 6

USHUAIA, ARGENTINA | DISEMBARK | BUENOS AIRES

Disembark *L'Austral* this morning and transfer to the airport for return flights. (B)

PROGRAM INCLUSIONS

- Charter flights between Buenos Aires and Ushuaia
- One night at the *Hotel Arakur* in Ushuaia
- Comprehensive 10-night cruise aboard the deluxe *L'Austral*. All accommodations are outside staterooms and suites, 95% of which feature a private balcony.
- Complete program of expedition excursions via Zodiacs led by experienced naturalists
- Lectures and briefings by Expedition Leader and naturalists
- Complimentary expedition parka and boot rental
- All meals aboard ship including coffee & pastry, breakfast, lunch, afternoon tea, dinner, and sweets from Ladurée
- French-inspired gourmet cuisine, with menu creation and chef training by Ducasse Conseil, the consulting arm of the Alain Ducasse Enterprise
- Complimentary open bar aboard ship including select wines served with lunch and dinner
- Welcome and farewell cocktail receptions aboard ship
- 24-hour room service; complimentary wifi
- Airport/hotel/pier transfers and handling of luggage
- Gratuities to shipboard personnel, porters, guides, and drivers
- Port taxes and charges
- Pre-departure materials